

THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL AS LISTED IN THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Judge and Tribe	Significant Events in the life of the Judge	Enemies of Israel	Period of Oppression	Period of "Rest"	Scripture reference
1. Othniel (Judah) Son of Kenza, a Gentile Kenizzite convert of the Exodus generation and younger brother of Caleb	Othniel was the nephew of Caleb, the only man other than Joshua to survive from the adults of the Exodus generation and who was a chieftain of Judah. In the conquest of Canaan, Othniel was the hero of the capture of Kiriath-Sepher/Debir, the son-in-law of Caleb and became the first warrior-Judge of Israel. He delivered Israel from the oppression of the Edomites.	Cushan-Rishathaim, King of Mesopotamia	8 Years	40 years	Josh 15:13-17; Judg 1:9-21; 3:1-11; 1Chron. 4:13
2. Ehud (Benjamin) Son of Gera	Ehud was a left-handed Benjaminite who personally killed Eglon the fat king of Moab. He led in the slaying of 10,000 Moabites.	Eglon king of Moab, Ammonites and Amalekites	18 years	80 years	Judg 3:12-30
3. Shamgar (tribe ?) His name is not Hebrew. Son of Anath	He killed 600 Philistines with an oxgoad. The "Song of Deborah refers to "in the days of Shamgar ben Anath" (Judg 5:6); possibly the son of a mixed marriage = Hurrian/Israelite?	Philistines	Not given	Not given	Judg 3:31-5:6
4. Deborah /Barak (Deborah = Ephraim and Barak = Naphtali)	Deborah was a prophetess and a judge. She was the wife of Lappidoth. Deborah and her general, Barak defeated Sisera, the general of the Army of Canaanite King Jabin of Hazor at the Battle of Kishon on Mt Tabor. The Song of Deborah (Judg chapter 15) recounts the great victory. Barak is listed among the "Heroes of the Faith" in Heb 11:32.	Jabin, Canaanite king of Hazor Sisera, general and vassal of Jabin; may have been a Hittite	20 years	40 years	Judg 4:1-5:31; 1 Sam 12:11; Heb 11:32

<p>5. Gideon (Manasseh) Son of Joash of Abiezer</p>	<p>The Angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon at Ophrah. Gideon destroyed the altar of Baal. Seeking God’s will Gideon put out a fleece twice for a sign. On God’s command he reduced the size of his army from 32,000 to 10,000 to 300, and successfully routed the Midianite army. He took revenge on the men of Succoth and Penuel for not giving his army bread. He killed the Midianite kings Zebah and Zalmunna in revenge for the killing of his brothers at the battle of Mt. Tabor. He made a gold ephod that led the people into idolatry.</p>	<p>Midianites Amalekites “People of the East”</p>	<p>7 years</p>	<p>40 years</p>	<p>Jud 6:1-8:32 Heb 11:32</p>
<p>6. Tola (Issachar) Son of Puah; grandson of Dodo</p>	<p>Tola was probably from one of the leading clans of Issachar (Gen 46:13; Num 26:23) but lived at Shamir in the territory of Ephraim.</p>			<p>He judged Israel 23 years</p>	<p>Judg 10:1,2</p>
<p>7. Jair (Gilead-Manasseh)</p>	<p>Jair may have been a descendant of the same Jair who distinguished himself during the days of Moses and Joshua (see Num 32:41; Dt 3:14; Josh 13:30; 1 Kng 4:13; 1Chr 2:21). He had 30 sons who were itinerant judges.</p>			<p>He judged Israel 22 years</p>	<p>Judg 10:3-5</p>
<p>8. Jephthah (Gilead-Manasseh) Son of Gilead by a harlot (Judges 11:1)</p>	<p>Jephthah was the son of Gilead by a harlot and was driven away by his half-brothers. The Elders of Gilead brought him back and made him their chief at Mizpah. Jephthah refused to give up Gilead to the Ammonites. He fought the Ammonites and conquered some 20 cities. The swearing of a foolish vow cost him his daughter’s life. He defeated the tribe of Ephraimites who had been offended because they had not been asked to join in the battle against the Ammonites.</p>	<p>Philistines Ammonites Civil war with the tribe of Ephraim</p>	<p>18 years (Judges 10:8)</p>	<p>He judged Israel 6 years</p>	<p>Judg 10:6-12:7; Heb 11:32</p>

9. Ibzan (Judah)	Ibzan was a socially prominent man who had 30 sons and 30 daughters for whom he arranged marriages. Jewish tradition identifies him with Boaz of Bethlehem-Judah.			Judged Israel 7 years	Josh 19:15; Judg 12:8-10
10. Elon (Zebulun)	He was buried at Aijalon in Zebulun.			Judged Israel 10 years	Judg 12:11, 12
11. Abdon (Ephraim) Son of Hillel	Abdon, the son of Hillel was a man of wealth and prominence. He had 40 sons and 30 grandsons. He was a native of Pirathon and was buried there.			Judged Israel 8 years	Judg 12:13-15
12. Samson (Dan) Son of Manoah	An angel announced Samson's birth. He was consecrated as a Nazirite from birth (Num chapter 6). He had a fatal fondness for Philistine women. Samson was a man of immense strength: he killed a lion with his hands; he killed 30 Philistines at Ashkelon, and a "thousand" with a jawbone of an ass. Other amazing deeds included catching 300 foxes, tying them in pairs with torches and turning them loose to burn the grain fields of the Philistines, and carrying off the gate of Gaza. Samson was conquered by the Philistine girl, Delilah, who cut his hair, the source of his strength. He was blinded and imprisoned at Gaza. He called out to God who allowed his strength to return. He pulled down the Temple of Dagon killing himself and about 3,000 Philistines.	Philistines	40 years	Judged Israel 20 years	Judg 13:1-16:31; Heb 11:32

Abimelech was not a judge but was a son of Gideon who assumed power over Manasseh and brought about a civil war within the tribes of Israel (Judg 8:33-(:57). The Prophet Samuel and his sons are listed as the last "judges" of Israel before the age of the United Monarchy (1 Sam 7:15-17; 8:1-2; Sir 46:13/16-20/23; Heb 11:32-40).

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The formula for rule of God's Judge

- Announcement of wrongdoing
- Statement of God's response
- Notice of how long Israel suffered
- Reference to Israel "crying out"
- God "raises up" a deliverer
- How deliverance is achieved
- Concluding note on length of the peace

SUMMARY OF THE BOOK OF JUDGES

BIBLICAL PERIOD	#5 THE JUDGES RULE ISRAEL				
FOCUS	CYCLE OF APOSTASY	CYCLE OF DELIVERANCE	CYCLE OF DEPRAVITY		
COVENANT	THE SINAI COVENANT				
SCRIPTURE	1:1-----3:6-----17:1-----19:1-----20:1-21:5				
DIVISIONS	Prologue: -Israel fails to complete the conquest -God judges Israel	The six campaigns to take the land	Results of Israel's spiritual and moral decay		
TOPIC	Causes of apostasy	Curses of apostasy	Sin of idolatry	Sin of immoral conduct	Sin of Civil War
	Living with the pagan occupiers of the land	The wars against Israel's enemies	Adopting pagan customs and religious practices		
LOCATION	THE PROMISED LAND OF CANAAN/ISRAEL				
TIME	circa 350/ 410 YEARS*				

*When the various time spans of the Judges are added together they total 410 years (i.e., the years oppression, judging, and peace). However, a number of the judges' time of service probably overlapped since they were all from different regions of the land.

TIME LINE: BC

World Empire: Egypt-----Assyria

		UNITED KINGDOM			---DIVIDED KINGDOM	
					Northern Kingdom = Israel / Southern Kingdom = Judah	
c. 1300	c.1200	1100	1047	1000	930	722
Conquest of Canaan	c. Period of the Judges		----- Saul /	David/ conquers Jerusalem	Rehoboam= Civil War	Assyria conquers Israel
		Ruth and Boaz				

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