

Lectures on the Book of Judges

Second Lecture — Judges 9 — Abimelech

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Second Lecture: Judges 9 - 21 My object being no more than a sketch, as most of you know, I desire to say but a few words on such of the chapters as bear a similar character to that which has been already pointed out in the early portion of the book. We see that God was faithful; but the fidelity even of those whom He used in deliverance is another matter. Their faith was owned; but it was of a sadly mingled and imperfect character. Indeed this is found regularly throughout the book of Judges. In the case of Abimelech it is seen most conspicuously, yet is it always true, though it may be occasionally more marked than at other times. In him we have a man who took advantage of the reputation for the power of God that had wrought by his father; but where anything of the sort is used for self, and not for God, bitter disappointment must be the result; and if there be anything more marked than another in his history, it is the solemnity of divine retribution. This is always true in the ways of God. What a man sows he must reap: if he sows to the flesh, of the flesh he reaps corruption. And this is just as true of the saint as of the man who rashly or lightly bears the name of the Lord Jesus. In the latter case it is nothing but flesh, which becomes manifest in the long run; but even in the case of him who is truthful, whatever is carnal, whatever lets out that nature which is already judged, the confession of whose judgment is the very starting-point of a Christian, but which it is his calling to act upon and treat as a dead and condemned thing to the end — if he forgets this, then, in the measure in which he does so, it brings in that which the Lord must infallibly deal with. Now; in Abimelech's history we see that he had begun with the most intense selfishness — taking an utterly reckless advantage of those who had a better claim to represent their father than himself. The end was that he met with the judgment least of all to be coveted by man, most of all detestable to a proud spirit like his own. (Judges 9)