

The Cycle of Sin and Judgment

After Joshua died, the people of Israel strayed from their roots, neglected their covenant, and played the harlot by worshipping other gods. As a result, God allowed the surrounding nations to enslave them. Once the reality of oppression set in, the Israelites cried out to God, and, in His mercy, He delivered them through leaders called judges. However, once delivered, it didn't take long for the people to repeat the same pattern (at least 7 times).

1 — Othniel (from Judah) defeated Cushan-Rishathaim, King of Mesopotamia. Israel was oppressed for 8 years and had peace for 40 years (*Judges 1:11-15; 3:1-11; Joshua 15:16-19; 1 Chronicles 4:13*).

2 — Ehud (from Benjamin) defeated Eglon, King of Moab, the Amorites and Amalekites. Israel was oppressed 18 years and had peace for 80 years (*Judges 3:12-4:1*).

3 — Shamgar (tribe unknown) defeated the Philistines. Israel's oppression and peace are unknown (*Judges 3:31; 5:6*).

4 — Deborah (from Ephraim) and **Barak** (Naphtali) defeated Jabin, King of Canaan, and Sisera, the Army Commander. Israel was oppressed 20 years and had peace for 40 years (*Judges 4:1-5:31; Heb. 11:32*).

5 — Gideon (from West Manasseh) defeated the Midianites, Amalekites, and "the people of the east." Israel was oppressed for 7 years and had peace for 40 years (*Judges 6:1-8:32; Hebrews 11:32*).

6 — Abimilech (from West Manasseh) started civil war in Shechem (evil). He ruled 3 years (*Judges 8:33-9:57; 2 Sam. 11:21*).

7 — Tola (from Issachar) defeated an unknown enemy. He judged Israel for 23 years (*Judges 10:1, 2*).

8 — Jair (from East Manasseh) defeated an unknown enemy. He judged Israel for 22 years (*Judges 10:3-5*).

9 — Jephthah (from East Manasseh) defeated the Philistines, Ammonites, and was part of a civil war with the Ephraimites. Israel was oppressed 18 years and had peace for 6 years (*Judges 10:6-12:7; Heb. 11:32*).

10 — Ibzan (from Judah or Zebulun) defeated an unknown enemy. He judged Israel for 7 years (*Judges 12:8-10*).

11 — Elon (from Zebulun) defeated an unknown enemy. He judged Israel for 10 years (*Judges 12:11, 12*).

12 — Abdon (from Ephraim) defeated an unknown enemy. He judged Israel for 8 years (*Judges 12:13-15*).

13 — Samson (from Dan) defeated the Philistines. Israel was oppressed for 40 years and had peace for 20 years (*Judges 13:1-16:31; Hebrews 11:32*).

14 — Samuel (from Levi) defeated the Philistines, Amalekites, and others. He judged Israel for at least 40 years. Samuel was a prophet, the last judge, and he anointed Israel's first two kings — Saul and David (*1, 2 Samuel; 1 Samuel 7:3-6*).