

# The 12 Judges of Israel

*Studying the history and culture of the time*

<i>Judge</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Reference</i>
<b>1. OTHNIEL (JUDAH)</b> Son of Kenaz, a Gentile convert of the Exodus generation and younger brother of Caleb.	The nephew and son-in-law of Caleb, and son of Kenaz, Gentile Kenizzite converts who joined the tribe of Judah. He became the first warrior-judge of Israel and delivered Israel from the oppression of the Edomites.	Joshua 15:13-17 Judges 1:9-21; 3:1-11 1 Chronicles 4:13
<b>2. EHUD (BENJAMIN)</b> Son of Gera	Ehud was a left-handed Benjaminite. He killed Eglon king of Moab and ended Moabite domination of Israel.	Judges 3:12-30
<b>3. SHAMGAR (TRIBE UNKNOWN)</b> His name is not Hebrew. Son of Anath	Unlike the descriptions of other biblical judges, the first reference to Shamgar has no introduction, conclusion, or reference to the length of reign. He is said, however, to have killed 600 Philistines with an oxgoad. A contemporary of the judge Deborah (Judges 5:6).	Judges 3:31; 5:6
<b>4. DEBORAH (EPHRAIM)†</b> Barak (Naphtali)	A prophet, counselor, warrior, and wife. The only female judge mentioned in the Bible, Deborah led a successful counterattack against the forces of Jabin king of Canaan and his military commander Sisera (also see Barak, Deborah's military commander).	Judges 4:1–5:31 1 Samuel 12:11 Hebrews 11:32
<b>5. GIDEON (MANASSEH)†</b> Son of Joash of Abiezer	An angel appeared and told him to go out boldly and save his people. Destroyed the altar of Baal, later sought confirmation of God's will by putting out a fleece twice for a sign. On God's command, reduced his army from 32,000 to 300 and successfully crushed the Midianite army.	Judges 6:1–8:32 Hebrews 11:32
<b>6. TOLA (ISSACHAR)</b> Son of Puah; grandson of Dodo	Tola was probably from one of the leading clans of Issachar (Genesis 46:13; Numbers 26:23) but lived at Shamir in the territory of Ephraim.	Judges 10:1-2

† Indicates individuals listed in Hebrews 11's "Faith Hall of Fame"

# The 12 Judges of Israel

Studying the history and culture of the time

<i>Judge</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Reference</i>
<b>7. JAIR (GILEAD-MANASSEH)</b>	Jair was said to have greatness and wealth. He had “thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys, and they had thirty cities . . .” There seems to be some connection between these thirty cities in the land of Gilead and those in the Bashan (1 Kings 4:13).	Judges 10:3-5
<b>8. JEPHTHAH (GILEAD-MANASSEH)†</b> Son of Gilead by a prostitute (Judges 11:1)	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 20 cities. He swore a foolish vow that cost him his daughter’s life	Judges 10:6–12:7 Hebrews 11:32
<b>9. IBZAN (JUDAH)</b>	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.	Joshua 19:15 Judges 12:8-10
<b>10. ELON (ZEBULUN)</b>	Buried at Aijalon in Zebulun.	Judges 12:11-12
<b>11. ABDON (EPHRAIM)</b> 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 (near Shechem) and was buried there.	Judges 12:13-15
<b>12. SAMSON (DAN)†</b> Son of Manoah	An angel announced his birth, consecrated as a Nazirite (Numbers 6). A man of immense strength. Fatal fondness for Philistine women (Delilah). Lost his strength. Was blinded and then imprisoned at Gaza. Called to God, who allowed his strength to return. He pulled down the Temple of Dagon, killing himself and about 3,000 Philistines.	Judges 13:1–16:31 Hebrews 11:32

† Indicates individuals listed in Hebrews 11’s “Faith Hall of Fame”