**12 JUDGES**

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| **JUDGE** | **CITE** | **TRIBE** | **OPPONENT** | **YEARS OPPRESSED****/YEARS RESTED** | **COMMENTS** |
| Othniel | 3:9 | Judah | Nomads- (Chushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia/Aram= now- E. Syria/N. Iraq) | 8/40 | Caleb’s nephew- married Caleb’s daughter, Achsah- attacks came from north & surprised a southern hero. |
| Ehud | 3:15 | Benjamin | Eglon (Moabite- Lot’s descendants) Ammonites (also Lot’s descendants) & Amalekites (Esau’s descendants) | 18/80 (unusually long rest) | Story of humor and satire; Ehud, like many Benjaminites, was ambidextrous or left-handed; Israel & the opponents vied for territory east of the Jordan [Moabites lived east of the Dead Sea & worshipped Chemosh; Ammonites lived next to Moab, 30 mi. east of the Jordan; their god= Molech; Amalekites = nomads & enemies of Israel]; the opponents crossed the Jordan & took Jericho as an outpost.  |
| Shamgar | 3:31 | Non-Israelite, son of Anath, a Canaanite  | Philistines (descendants of Ham, Noah’s son) lived in coastal plain b/n modern Tel Aviv & Gaza |  | Man of great strength, like Samson; killed 600 Philistines w/an oxgoad (iron-tipped stick to prod cattle) |
| Deborah (Jael, Kenite/ non-Israelite descendant of Moses’ father-in-law, Hobab) | 4-6 | Ephraim, she called on Naphtali (Barak= commander) & Zebulun | Northern Canaanites (Jabin= king of Hazor/ Sisera= his general w/900 iron chariots)  | 20/40 | Charismatic woman judge & prophetess; Barak Israel’s commander, wouldn’t go to war w/out her; hence, God gave a non-Israelite woman, Jael, the honor of killing Canaanite general, Sisera.  |
| Gideon | 6:11 | Manasseh- central Canaan  | Midianites (descendants of Abraham & Keturah- Gen.25:1-6) - lived in what is now Jordan or Saudi Arabia - centered in Arabia east of the Red Sea, they roamed great distances; later, they were absorbed into the Arabians, descendants of Ishmael- Gen.16; today= Saudi Arabia & Yemen) & Amalekites.  | 7/40 | God through Gideon defeated 135K Midianites w/300 men; he was offered the crown but refused saying only YHWH was Israel’s king- [Ahimelech, his son, was a non-judge who killed his brothers, made himself king at Shechem, Israel’s central sanctuary since Joshua’s time & he made it a Baal house; Ahimelech ruled 3 years & showed the danger of inherited leadership]. |
| Tola | 10:1 | Issachar |  | ?/23 |  |
| Jair | 10:3 | Gilead/E. Manasseh |  | ?/22 | 30 sons/30 donkeys/30 towns in Gilead, now Jordan. |
| Jephthah | 11L1 | Gilead/E. Manasseh | Ammonites, now Jordan | 18/6 | Illegitimate son, who had to flee after being disinherited; made a foolish vow that if God gave him victory, he would sacrifice the 1st to meet him on his return; that was his only daughter; she refused to let her father break his vow to God but only asked for 2 months to mourn her virginity. |
| Ibzan | 12:8 | Judah?/ Bethlehem |  | ?/7 | 30 sons & 30 daughters – all married to other tribes. |
| Elon | 12:11 | Zebulun |  | ?/10 |  |
| Abdon | 12:13 | Ephraim |  | ?/8 | 40 sons/30 grandsons; all rode donkeys (kingly mounts)  |
| Samson | 15:20 | Dan | Philistines, whose chief god was Dagon. | 40/20 | After a miraculous birth, he was dedicated as a Nazarite (prohibited from cutting his hair); scourge of the Philistines, but with weakness for Philistine women. When Delilah cut his hair, he lost his enormous strength, was captured & enslaved. The Lord answered his prayer & enabled him to bring down Dagon’s temple on himself & all the Canaanite hierarchy.  |