

April 1

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[This happened in Phinehas' lifetime: 20:26, so chapters 19-21 are placed here following Joshua.]

Judges 19

Perveted Benjamites Rape and Kill

19:1 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel [cf. 17:6, 18:1], that there was a certain Levite staying in the remote mountains of Ephraim. He took for himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. 2 But his concubine played the harlot against him, and went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there four [4] whole months. 3 Then her husband arose and went after her, to speak kindly to her and bring her back, having his servant and a couple of donkeys with him. So she brought him into her father's house; and when the father of the young woman saw him, he was glad to meet him. 4 Now his father-in-law, the young woman's father, detained him; and he stayed with him three [3] days. So they ate and drank and lodged there. 5 Then it came to pass on the fourth [4th] day that they arose early in the morning, and he stood to depart; but the young woman's father said to his son-in-law, "Refresh your heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way." 6 So they sat down, and the two of them ate and drank together. Then the young woman's father said to the man,

"Please be content to stay all night, and let your heart be merry." 7

And when the man stood to depart, his father-in-law urged him; so he lodged there again. 8 Then he arose early in the morning on the fifth [5th] day to depart, but the young woman's father said,

"Please refresh your heart."

So they delayed until afternoon; and both of them ate. 9 And when the man stood to depart — he and his concubine and his servant — his father-in-law, the young woman's father, said to him,

"Look, the day is now drawing toward evening; please spend the night. See, the day is coming to an end; lodge here, that your heart may be merry. Tomorrow go your way early, so that you may get home." 10

However, the man was not willing to spend that night; so he rose and departed, and came to opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). With him were the two saddled donkeys; his concubine was also with him. 11 They were near Jebus, and the day was far spent; and the servant said to his master, "Come, please, and let us turn aside into this city of the Jebusites and lodge in it." 12

[Hence, this story occurs before Jebus was invaded by Israel?]

But his master said to him,

"We will not turn aside here into a city of foreigners, who are not of the children of Israel; we will go on to Gibeah." 13

So he said to his servant,

"Come, let us draw near to one of these places, and spend the night in Gibeah or in Ramah." 14

And they passed by [Jebus] and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin. 15 They turned aside there to go in to lodge in Gibeah. And when he went in, he sat down in the open square of the city, for no one would take them into his house to spend the night.

16 ¶ Just then an old man came in from his work in the field at evening, who also was from the mountains of Ephraim; he was staying in Gibeah, whereas the men of the place were Benjamites. 17 And when he raised his eyes, he saw the traveler in the open square of the city; and the old man said,

"Where are you going, and where do you come from?" 18

So he said to him,

"We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah toward the remote mountains of Ephraim; I am from there. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; now I am going to the house of the LORD. But there is no one who will take me into his house, 19 although we have both straw and fodder for our donkeys, and bread and wine for myself, for your female servant, and for the young man who is with your servant; there is no lack of anything." 20

And the old man said,

"Peace be with you! However, let all your needs be my responsibility; only

do not spend the night in the open square." 21

So he brought him into his house, and gave fodder to the donkeys. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

22 ¶ As they were enjoying themselves, suddenly certain men of the city, perverted men, surrounded the house and beat on the door. They spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying,

"Bring out the man who came to your house, that we may know him carnally!" 23

But the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brethren! I beg you, do not act so wickedly! Seeing this man has come into my house, do not commit this outrage. 24 Look, here is my virgin daughter and the man's concubine; let me bring them out now. Humble them, and do with them as you please; but to this man do not do such a vile thing!" 25

But the men would not heed him. So the man took his concubine and brought her out to them. And they knew her and abused her all night until morning; and when the day began to break, they let her go. 26 Then the woman came as the day was dawning, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her master was, till it was light. 27 When her master arose in the morning, and opened the doors of the house and went out to go his way, there was his concubine, fallen at the door of the house with her hands on the threshold. 28 And he said to her,

“Get up and let us be going.”

But there was no answer. So the man lifted her onto the donkey; and the man got up and went to his place. 29 When he entered his house he took a knife, laid hold of his concubine, and divided her into twelve pieces, limb by limb, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. 30 And so it was that all who saw it said, “No such deed has been done or seen from the day that the children of Israel came up from the land of Egypt until **this day**. Consider it, confer, and speak up!”

Judges 20

All Israel Comes Against Gibeah

20:1 ¶ So all the children of Israel came out, from Dan [north] to Beersheba [south], as well as from the land of Gilead [east of the Jordan], and the congregation gathered together as one man before **the LORD** at Mizpah [“watchtower” in Gilead]. 2 And the leaders of all the people, all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in **the assembly of the people of God**, four hundred thousand [400,000] foot soldiers who drew the sword. 3 (Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.) Then the children of Israel said,

“Tell us, how did this wicked deed happen?” 4

So the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said,

“My concubine and I went into Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin,

to spend the night. 5 And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and surrounded the house at night because of me. They intended to kill me, but instead they ravished my concubine so that she died. 6 So I took hold of my concubine, cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the territory of the inheritance of Israel, because they committed lewdness and outrage in Israel. 7 Look! All of you *are* children of Israel; give your advice and counsel here and now!” 8

So all the people arose as one man, saying,

“None of us will go to his tent, nor will any turn back to his house; 9 but now this *is* the thing **that** we will do to Gibeah: *We will go up* against it by lot. 10 We will take ten men out of every hundred [100] throughout all the tribes of Israel, a hundred [100] out of every thousand [1,000], and a thousand [1,000] out of every ten thousand [10,000], to make provisions for the people, that when they come to Gibeah in Benjamin, they may repay all the vileness that they have done in Israel.” 11

So all the men of Israel were gathered **against the city, united together as one man**.

Benjamin Refuses to Give Up Gibeah

12 ¶ Then the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying,

“What *is* this wickedness that has occurred among you? 13 Now therefore, **deliver up the men, the perverted men who are in Gibeah**, that we may put

them to death and remove the evil from Israel!”

But the children of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brethren, the children of Israel. 14 Instead, the children of Benjamin gathered together from their cities to Gibeah, to go to battle against the children of Israel. 15 And from their cities at that time the children of Benjamin numbered twenty-six thousand [26,000] men who drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who numbered seven hundred [700] select men. 16 Among all this people *were* seven hundred [700] select men *who were* left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair’s *breadth* and not miss. 17 Now besides Benjamin, the men of Israel numbered four hundred thousand [400,000] men who drew the sword; all of these *were* men of war.

26,700 Take On 400,000

18 ¶ Then the children of Israel arose and went up to **the house of God** [presumably in Shiloh] to inquire of God. They said,

“Which of us shall go up first to battle against the children of Benjamin?”

The **LORD** said,

“**Judah first!**” 19

So the children of Israel rose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah. 20 And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin, and the men of Israel put themselves in battle array to fight against them at Gibeah. 21 Then the children of Benjamin came out of Gibeah, and on that day cut down to the ground twenty-

two thousand [22,000] men of the Israelites. 22 And the people, that is, the men of Israel, encouraged themselves and again formed the battle line at the place where they had put themselves in array on the first day. 23 Then the children of Israel went up and wept **before the LORD** until evening, and asked counsel of **the LORD**, saying, “Shall I again draw near for battle against the children of my brother Benjamin?”

And **the LORD** said,

“**Go up against him.**” 24

So the children of Israel approached the children of Benjamin on the second day. 25 And Benjamin went out against them from Gibeah on the second day, and cut down to the ground eighteen thousand [18,000] more of the children of Israel; all these drew the sword.

26 ¶ Then **all the children of Israel**, that is, **all the people**, went up and came to **the house of God** and wept. They sat there **before the LORD** and **fasted** that day until evening; and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings **before the LORD**. 27 So the children of Israel inquired of **the LORD** (**the ark of the covenant of God** was there in those days, 28 and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days [so this happened in **Phinehas**’ lifetime]), saying, “Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease?”

And **the LORD** said,

“Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand.”²⁹

Then Israel set men in ambush all around Gibeah.³⁰ And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in battle array against Gibeah as at the other times.³¹ So the children of Benjamin went out against the people, and were drawn away from the city. They began to strike down and kill some of the people, as at the other times, in the highways (one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah) and in the field, about thirty [30] men of Israel.³² And the children of Benjamin said, “They are defeated before us, as at first.”

But the children of Israel said, “Let us flee and draw them away from the city to the highways.”³³

So all the men of Israel rose from their place and put themselves in battle array at Baal Tamar [“lord of the palms”]. Then Israel’s men in ambush burst forth from their position in the plain of Geba [“hill”; a city in Benjamin (modern ‘Jeba’) that stands on the top of a steep terraced hill, 6 miles (10 km) northeast of Jerusalem and 3 miles (5 km) from Gibeah, on the edge of the Wadi Suweinit looking northward to the opposite village of ancient Michmash (modern Mukhmas)].³⁴ And ten thousand [10,000] select men from all Israel came against Gibeah, and the battle was fierce. But the Benjamites did not know that disaster was upon them.³⁵

The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel. And the children of Israel destroyed that day twenty-five thousand one hundred [25,100; leaving 1600] Benjamites; all these drew the sword.³⁶ So the children of Benjamin saw that they were defeated. The men of Israel had given ground to the Benjamites, because they relied on the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah.³⁷ And the men in ambush quickly rushed upon Gibeah; the men in ambush spread out and struck the whole city with the edge of the sword.³⁸ Now the appointed signal between the men of Israel and the men in ambush was that they would make a great cloud of smoke rise up from the city,³⁹ whereupon the men of Israel would turn in battle. Now Benjamin had begun to strike and kill about thirty [30] of the men of Israel. For they said, “Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle.”⁴⁰ But when the cloud began to rise from the city in a column of smoke, the Benjamites looked behind them, and there was the whole city going up in smoke to heaven.⁴¹ And when the men of Israel turned back, the men of Benjamin panicked, for they saw that disaster had come upon them.⁴² Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them, and whoever came out of the cities they destroyed in their midst.⁴³ They surrounded the Benjamites, chased them, and easily trampled them down as far as the front of

Gibeah toward the east.⁴⁴ And eighteen thousand [18,000] men of Benjamin fell; all these were men of valor.⁴⁵ Then they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon [“pomegranate”; a cliff or inaccessible natural fortress]; and they cut down five thousand [5,000] of them on the highways. Then they pursued them relentlessly up to Gidom [“a cutting down”], and killed two thousand [2,000] of them.⁴⁶ So all who fell of Benjamin that day were twenty-five thousand [25,000 = 18,000 + 5,000 + 2,000] men who drew the sword; all these were men of valor.⁴⁷ But six hundred [600] men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, and they stayed at the rock of Rimmon for four [4] months.⁴⁸ And the men of Israel turned back against the children of Benjamin, and struck them down with the edge of the sword — from every city, men and beasts, all who were found. They also set fire to all the cities they came to. [26,700 – (25,000 + 600) = 1,100 unaccounted for???

Judges 21

Wives Needed for the Final 600

21:1 ¶ Now the men of Israel had sworn an oath at Mizpah, saying, “None of us shall give his daughter to Benjamin as a wife.”² Then the people came to the house of God, and remained there before God till evening. They lifted up their voices and wept bitterly,³ and said,

“O LORD God of Israel, why has this come to pass in Israel, that today there should be one tribe missing in Israel?”⁴ So it was, on the next morning, that the people rose early and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.⁵ The children of Israel said,

“Who is there among all the tribes of Israel who did not come up with the assembly to the LORD?”

For they had made a great oath concerning anyone who had not come up to the LORD at Mizpah, saying,

“He shall surely be put to death.”⁶

And the children of Israel grieved for Benjamin their brother, and said,

“One tribe is cut off from Israel today.”

⁷ What shall we do for wives for those who remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them our daughters as wives?”⁸

And they said,

“What one is there from the tribes of Israel who did not come up to Mizpah to the LORD?”

And, in fact, no one had come to the camp from Jabesh [“dry”] Gilead [a town in the territory of Gilead; according to Eusebius, it is beyond the Jordan, 6 miles (10 km) from Pella, on the mountain road to Gerasa; site unknown but may be modern ‘Wadi Yabes’] to the assembly.⁹ For when the people were counted, indeed, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead was there.¹⁰ So the congregation sent out there twelve thousand [12,000] of their most valiant men, and commanded them, saying,

“Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, including the women and children. ¹¹ And this *is* the thing that you shall do: You shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman who has known a man intimately. ¹² So they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead four hundred [400] young virgins who had not known a man intimately; and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. ¹³ Then the whole congregation sent *word* to the children of Benjamin who *were* at the rock of Rimmon, and announced peace to them. ¹⁴ So Benjamin came back at that time, and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh Gilead; and yet they had not found enough for them. ¹⁵ And the people grieved for Benjamin, because **the LORD** had made a void in the tribes of Israel.

Another 200 Wives Needed

¹⁶ ¶ Then the elders of the congregation said,
“What shall we do for wives for those who remain, since the women of Benjamin have been destroyed?” ¹⁷
And they said,
“*There must be an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe may not be destroyed from Israel.* ¹⁸ However, we cannot give them wives from our daughters, for the children of Israel have sworn an oath, saying, ‘Cursed *be* the one who gives a wife to Benjamin.’” ¹⁹
Then they said,

“In fact, *there is* a yearly feast of **the LORD** in Shiloh, which *is* north of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah.” ²⁰
Therefore they instructed the children of Benjamin, saying,
“Go, lie in wait in the vineyards, ²¹ and watch; and just when the daughters of Shiloh come out to perform their dances, then come out from the vineyards, and every man catch a wife for himself from the daughters of Shiloh; then go to the land of Benjamin. ²² Then it shall be, when their fathers or their brothers come to us to complain, that we will say to them, ‘Be kind to them for our sakes, because we did not take a wife for any of them in the war; for *it is not as though* you have given the *women* to them at this time, making yourselves guilty of your oath.” ²³ [A conspiracy to violate an oath by a technicality!]
And the children of Benjamin did so; they took enough wives for their number from those who danced, whom they caught. Then they went and returned to their inheritance, and they rebuilt the cities and dwelt in them. ²⁴

So the children of Israel departed from there at that time, every man to his tribe and family; they went out from there, every man to his inheritance. ²⁵
In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. [cf. 17:6, 18:1, 19:1]

April 2

Judges 1

Judah, Simeon Attack Canaanites

^{1:1} ¶ Now after the death of Joshua [~2581 AB: Jos 24:29] [new history really starts at 2:10, after a recap and some additional information] it came to pass that the children of Israel asked **the LORD**, saying,
“Who shall be first to go up for us against the Canaanites to fight against them?” ²
And **the LORD** said,
“**Judah shall go up. Indeed I have delivered the land into his hand.**” ³
So **Judah** said to **Simeon** his brother,
“Come up with me to my allotted territory, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I will likewise go with you to your allotted territory.” [Because the territory of Simeon was within that of Judah: Jos 19:1.] And Simeon went with him. ⁴ Then Judah went up, and **the LORD** delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand; and they killed ten thousand [10,000] men at Bezek [“lightning”]. ⁵ And they found Adoni-Bezek [“my lord is lightning”] in Bezek, and fought against him; and they defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. ⁶ Then Adoni-Bezek fled, and they pursued him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and big toes. ⁷ And Adoni-Bezek said,
“Seventy [70] kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off used to gather scraps under my table; as I have done, so **God** has repaid me.”

Then they brought him to **Jerusalem** [“teaching of peace”], and there he died. ⁸ Now the children of Judah fought against Jerusalem and took it; they struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire.

[Almost verbatim starting 8 lines below with the parallel to the right:]

9 ¶ And afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who dwelt in the mountains, **in the South**, and in the lowland. 10 Then **Judah** went against the Canaanites who dwelt in **Hebron**. (Now the name of Hebron was formerly Kirjath Arba.)

And they killed

Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.

11 From there they went against the inhabitants of **Debir**. (The name of Debir was formerly Kirjath Sepher.)

12 Then Caleb said, “**Whoever attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give my daughter Achsah [“ankle chain” or “anklet”] as wife.**” 13

And Othniel [“lion of God”] the son of Kenaz [“hunter”], Caleb’s younger brother [so her uncle], took it; so he gave him his daughter Achsah as wife.

14 Now it **happened**, when she came to him, that she **urged** him to ask her father for a field. And she dismounted from *her* donkey, and Caleb said to her,

“**What do you wish?**” 15

So she said to him,

“**Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water.**”

And **Caleb** gave her the upper springs and the lower springs. [Significance?]

[So this happened earlier in Joshua and is recapped here:]

Part of Judah for Caleb Joshua 15:

13 ¶ Now to **Caleb** the son of Jephunneh he gave a share among the children of **Judah**, according to the commandment of the **LORD** to Joshua, namely,

Kirjath Arba, which is Hebron (*Arba* was the father of Anak). 14 **Caleb** drove out the three [3] sons of **Anak** from there: **Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai**, the children of Anak.

15 Then he went up from there to the inhabitants of

Debir (formerly the name of Debir was Kirjath Sepher).

16 And Caleb said, “**He who attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give Achsah [“ankle chain” or “anklet”] my daughter as wife.**” 17

So Othniel [“lion of God”] the son of Kenaz [“hunter”], the brother of Caleb [so her uncle], took it; and he gave him Achsah his daughter as wife.

18 Now it **was so**, when she came to him, that she **persuaded** him to ask her father for a field. So she dismounted from *her* donkey, and Caleb said to her,

“**What do you wish?**” 19

She answered,

“**Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water.**”

So he gave her the upper springs and the lower springs. [Significance?]

16 Now the children of the Kenite [“smith”], Moses’ father-in-law [Jethro], went up from the City of Palms with the children of **Judah** into the Wilderness of Judah, which lies in the South near Arad [“a wild ass”]; and they went and dwelt among the people. 17 And **Judah** went with his brother **Simeon**, and they attacked the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath [“watchtower”], and utterly destroyed it. So the name of the city was called Hormah [“devotion”]. 18 Also **Judah** took Gaza [“the strong”] with its territory, Ashkelon [“the fire of infamy: I shall be weighed”] with its territory, and Ekron [“emigration” or “torn up by the roots”] with its territory. 19 So **the LORD** was with **Judah**. And they drove out the mountaineers,

Failures of Tribes to Drive Out ...

but they **could not drive out** the inhabitants of the lowland, because they had chariots of iron. 20 And they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had said. Then **he expelled from there the three [3] sons of Anak.**

21 ¶ But the children of **Benjamin** **did not drive out** the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem; so the **Jebusites** dwell with the children of **Benjamin** in Jerusalem to **this day.**

Joshua 15:63

As for the **Jebusites**, the inhabitants of **Jerusalem**, the children of **Judah** **could not drive them out**; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of **Judah** at Jerusalem to **this day.**

Exception: Joseph – Bethel (Luz)

22 And the house of **Joseph** also went up against Bethel, and **the LORD** was with them. 23 So the house of Joseph sent men to spy out Bethel [“house of God”]. (The name of the city was formerly Luz [“almond tree”].) 24 And when the spies saw a man coming out of the city, they said to him, “**Please show us the entrance to the city, and we will show you mercy.**” 25 So he showed them the entrance to the city, and they struck the city with the edge of the sword; but they let the man and all his family go. 26 And the man went to the land of the Hittites, built a city, and called its name Luz, which is its name to this day. 27

However, **Manasseh**

did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shean [“house of ease”] and its villages, or Taanach [“sandy”] and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor [“generation”] and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam [“devouring the people”] and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo [“place of crowds”] and its villages;

for the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land. 28 And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites under tribute, but did not completely drive them out. 29

Nor did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer [“portion”];

so the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them. 30

Nor did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron [*“incense”*] or the inhabitants of Nahalol [*“pasture”*]; so the Canaanites dwelt among them, and were put under tribute. 31

Nor did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Acco [*“his straitness”*] or the inhabitants of Sidon [*“hunting”*], or of Ahlab [*“fertile place”*], Achzib [*“desceit”*], Helbah [*“fertile”*], Aphik [*“enclosure”*], or Rehob [*“broad place”*]. 32 So the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they **did not drive them out**. 33

Nor did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh [*“house of the sun”* or *“sun-temple”*] or the inhabitants of Beth Anath [*“house of response (or affliction)”*]; but they dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land. Nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath were put under tribute to them. 34

And the Amorites forced the children of **Dan** into the mountains, for they would not allow them to come down to the valley; 35 and the Amorites were determined to dwell in

Mount Heres [*Mount “the sun”*], in Aijalon [*“field of deer”*], and in Shaalvim [*“place of foxes”*]; yet when the strength of the house of Joseph became greater, they were put under tribute. 36 Now the boundary of the Amorites was from the Ascent of Akrabbim [*“scorpions”*], from Sela [*“crag (or cliff or rock)”*], and upward.

Judges 2

Consequences of Disobedience

2:1 ¶ Then **the Angel of the LORD** came up from Gilgal [*where He had been meeting with Joshua*] to Bochim, and said: “I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, ‘I will never break **My covenant** with you. 2 And you shall make **no covenant** with the inhabitants of this land; you shall **tear down their altars**.’ But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? 3 Therefore I also said, ‘I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be **thorns in your side**, and their gods shall be a snare to you.’” 4 So it was, when **the Angel of the LORD** spoke these words to all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept. 5 Then they called the name of that place Bochim [*“weeping”*]; and they sacrificed there to **the LORD**.

[Three parallels displayed sequentially next:]

Joshua Dismisses the People

6 ¶ And when **Joshua** had dismissed the people, the children of Israel went **each to his own inheritance** to possess the land.

Joshua 24:

28 So **Joshua** let the people depart, **each to his own inheritance**.

Israel Served the LORD for a While

7 So the people served **the LORD** all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the **elders** who outlived Joshua, who had **seen** all the **great** works of **the LORD**, which He had done for Israel.

Joshua 24:31

Israel Served the LORD for a While

31 Israel served **the LORD** all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the **elders** who outlived Joshua, who had **known** all the **_____** works of **the LORD**, which He had done for Israel.

Joshua Dies

8 **Now** Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of **the LORD**, died at one hundred and ten years [*110*] old. 9 And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at **Timnath Heres** [*“portion of the sun”*], _____ in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash.

Joshua 24:29

Joshua Dies

29 ¶ **Now it came to pass after these things that** Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of **the LORD**, **died** at one hundred and ten [*110*] years old [*if Joshua was about the same age as Caleb (we are never told but they were spies together into Canaan), this*

would be in about 2581 AB: 14:7]. 30 And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at **Timnath Serah** [*“abundant provision”*], which is in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Gaash [*“quaking”*]. [*1:1 said this was after Joshua’s death, but obviously it is starting with a recap. Next is the history following.]*

Overview of After Joshua’s Death:

Israel Falls Away; Consequences

10 When all that generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation arose after them who did not know **the LORD** nor the work that He had done for Israel [*cf. 2:7*]. 11 Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of **the LORD**, and served the **baals** [*“lords”; supreme male divinities of the Phoenicians or Canaanites*]; 12 and they forsook **the LORD God of their fathers**, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; and they followed **other gods** from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they bowed down to them; and they provoked **the LORD** to anger. 13 They forsook **the LORD** and served Baal and the Ashtoreths [*“Stars”; goddesses in the Canaanite religion, usually related to fertility cult*]. 14 And the anger of **the LORD** was hot against Israel. So He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who despoiled them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. 15 Wherever they went out, the hand of

the LORD was against them for calamity, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed. 16

The LORD Raises Up Deliverers

Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them. 17 Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the harlot with other gods, and bowed down to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so. 18 And when the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them. 19 And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way. 20 Then the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He said,

“Because this nation has transgressed My covenant that I commanded their fathers, and has not heeded My voice, 21 I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died, 22 [reason:] so that through them I may test Israel, whether they will keep the ways of the

LORD, to walk in them as their fathers kept them, or not.”

23 Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out immediately; nor did He [earlier] deliver them into the hand of Joshua.

Judges 3

The Nations Not Driven Out

3:1 ¶ Now these are the nations that the LORD left, [why?] that He might test Israel by them, that is, all who had not known any of the wars in Canaan [so this sounds like about 40 years (as in the desert) after Joshua died?] 2 (this was only so that the generations of the children of Israel might be taught to know war [be skilled in warfare], at least those who had not formerly known it), 3 namely, five lords of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites who dwelt in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal Hermon to the entrance of Hamath. 4 And they were left, that He might test Israel by them, to know whether they would obey the commandments of the LORD, which He had commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

Israel Repeatedly Fails the Test:

Israel Sins: Mesopotamia Oppresses

5 Thus the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 6 And they took their daughters to be their wives, and they gave their daughters

to their sons; and they served their gods.

7 So [in this way] the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD. They forgot the LORD their God, and served the Baals and Asherahs.

8 ¶ Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of Cushan-Rishathaim [“twice-wicked Chushan”] king of Mesopotamia [or Aram-Naharaim: “Aram of the two rivers” (the Euphrates and Tigris)]; and the children of Israel served Cushan-Rishathaim eight [8] years. [8 years so far.]

Deliverer: 1st Judge Othniel

9 When the children of Israel cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the children of Israel, who delivered them: Othniel [“lion of God”] the son of Kenaz [“hunter”], Caleb’s younger brother. 10 The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD delivered Cushan-Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed over Cushan-Rishathaim. 11 So the land had rest for forty [40] years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died. [8 + 40 years, so 48 total.]

Israel Sins: Moab Oppresses

12 ¶ And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD strengthened Eglon [“calf-like”] king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight

of the LORD. 13 Then he gathered to himself the people of Ammon and Amalek, went and defeated Israel, and took possession of the City of Palms. 14 So the children of Israel served Eglon king of Moab eighteen [18] years. [48 + 18 years, so 66 total.]

Deliverer: 2nd Judge Ehud

15 But when the children of Israel cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for them: Ehud [“I will give thanks: I will be praised”] the son of Gera [“a grain”], the Benjamite, a left-handed man. By him the children of Israel sent tribute to Eglon king of Moab. 16 Now Ehud made himself a dagger (it was double-edged and a cubit [~18 inches] in length) and fastened it under his clothes on his right thigh. 17 So he brought the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. (Now Eglon was a very fat man.) 18 And when he had finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who had carried the tribute. 19 But he himself turned back from the stone images that were at Gilgal, and said, “I have a secret message for you, O king.” He said, “Keep silence!” And all who attended him went out from him. 20 And Ehud came to him (now he was sitting upstairs in his cool private chamber). Then Ehud said, “I have a message from God for you.”

So he arose from *his* seat. 21 Then Ehud reached with his left hand, took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly. 22 Even the hilt went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the dagger out of his belly; and his entrails came out. 23 Then Ehud went out through the porch and shut the doors of the upper room behind him and locked them. 24 When he had gone out, Eglon's servants came to look, and *to their* surprise, the doors of the upper room were locked. So they said,

“He is probably attending to his needs in the cool chamber.” 25

So they waited till they were embarrassed, and still he had not opened the doors of the upper room. Therefore they took the key and opened *them*. And there was their master, fallen dead on the floor. 26 But Ehud had escaped while they delayed, and passed beyond the stone images and escaped to Seirah [*“the shaggy”*]. 27 And it happened, when he arrived, that he blew the trumpet in the mountains of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mountains; and he led them. 28 Then he said to them, “Follow me, for **the LORD** has delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand.”

So they went down after him, seized the fords of the Jordan leading to Moab, and did not allow anyone to cross over. 29 And at that time they killed about ten thousand [*~10,000*] men of Moab, all stout men of valor;

not a man escaped. 30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had **rest for eighty [80] years.** [*166 + 80 years, so 146 total.*]

The Philistines: 3rd Judge Shamgar

31 ¶ After him was **Shamgar** [*“sword”*] the son of Anath [*“answer”*], who killed six hundred [*600*] men of the Philistines with an ox goad; and he also delivered Israel. [*No addition time noted, so still 146 years total, but possibly more.*]

April 3

Judges 4

Israel Sins: The Canaanites Oppress

4:1 ¶ When Ehud was dead, the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of **the LORD**. 2 So **the LORD** sold them into the hand of Jabin [*“whom God observes”*] king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor [*“castle”*]. The commander of his army was Sisera [*“battle array”*], who dwelt in Harosheth [*“woodland”*] Hagoyim [*“nations”*]. 3 And the children of Israel cried out to **the LORD**; for Jabin had nine hundred [*900*] chariots of iron, and for **twenty [20] years** he harshly oppressed the children of Israel. [*146 + 20 years, so 166 total.*]

Deliverer: 4th Judge Deborah

4 ¶ Now Deborah [*“bee”*], a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth [*“torches”*], was judging Israel at that time. 5 And she would sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah [*“hill”*] and

Bethel [*“house of God”*] in the mountains of **Ephraim**. And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.

6 Then she sent and called for Barak [*“lightning (flash)”*] the son of Abinoam [*“my father is delight”*] from Kedesh [*“holy place”*] in Naphtali, and said to him, “Has not **the LORD God of Israel** commanded, ‘Go and deploy troops at Mount Tabor [*“mound”*]; take with you ten thousand [*10,000*] men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun; 7 and against you I will deploy Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude at the River Kishon [*“winding”*]; and I will deliver him into your hand?’”

8 And Barak said to her,

“If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go!” 9

So she said,

“I will surely go with you; nevertheless there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking, for **the LORD** will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.”

Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh.

10 ¶ And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; he went up with ten thousand [*10,000*] men under his command, and Deborah went up with him. 11 Now Heber [*“comrad”*] the Kenite, of the children of Hobab [*“cherished”*; AKA Reuel, Jethro] the father-in-law of Moses, had separated himself from the Kenites and pitched his tent near the terebinth tree at

Zaanaim [*“removings”*], which is beside Kedesh.

12 And they reported to Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor. 13 So Sisera gathered together all his chariots, nine hundred [*900*] chariots of iron, and all the people who *were* with him, from Harosheth Hagoyim to the River Kishon. 14 Then Deborah said to Barak, “Up! For this is the day in which **the LORD** has delivered Sisera into your hand. Has not **the LORD** gone out before you?”

So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand [*10,000*] men following him. 15 And **the LORD** routed Sisera and all *his* chariots and all *his* army with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera alighted from *his* chariot and fled away on foot. 16 But Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Harosheth Hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; **not a man was left.**

17 ¶ However, Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of Jael [*“mountain goat”*], the wife of Heber the Kenite; for *there was* peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. 18 And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, “Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; do not fear.”

And when he had turned aside with her into the tent, she covered him with a blanket. 19 Then he said to her,

“Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty.”

So she opened a jug of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him. 20 And he said to her,

“Stand at the door of the tent, and if any man comes and inquires of you, and says,

‘Is there any man here?’

you shall say,

‘No.’” 21

Then Jael, Heber’s wife, took a tent peg and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it went down into the ground; for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died. 22 And then, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said to him, “Come, I will show you the man whom you seek.”

And when he went into her tent, there lay Sisera, dead with the peg in his temple. 23 So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the children of Israel. 24 And the hand of the children of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

Judges 5

The Song of Deborah and Barak

5:1 ¶ Then Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam sang on that day, saying:

2 “

When leaders lead in Israel,

When the people

willingly offer themselves,

Bless the LORD! 3

Hear, O kings! Give ear, O princes!

I, even I, will sing to the LORD;

I will sing praise to

the LORD God of Israel. 4

LORD, when You went out from Seir,

When You marched from

the field of Edom,

The land [earth] trembled and

the heavens poured,

The clouds also poured, water; 5

The mountains gushed

before the LORD,

This Sinai,

before the LORD God of Israel.

6 ¶

In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath,

In the days of Jael,

The highways were deserted,

And the travelers walked

along the byways. 7

Village life ceased, it ceased in Israel,

Until I, Deborah, arose

They chose new gods;

Then there was war in the gates;

Not a shield or spear was seen among

forty thousand [40,000] in Israel. 9

My heart is with the rulers of Israel

Who offered themselves willingly

with the people.

Bless the LORD! 10

Speak, you who ride on white donkeys,

Who sit in judges’ attire,

And who walk along the road. 11

Far from the noise of the archers,

among the watering places,

There they shall recount

the righteous acts of the LORD,

The righteous acts for

His villagers in Israel;

Then the people of the LORD

shall go down to the gates.

12 ¶

Awake, awake, Deborah!

Awake, awake, sing a song!

Arise, Barak, and

lead your captives away,

O son of Abinoam! 13

Then the survivors came down,

the people against the nobles;

The LORD came down for me

against the mighty. 14

From Ephraim were those

whose roots were in Amalek.

After you, Benjamin, with your peoples,

From Machir rulers came down,

And from Zebulun those

who bear the recruiter’s staff. 15

And the princes of Issachar

were with Deborah;

As Issachar, so was Barak

Sent into the valley under his command;

Among the divisions of Reuben

There were great resolves of heart. 16

Why did you sit among the sheepfolds,

To hear the pipings for the flocks?

The divisions of Reuben have

great searchings of heart. 17

Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan,

And why did Dan remain on ships?

Asher continued at the seashore,

And stayed by his inlets. 18

Zebulun is a people who jeopardized

their lives to the point of death,

Naphtali also,

on the heights of the battlefield. 19

The kings came and fought,

Then the kings of Canaan fought

In Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo;

They took no spoils of silver. 20

They fought from the heavens;

The stars from their courses

fought against Sisera. 21

The torrent of Kishon

swept them away,

That ancient torrent,

the torrent of Kishon.

O my soul, march on in strength! 22

Then the horses’ hooves pounded,

The galloping, galloping of his steeds. 23

Curse Meroz [“refuge”],

said the Angel of the LORD,

‘Curse its inhabitants bitterly,

Because they did not come

to the help of the LORD,

To the help of the LORD

against the mighty.’

24 ¶

Most blessed among women is Jael,

The wife of Heber the Kenite;

Blessed is she among women in tents. 25

He asked for water, she gave milk;

She brought out cream in a lordly bowl. 26

She stretched her hand to the tent peg,

Her right hand

to the workmen’s hammer;

She pounded Sisera,

she pierced his head,

She split and struck

through his temple. 27

At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still;

At her feet he sank, he fell;

Where he sank, there he fell dead. 28

The mother of Sisera

looked through the window,

And cried out through the lattice,

‘Why is his chariot so long in coming?

Why tarries

the clatter of his chariots?’ 29

Her wisest ladies answered her,

Yes, she answered herself, 30

Are they not

finding and dividing the spoil:

To every man a girl or two;

For Sisera, plunder of dyed garments,

Plunder of garments

embroidered and dyed,

Two pieces of dyed embroidery
for the neck of the looter? ’ 31
Thus let all Your enemies perish,
O LORD!

But those who love Him *be* like the sun
When it comes out in full strength.
”

So the land had rest for forty [40] years.
[166 + 40 years, so 206 total.]

Judges 6

Israel Sins: Midian Oppresses

6:1 ¶ Then the children of Israel did
evil in the sight of the LORD. So the
LORD delivered them into the hand of
Midian for seven [7] years, 2 and the
hand of Midian prevailed against Is-
rael. Because of the Midianites, the
children of Israel made for themselves
the dens, the caves, and the strong-
holds that are in the mountains. 3 So
it was, whenever Israel had sown,
Midianites would come up, also
Amalekites and the people of the East
would come up, against them. 4 Then
they would encamp against them and
destroy the produce of the land [earth]
as far as Gaza, and leave no suste-
nance for Israel, neither sheep nor ox
nor donkey. 5 For they would come
up with their livestock and their tents,
coming in as numerous as locusts;
both they and their camels were with-
out number; and they would enter the
land to destroy it. 6 So Israel was
greatly impoverished because of the
Midianites, and the children of Israel
cried out to the LORD.

Deliverer: 5th Judge Gideon

7 ¶ And it came to pass, when the chil-
dren of Israel cried out to the LORD be-
cause of the Midianites, 8 that the
LORD sent a prophet to the children of
Israel, who said to them,
“Thus says the LORD God of Israel:
‘I brought you up from Egypt and
brought you out of the house of bond-
age; 9 and I delivered you out of the
hand of the Egyptians and out of the
hand of all who oppressed you, and
drove them out before you and gave
you their land. 10 Also I said to you,
‘I am the LORD your God; do not fear
the gods of the Amorites, in whose
land you dwell.’ But you have not
obeyed My voice.”

11 ¶ Now the Angel of the LORD came
and sat under the terebinth tree that
was in Ophrah [“fawn”], which be-
longed to Joash [“given by the LORD”]
the Abiezrite [“my father is help”],
while his son Gideon [“hewer”]
threshed wheat in the winepress, in
order to hide it from the Midianites. 12
And the Angel of the LORD appeared
to him, and said to him,
“The LORD is with you, you mighty
man of valor!” 13
Gideon said to Him,
“O my lord, if the LORD is with us,
why then has all this happened to us?
And where are all His miracles that
our fathers told us about, saying,
‘Did not the LORD bring us up from
Egypt?’
But now the LORD has forsaken us and
delivered us into the hands of the
Midianites.” 14

Then the LORD turned to him and said,
“Go in this might of yours, and you
shall save Israel from the hand of the
Midianites. Have I not sent you?” 15
So he said to Him,
“O my Lord, how can I save Israel?
Indeed my clan is the weakest in Ma-
nasseh, and I am the least in my fa-
ther’s house.” 16
And the LORD said to him,
“Surely I will be with you, and you
shall defeat the Midianites as one
man.” 17

Then he said to Him,
“If now I have found favor in Your
sight, then show me a sign that it is
You who talk with me. 18 Do not de-
part from here, I pray, until I come to
You and bring out my offering and set
it before You.”

And He said,
“I will wait until you come back.” 19
So Gideon went in and prepared a
young goat, and unleavened bread
from an ephah of flour. The meat he
put in a basket, and he put the broth in
a pot; and he brought them out to Him
under the terebinth tree and presented
them. 20 The Angel of God said to him,
“Take the meat and the unleavened
bread and lay them on this rock, and
pour out the broth.”

And he did so. 21 Then the Angel of
the LORD put out the end of the staff
that was in His hand, and touched the
meat and the unleavened bread; and
fire rose out of the rock and consumed
the meat and the unleavened bread.
And the Angel of the LORD departed
out of his sight. 22 Now Gideon per-

ceived that He was the Angel of the
LORD. So Gideon said,
“Alas, O Lord God [Adonai YHWH]!
For I have seen the Angel of the LORD
face to face.” 23
Then the LORD said to him,
“Peace be with you; do not fear, you
shall not die.” 24
So Gideon built an altar there to the
LORD, and called it The-LORD-Is-Peace
[YHWH Shalom]. To this day it is still
in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

25 ¶ Now it came to pass the same
night that the LORD said to him,
“Take your father’s young bull, the
second bull of seven [7] years old,
and tear down the altar of Baal that
your father has, and cut down the
wooden image that is beside it; 26 and
build an altar to the LORD your God on
top of this rock in the proper arrange-
ment, and take the second bull and of-
fer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of
the image that you shall cut down.” 27
So Gideon took ten men from among
his servants and did as the LORD had
said to him. But because he feared his
father’s household and the men of the
city too much to do it by day, he did it
by night. 28 And when the men of the
city arose early in the morning, there
was the altar of Baal, torn down; and
the wooden image that was beside it
was cut down, and the second bull
was being offered on the altar that had
been built. 29 So they said to one an-
other,
“Who has done this thing?”
And when they had inquired and
asked, they said,

“Gideon the son of Joash has done this thing.”³⁰

Then the men of the city said to Joash, “Bring out your son, that he may die, because he has torn down the altar of Baal, and because he has cut down the wooden image that *was* beside it.”³¹

But Joash said to all who stood against him,

“Would you plead for Baal? Would you save him? Let the one who would plead for him be put to death by morning! If he is a god, let him plead for himself, because his altar has been torn down!”³²

Therefore on that day he [*Joash, his father*] called him [*Gideon, his son*] Jerubbaal [*“let Baal contend”*], saying,

“Let Baal plead against him, because he has torn down his altar.”

³³ ¶ Then all the Midianites and Amalekites, the people of the East, gathered together; and they crossed over and encamped in the Valley of Jezreel.³⁴ But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; then he blew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites gathered behind him.³⁵ And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, who also gathered behind him. He also sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.³⁶ So Gideon said to God, “If You will save Israel by my hand as You have said —³⁷ look, I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall

know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said.”³⁸

And it was so. When he rose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece together, he wrung the dew out of the fleece, a bowlful of water.³⁹ Then Gideon said to God, “Do not be angry with me, but let me speak just once more: Let me test, I pray, just once more with the fleece; let it now be dry only on the fleece, but on all the ground let there be dew.”⁴⁰

And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, but there was dew on all the ground.

April 4

Judges 7

^{7:1} ¶ Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him rose early and encamped beside the well of Harod, so that the camp of the Midianites was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley.² And the LORD said to Gideon, “The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’³ Now therefore, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, ‘Whoever is fearful and afraid, let him turn and depart at once from Mount Gilead.’”

And twenty-two thousand [22,000] of the people returned, and ten thousand [10,000] remained.⁴ But the LORD said to Gideon,

“The people are still too many; bring them down to the water, and I will test them for you there. Then it will be, that of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall go with you’, the same shall go with you; and of whomever I say to you, ‘This one shall not go with you’, the same shall not go.”⁵

So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, “Everyone who laps from the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set apart by himself; likewise everyone who gets down on his knees to drink.”⁶

And the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred [300] men; but all the rest of the people got down on their knees to drink water.⁷

Then the LORD said to Gideon, “By the three hundred [300] men who lapped I will save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand. Let all the other people go, every man to his place.”⁸

So the people took provisions and their trumpets in their hands. And he sent away all the rest of Israel, every man to his tent, and retained those three hundred [300] men. Now the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

⁹ ¶ It happened on the same night that the LORD said to him, “Arise, go down against the camp, for I have delivered it into your hand.¹⁰ But if you are afraid to go down, go down to the camp with Purah [*“bough”*] your servant,¹¹ and you shall hear

what they say; and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to go down against the camp.”

Then he went down with Purah his servant to the outpost of the armed men who were in the camp.¹² Now the Midianites and Amalekites, all the people of the East, were lying in the valley as numerous as locusts; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the seashore in multitude.¹³ And when Gideon had come, there was a man telling a dream to his companion. He said,

“I have had a dream: To my surprise, a loaf of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian; it came to a tent and struck it so that it fell and overturned, and the tent collapsed.”¹⁴

Then his companion answered and said,

“This is nothing else but the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel! Into his hand God has delivered Midian and the whole camp.”¹⁵

And so it was, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, that he worshiped. He returned to the camp of Israel, and said, “Arise, for the LORD has delivered the camp of Midian into your hand.”

¹⁶ ¶ Then he divided the three hundred [300] men into three companies, and he put a trumpet into every man’s hand, with empty pitchers, and torches inside the pitchers.¹⁷ And he said to them,

“Look at me and do likewise; watch, and when I come to the edge of the camp you shall do as I do:¹⁸ When I

blow the trumpet, I and all who *are* with me, then you also blow the trumpets on every side of the whole camp, and say,

“*The sword of [cf. v20] the LORD and of Gideon!*”¹⁹

So Gideon and the hundred [100] men who *were* with him came to the outpost of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just as they had posted the watch; and they blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers that *were* in their hands.²⁰ Then the three [3] companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers — they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing — and they cried,

“*The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!*”²¹

And every man stood in his place all around the camp; and the whole army ran and cried out and fled.²² When the three hundred [300] blew the trumpets, **the LORD** set every man’s sword against his companion throughout the whole camp; and the army fled to Beth-Shittah [*“house of the acacia tree”*], toward Zererah [*“oppression”*], as far as the border of Abel Meholah [*“meadow of dancing”*], by Tabbath [*“celebrated”*].

²³ ¶ And the men of Israel gathered together from **Naphtali**, **Asher**, and all **Manasseh**, and pursued the Midianites.²⁴ Then Gideon sent messengers throughout all the mountains of **Ephraim**, saying,

“Come down against the Midianites, and seize from them the watering places as far as Beth Barah [*“house of (the) ford”*] and the Jordan.”

Then all the men of Ephraim gathered together and seized the watering places as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan.²⁵ And they captured two princes of the Midianites, Oreb [*“raven”*] and Zeeb [*“wolf”*]. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb. They pursued Midian and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side of the Jordan.

Judges 8

8:1 ¶ Now the men of Ephraim said to him,

“Why have you done this to us by not calling us when you went to fight with the Midianites?”

And they reprimanded him sharply.² So he said to them,

“What have I done now in comparison with you? *Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?*³ God has delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. And what was I able to do in comparison with you?”

Then their anger toward him subsided when he said that.

⁴ ¶ When Gideon came to the Jordan, he and the three hundred [300] men who *were* with him crossed over, exhausted but still in pursuit.⁵ Then he said to the men of **Succoth** [*“booths”*], “Please give loaves of bread to the people who follow me, for they are

exhausted, and I am pursuing Zebah [*“deprived of protection”*] and Zalmunna [*“deprived of protection (?)”*], kings of Midian.”⁶

And the leaders of Succoth said, “Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand, that we should give bread to your army?”⁷

So Gideon said, “For this cause, when **the LORD** has delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, then I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers!”⁸

Then he went up from there to Penuel [*“facing God”*] and spoke to them in the same way. And the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered.⁹ So he also spoke to the men of Penuel, saying,

“When I come back in peace, I will tear down this tower!”¹⁰

Now Zebah and Zalmunna *were* at Karkor [*“foundation”*], and their armies with them, about fifteen thousand [~15,000], all who were left of all the army of the people of the East; for one hundred and twenty thousand [120,000] men who drew the sword had fallen.¹¹ Then Gideon went up by the road of those who dwell in tents on the east of Nobah [*“barking”*] and Jogbehah [*“lofty”*]; and he attacked the army while the camp felt secure.¹² When Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued them; and he took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and routed the whole army.¹³ Then Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle, from the Ascent of Heres [*“sun”*].¹⁴ And he caught a young

man of the men of Succoth and interrogated him; and he wrote down for him the leaders of Succoth and its elders, seventy-seven [77] men.¹⁵ Then he came to the men of Succoth and said,

“Here are Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you ridiculed me, saying, ‘Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand, that we should give bread to your weary men?’”¹⁶

And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he taught the men of Succoth.¹⁷ Then he tore down the tower of Penuel and killed the men of the city.

¹⁸ ¶ And he said to Zebah and Zalmunna,

“What kind of men *were they* whom you killed at Tabor?”

So they answered, “As you *are*, so *were they*; each one resembled the son of a king [*had the bearing of a king*].”¹⁹

Then he said,

“They *were* my brothers, the sons of my mother. As **the LORD** lives, if you had let them live, I would not kill you.”²⁰

And he said to Jether [*“abundance”*] his firstborn,

“Rise, kill them!”

But the youth would not draw his sword; for he was afraid, because he *was* still a youth.²¹ So Zebah and Zalmunna said,

“Rise yourself, and kill us; for as a man *is*, so *is* his strength.”

So Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the crescent ornaments that *were* on their camels' necks.

22 ¶ Then the men of Israel said to Gideon,

“Rule over us, both you and your son, and your grandson also; for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian.” 23

But Gideon said to them,

“I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you.” [Gideon knew that God was King of Israel.] 24

Then Gideon said to them,

“I would like to make a request of you, that each of you would give me the earrings from his plunder.”

For they had gold earrings, because they [the Midianites] were Ishmaelites. 25 So they answered,

“We will gladly give them.”

And they spread out a garment, and each man threw into it the earrings from his plunder. 26 Now the weight of the gold earrings that he requested was one thousand seven hundred [1,700] shekels of gold, besides the crescent ornaments, pendants, and purple robes that *were* on the kings of Midian, and besides the chains that *were* around their camels' necks. 27

Then Gideon made it into an ephod and set it up in his city, Ophrah [“fawn”]. And all Israel played the harlot with it there. It became a snare to Gideon and to his house. 28

Thus Midian was subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted their heads no more. And the country was quiet for forty [40] years in the days of Gideon.

[206 + 47 years, so 253 total.]

Gideon's 70 + 1 Sons:

6th Judge Abimelech

29 ¶ Then Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and dwelt in his own house. 30 Gideon had seventy [70] sons who were his own offspring, for he had many wives. 31 And his concubine who was in Shechem [“back” or “shoulder”] also bore him a son [the 71st], whose name he called Abimelech [“my father is king”]. 32 Now Gideon the son of Joash died at a good old age, and was buried in the tomb of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. 33

So it was, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel again played the harlot with the Baals, and made Baal-Berith [“lord of the covenant”] their god. 34 Thus the children of Israel did not remember the LORD their God, who had delivered them from the hands of all their enemies on every side; 35 nor did they show kindness to the house of Jerubbaal (Gideon) in accordance with the good he had done for Israel.

Judges 9

9:1 ¶ Then Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem, to his mother's brothers, and spoke with

them and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying, 2 “Please speak in the hearing of all the men of Shechem:

“Which is better for you, that all seventy [70] of the sons of Jerubbaal reign over you, or that one reign over you?”

Remember that I *am* your own flesh and bone.” 3

And his mother's brothers spoke all these words concerning him in the hearing of all the men of Shechem; and their heart was inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, “He is our brother.” 4

So they gave him seventy [70] shekels of silver from the temple of Baal-Berith, with which Abimelech hired worthless and reckless men; and they followed him. 5 Then he went to his father's house at Ophrah and killed his brothers, the seventy [70] sons of Jerubbaal, on one stone. But Jotham [“YHWH is perfect”] the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left [the 70th], because he hid himself. 6 And all the men of Shechem gathered together, all of Beth Millo [“house of rampart (or mound)”], and they went and made Abimelech king beside the terebinth tree at the pillar that *was* in Shechem.

7 ¶ Now when they told Jotham, he went and stood on top of Mount Gerizim [“cuttings off”], and lifted his voice and cried out. And he said to them:

“Listen to me, you men of Shechem, That God may listen to you! 8

The trees once went forth to anoint a king over them.

And they said to the olive tree, ‘Reign over us!’ 9

But the olive tree said to them, ‘Should I cease giving my oil, With which they honor God and men,

And go to sway over trees?’ 10

Then the trees said to the fig tree, ‘You come *and* reign over us!’ 11

But the fig tree said to them, ‘Should I cease my sweetness and my good fruit,

And go to sway over trees?’ 12

Then the trees said to the vine,

‘You come *and* reign over us!’ 13

But the vine said to them,

‘Should I cease my new wine, Which cheers *both* God and men,

And go to sway over trees?’ 14

Then all the trees said to the bramble,

‘You come *and* reign over us!’ 15

And the bramble said to the trees,

‘If in truth you anoint me

As king over you,

Come, take shelter in my shade; But if not,

Let fire come out of the bramble And devour the cedars of Lebanon!’

16 Now therefore, if you have acted in truth and sincerity in making Abimelech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done to him as he deserves — 17 for my father fought for you, risked his life, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian; 18 but you have risen up against my father's house this day, and killed his seventy [70] sons on one stone, and made Abimelech, the

son of his female servant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother — 19 **if then you have acted in truth and sincerity** with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, *then* rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you. 20 But if not, let fire come from Abimelech and devour the men of Shechem and Beth Millo; and let fire come from the men of Shechem and from Beth Millo and devour Abimelech!” 21

And Jotham ran away and fled; and he went to Beer and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

April 5

22 ¶ After Abimelech had reigned over Israel **three [3] years**, 23 God sent a spirit of ill will between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech, 24 [*why, in the LORD's plan?*] that the crime *done* to the seventy [70] sons of Jerubbaal might be settled and their blood be laid on Abimelech their brother, who killed them, and on the men of Shechem, who aided him in the killing of his brothers. 25 And the men of Shechem set men in ambush against him on the tops of the mountains, and they robbed all who passed by them along that way; and it was told Abimelech. 26 Now Gaal [*“loathing”*] the son of Ebed [*“servant”*] came with his brothers and went over to Shechem; and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him. 27 So they went out

into the fields, and gathered *grapes* from their vineyards and trod *them*, and made merry. And they went into **the house of their god**, and ate and drank, and cursed Abimelech. 28 Then Gaal the son of Ebed said, “Who *is* Abimelech, and who *is* Shechem, that we should serve him? *Is he* not the son of Jerubbaal, and *is not* Zebul his officer? Serve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem; but why should we serve him? 29 If only this people were under my authority! Then I would remove Abimelech.”

So he said to Abimelech, “Increase your army and come out!” 30 When Zebul, the ruler of the city, heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, his anger was aroused. 31 And he sent messengers to Abimelech secretly, saying,

“Take note! Gaal the son of Ebed and his brothers have come to Shechem; and here they are, fortifying the city against you. 32 Now therefore, get up by night, you and the people who *are* with you, and lie in wait in the field. 33 And it shall be, as soon as the sun is up in the morning, *that you shall rise early and rush upon the city; and when he and the people who are with him come out against you, you may then do to them as you find opportunity.*” 34

So Abimelech and all the people who *were* with him rose by night, and lay in wait against Shechem in four companies. 35 When Gaal the son of Ebed went out and stood in the entrance to the city gate, Abimelech and the people who *were* with him rose from ly-

ing in wait. 36 And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, “Look, people are coming down from the tops of the mountains!” But Zebul said to him, “You see the shadows of the mountains as *if they were* men.” 37 So Gaal spoke again and said, “See, people are coming down from the center of the land, and another company is coming from the Diviners’ Terebinth Tree.” 38 Then Zebul said to him, “Where indeed *is* your mouth now, with which you said, ‘Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?’

Are not these the people whom you despised? Go out, if you will, and fight with them now.” 39 So Gaal went out, leading the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech. 40 And Abimelech chased him, and he fled from him; and many fell wounded, to the *very* entrance of the gate. 41 Then Abimelech dwelt at Arumah [*“I shall be exalted”*], and Zebul drove out Gaal and his brothers, so that they would not dwell in Shechem. 42 And it came about on the

next day that the people went out into the field, and they told Abimelech. 43 So he took his people, divided them into three companies, and lay in wait in the field. And he looked, and there were the people, coming out of the city; and he rose against them and attacked them. 44 Then Abimelech and the company that *was* with him rushed forward and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city; and the *other* two

companies rushed upon all who *were* in the fields and killed them. 45 So Abimelech fought against the city all that day; he took the city and killed the people who *were* in it; and he demolished the city and sowed it with salt. 46 Now when all the men of the tower of Shechem had heard *that*, they entered the stronghold of **the temple of the god Berith** [*“covenant”*]. 47 And it was told Abimelech that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together. 48 Then Abimelech went up to Mount Zalmon [*“shady”*], he and all the people who *were* with him. And Abimelech took an ax in his hand and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it and laid *it* on his shoulder; then he said to the people who were with him, “What you have seen me do, make haste and do as I have done.” 49 So each of the people likewise cut down his own bough and followed Abimelech, put *them* against the stronghold, and set the stronghold on fire above them, so that all the people of the tower of Shechem died, about a thousand [*~1,000*] men and women.

50 ¶ Then Abimelech went to Thebez [*“conspicuous”*], and he encamped against Thebez and took it. 51 But there was a strong tower in the city, and all the men and women — all the people of the city — fled there and shut themselves in; then they went up to the top of the tower. 52 So Abimelech came as far as the tower and fought against it; and he drew near the door of the tower to burn it with fire. 53

But a certain woman dropped an upper millstone on Abimelech's head and crushed his skull. ⁵⁴ Then he called quickly to the young man, his armorbearer, and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, lest men say of me,

"A woman killed him."

So his young man thrust him through, and he died. ⁵⁵ And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed, every man to his place. ⁵⁶

Thus God repaid the wickedness of Abimelech, which he had done to his father by killing his seventy [70] brothers. ⁵⁷ And all the evil of the men of Shechem God returned on their own heads, and on them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal. [253 + 3 years, so 256 total.]

Judges 10

7th Judge Tola ben Puah ben Dodo

^{10:1} ¶ After Abimelech there arose to save Israel Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in the mountains of Ephraim. ² He judged Israel twenty-three [23] years; and he died and was buried in Shamir.

[256 + 23 years, so 279 total.]

8th Judge Jair

³ After him arose Jair, a Gileadite; and he judged Israel twenty-two [22] years. ⁴ Now he had thirty [30] sons who rode on thirty [30] donkeys; they also had thirty [30] towns, which are called "Havoth Jair" ["villages of" "he enlightens"] to this day, which

are in the land of Gilead. ⁵ And Jair died and was buried in Camon ["raised"].

[279 + 22 years, so 301 total.]

Israel Sins: Ammon Oppresses

⁶ ¶ Then the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals ["lords"] and the Ashtoreths ["stars"], the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the people of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him. ⁷ So the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and into the hands of the people of Ammon. ⁸ From that year they harassed and oppressed the children of Israel for eighteen [18] years — [301 + 18 years, so 319 total.] all the children of Israel who were on the other side of the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, in Gilead. ⁹ Moreover the people of Ammon crossed over the Jordan to fight against Judah also, against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was severely distressed.

¹⁰ ¶ And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD, saying, "We have sinned against You, because we have both forsaken our God and served the Baals!" ¹¹

So the LORD said to the children of Israel,

"Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians and from the Amorites and from the people of Ammon and from the Philistines? ¹² Also the Sidonians and Amalekites and Maonites oppressed you; and you cried out to Me, and I delivered you from their hand. ¹³ Yet you have forsaken Me and served other gods. Therefore I will deliver you no more. ¹⁴ Go and cry out to the gods that you have chosen; let them deliver you in your time of distress." ¹⁵

And the children of Israel said to the LORD,

"We have sinned! Do to us whatever seems best to You; only deliver us this day, we pray." ¹⁶

So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD. And His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel. ¹⁷ Then the people of Ammon gathered together and encamped in Gilead. And the children of Israel assembled together and encamped in Mizpah. ¹⁸ And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said to one another, "Who is the man who will begin the fight against the people of Ammon? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

Judges 11

Deliverer: 9th Judge Jephthah

^{11:1} ¶ Now Jephthah ["he opens"] the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, but he was the son of a harlot; and Gilead begot Jephthah. ² Gilead's wife bore sons; and when his wife's

sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out, and said to him, "You shall have no inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman." ³

Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of Tob ["good"]; and worthless men banded together with Jephthah and went out raiding with him.

⁴ ¶ It came to pass after a time that the people of Ammon made war against Israel. ⁵ And so it was, when the people of Ammon made war against Israel, that the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob. ⁶ Then they said to Jephthah, "Come and be our commander, that we may fight against the people of Ammon." ⁷

So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Did you not hate me, and expel me from my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?" ⁸

And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "That is why we have turned again to you now, that you may go with us and fight against the people of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead." ⁹

So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you take me back home to fight against the people of Ammon, and the LORD delivers them to me, shall I be your head?" ¹⁰

And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “The LORD will be a witness between us, if we do not do according to your words.”¹¹ Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and commander over them; and Jephthah spoke all his words before the LORD in Mizpah [“watchtower”] [He repeated all that he (and the leaders?) had said, to entreat the LORD to help?].

¹² ¶ Now Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon, saying,

“What do you have against me, that you have come to fight against me in my land?”¹³

And the king of the people of Ammon answered the messengers of Jephthah, “Because Israel took away my land when they came up out of Egypt, from the Arnon as far as the Jabbok, and to the Jordan. Now therefore, restore those lands peaceably.”¹⁴

So Jephthah again sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon, and said to him,

“Thus says Jephthah:

‘Israel did not take away the land of Moab, nor the land of the people of Ammon [cf. De 2:16-23];¹⁶ for when Israel came up from Egypt, they walked through the wilderness as far as the Red Sea and came to Kadesh.¹⁷ Then [cf. Nu 20:14-21, De 2:1-7] Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying,

“Please let me pass through your land.”

But the king of Edom would not heed. And in like manner they sent to the king of Moab [cf. De 2:8-15], but he would not consent. So Israel remained in Kadesh.¹⁸ And they went along through the wilderness and by-passed the land of Edom and the land of Moab, came to the east side of the land of Moab, and encamped on the other side of the Arnon. But they did not enter the border of Moab, for the Arnon was the border of Moab.¹⁹ Then [cf. Nu 21:21-26] Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, king of Heshbon [“stronghold”]; and Israel said to him, “Please let us pass through your land into our place.”²⁰

But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory. So Sihon gathered all his people together, encamped in Jahaz [“trodden down”], and fought against Israel.²¹ And the LORD God of Israel delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they defeated them. Thus Israel gained possession of all the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country.

²² They took possession of all the territory of the Amorites, from the Arnon to the Jabbok [“emptying”] and from the wilderness to the Jordan.²³ And now the LORD God of Israel has dispossessed the Amorites from before His people Israel; should you then possess it? ²⁴ Will you not possess whatever Chemosh [“subduer”; the national deity of the Moabites and a god of the Ammonites; also identified with ‘Baal-peor’, ‘Baal-zebub’, ‘Mars’ and ‘Saturn’] your god gives

you to possess? So whatever the LORD our God takes possession of before us, we will possess.²⁵ And now, are you any better than Balak [“devastator”] the son of Zippor [“sparrow”], king of Moab? Did he ever strive against Israel? Did he ever fight against them? ²⁶ While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and its villages, in Aroer [“ruins”] and its villages, and in all the cities along the banks of the Arnon, for three hundred [300] years [must have begun in 2553^{AB} (Nu 20:28), but Joshua & Judges seem to indicate ~30 or more (to Joshua’s death) + 319 years since then; perhaps this is a round figure meaning less than 400 years], why did you not recover them within that time? ²⁷ Therefore I have not sinned against you, but you wronged me by fighting against me. May the LORD, the Judge, render judgment this day between the children of Israel and the people of Ammon.”²⁸

However, the king of the people of Ammon did not heed the words that Jephthah sent him.

April 6

²⁹ ¶ Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed through Mizpah of Gilead; and from Mizpah of Gilead he advanced toward the people of Ammon.³⁰ And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD, and said, “If You will indeed deliver the people of Ammon into my hands,³¹ then it

will be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the people of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD’s, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering.”³²

So Jephthah advanced toward the people of Ammon to fight against them, and the LORD delivered them into his hands.³³ And he defeated them from Aroer as far as Minnith [“distribution”] — twenty [20] cities — and to Abel Keramim [“meadow” “vineyard”], with a very great slaughter. Thus the people of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

³⁴ When Jephthah came to his house at Mizpah, there was his daughter, coming out to meet him with timbrels and dancing; and she was his only child. Besides her he had neither son nor daughter.³⁵ And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he tore his clothes, and said,

“Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low! You are among those who trouble me! For I have given my word to the LORD, and I cannot go back on it.”³⁶

So she said to him,

“My father, if you have given your word to the LORD, do to me according to what has gone out of your mouth, because the LORD has avenged you of your enemies, the people of Ammon.”³⁷

Then she said to her father, “Let this thing be done for me: let me alone for two [2] months, that I may go and wander on the mountains and bewail my virginity, my friends and I.”³⁸

So he said,
“Go.”

And he sent her away for two [2] months; and she went with her friends, and bewailed her virginity on the mountains. ³⁹ And it was so at the end of two [2] months that she returned to her father, and he carried out his vow with her that he had vowed. She knew no man. And it became a custom in Israel ⁴⁰ that the daughters of Israel went four [4] days each year to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.

Judges 12

12:1 ¶ Then the men of Ephraim gathered together, crossed over toward Zaphon, and said to Jephthah, “Why did you cross over to fight against the people of Ammon, and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house down on you with fire!” ²

And Jephthah said to them, “My people and I were in a great struggle with the people of Ammon; and when I called you, you did not deliver me out of their hands. ³ So when I saw that you would not deliver me, I took my life in my hands and crossed over against the people of Ammon; and the LORD delivered them into my hand. Why then have you come up to me this day to fight against me?” ⁴ Now Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead and fought against Ephraim. And the men of Gilead defeated Ephraim, because they said,

“You Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites and among the Manassites.” ⁵

The Gileadites seized the fords of the Jordan before the Ephraimites arrived.

And when any Ephraimite who escaped said,

“Let me cross over”,
the men of Gilead would say to him,
“Are you an Ephraimite?”

If he said,

“No”, ⁶

then they would say to him,

“Then say, ‘Shibboleth!’”

And he would say,

“Sibboleth”,

for he could not pronounce it right.

Then they would take him and kill him at the fords of the Jordan. There fell at that time forty-two thousand [42,000] Ephraimites. ⁷ And Jephthah judged Israel six [6] years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried in among the cities of Gilead. [319 + 6 years, so 325 total.]

Coming milestone: 1 Kings 6:1 Exodus to Temple: 480 Years

6:1 ¶ And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth [480th] year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth [4th] year of Solomon’s reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv [“brightness”], which is the second [2nd] month, that he began to build the house of the LORD. [So 2992 AB]

[Thus, there must be some overlaps in the simple list given in the next table (detailed chronology to be deduced):]

Judge	Oppressor	Years	Total	Judges
			0	
	Mesopotamia	8	8	3:8
1. Othniel		40	48	3:11
	Moab	18	66	3:14
2. Ehud		80	146	3:30
	Philistines	0	146	3:31
3. Shamgar		0	146	3:31
	Canaanites	20	166	4:3
4. Deborah		40	206	5:31
	Midian	7	213	6:1
5. Gideon		40	253	8:28
6. Abimelech		3	256	9:22
7. Tola		23	279	10:2
8. Jair		22	301	10:3
	Ammon	18	319	10:8
9. Jephthah		6	325	12:7
10. Ibzan		7	332	12:8
11. Elon		10	342	12:11
12. Abdon		8	350	12:13
	Philistines	40	390	13:1
13. Samson		20	410	15:20

10th Judge Ibzan

8 ¶ After him, Ibzan [“their tin, as white” or “their whiteness”] of Bethlehem judged Israel. ⁹ He had thirty [30] sons. And he gave away thirty [30] daughters in marriage, and brought in thirty [30] daughters from elsewhere for his sons. He judged Israel seven [7] years. ¹⁰ Then Ibzan died and was buried at Bethlehem. [325 + 7 years, so 332 total.]

11th Judge Elon

11 After him, Elon [“terebinth, mighty”] the Zebulunite judged Israel. He judged Israel ten [10] years. ¹² And Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried at Aijalon in the country of Zebulun. [332 + 10 years, so 342 total.]

12th Judge Abdon

13 After him, Abdon [“servile”] the son of Hillel [“praising”] the Pirathonite [“princely”] judged Israel. ¹⁴ He had forty [40] sons and thirty [30] grandsons, who rode on seventy [70] young donkeys. He judged Israel eight [8] years. ¹⁵ Then Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the mountains of the Amalekites. [342 + 8 years, so 350 total.]

Judges 13

Israel Sins: The Philistines Oppress

13:1 ¶ Again the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines for forty [40] years. [350 + 40 years, so 390 total.]

13th Judge Samson

2 Now there was a certain man from Zorah [“hornet”], of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah [“rest”]; and his wife was barren and had no children. ³ And the Angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, “Indeed now, you are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. ⁴ Now therefore, please be careful not to drink wine or similar drink, and not to eat anything unclean. ⁵ For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite [“consecrated or devoted one”] to God from the womb; and he shall begin to de-

liver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.” 6

So the woman came and told her husband, saying,

“A Man of God came to me, and His countenance was like the countenance of the Angel of God, very awesome; but I did not ask Him where He was from, and He did not tell me His name. 7 And He said to me, ‘Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. Now drink no wine or similar drink, nor eat anything unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death [she added this last phrase].’”

8 ¶ Then Manoah prayed to the LORD, and said,

“O my Lord, please let the Man of God whom You sent come to us again and teach us what we shall do for the child who will be born.” 9

And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the Angel of God came to the woman again as she was sitting in the field; but Manoah her husband was not with her. 10 Then the woman ran in haste and told her husband, and said to him,

“Look, the Man who came to me the other day has just now appeared to me!” 11

So Manoah arose and followed his wife. When he came to the Man, he said to Him,

“Are You the Man who spoke to this woman?”

And He said,

“I am.” 12

Manoah said,

“Now let Your words come to pass! What will be the boy’s rule of life, and his work?” 13

So the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah,

“Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful. 14 She may not eat anything that comes from the vine, nor may she drink wine or similar drink, nor eat anything unclean. All that I commanded her let her observe.”

[But He didn’t answer Ma-Noah’s two questions.]

15 ¶ Then Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD,

“Please let us detain You, and we will prepare a young goat for You.” 16

And the Angel of the LORD said to Manoah,

“Though you detain Me, I will not eat your food. But if you offer a burnt offering, you must offer it to the LORD.”

(For Manoah did not know He was the Angel of the LORD.) 17 Then Manoah said to the Angel of the LORD,

“What is Your name, that when Your words come to pass we may honor You?” 18

And the Angel of the LORD said to him,

“Why do you ask My name, seeing it is wonderful [beyond understanding, incomprehensible to you]?” 19

So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, and offered it upon the rock to the LORD. And He did a wondrous thing while Manoah and his wife looked on — 20 it happened as the flame went up toward heaven from the altar — the Angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar!

When Manoah and his wife saw this, they fell on their faces to the ground.

21 When the Angel of the LORD appeared no more to Manoah and his wife, then Manoah knew that He was the Angel of the LORD. 22 And Manoah said to his wife, “We shall surely die, because we have seen God!” [Emotional reaction.] 23

But his wife said to him, “If the LORD had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering from our hands, nor would He have shown us all these things, nor would He have told us such things as these at this time.” [Rational response.]

Samson Born

24 ¶ So the woman bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. 25 And the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him at Mahaneh Dan [“camp” “judge”] between Zorah [“hornet”] and Eshtaol [“entreaty”].

Judges 14

Samson Wants a Philistine Wife

14:1 ¶ Now Samson went down to Timnah [“portion”], and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. 2 So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, “I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife.” [Not even a “please”.] 3

Then his father and mother said to him,

“Is there no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?”

And Samson said to his father, “Get her for me, for she pleases me well.” [Again, no “please”.] 4

God’s Plan is Supreme

But his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD — that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

Samson Tears a Lion Apart

5 So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah. Now to his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him. 6 And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done [apparently he had been behind]. 7 Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well. 8

After some time, when he returned to get [marry] her, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the carcass of the lion. 9 He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother [apparently he had been behind again], he gave some to them, and

they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion [*unclean, presumably*].

Samson Gets Married, Separated

10 ¶ So his father went down to the woman [*presumably to prepare the wedding*]. And Samson gave a feast there, for young men used to do so. 11 And it happened, when they [*the woman's family, or townspeople?*] saw him, that they brought thirty [*30*] [*Philistine*] companions to be with him. 12 Then Samson said to them, "Let me pose a riddle to you. If you can correctly solve and explain it to me within the seven [*7*] days of the feast, then I will give you thirty [*30*] linen garments and thirty [*30*] changes of clothing. 13 But if you cannot explain it to me, then you shall give me thirty [*30*] linen garments and thirty [*30*] changes of clothing." And they said to him, "Pose your riddle, that we may hear it." 14 So he said to them: "Out of the eater came something to eat, And out of the strong came something sweet." Now for three [*3*] days they could not explain the riddle. 15 But it came to pass on the seventh [*7th*] day that they said to Samson's wife, "Entice your husband, that he may explain the riddle to us, or else we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us in order to take what is ours? *Is that not so?*" 16 Then Samson's wife wept on him, and said,

"You only hate me! You do not love me! You have posed a riddle to the sons of my people, but you have not explained it to me."

And he said to her, "Look, I have not explained it to my father or my mother; so should I explain it to you?" 17 Now she had wept on him the seven [*7*] days while their feast lasted. And it happened on the seventh [*7th*] day that he told her, because she pressed him so much. Then she explained the riddle to the sons of her people. 18 So the men of the city said to him on the seventh [*7th*] day before the sun went down:

"What is sweeter than honey?
And what is stronger than a lion?" And he said to them: "If you had not plowed with my heifer, You would not have solved my riddle!" 19 Then **the Spirit of the LORD** came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon [*"the fire of infamy: I shall be weighed"*] and killed thirty [*30*] of their men, took their apparel, and gave the changes of clothing to those who had explained the riddle. So his anger was aroused, and **he went back up to his father's house**. 20 And Samson's wife was given to his companion, who had been his best man.

Judges 15

Samson Burns Fields via Foxes

15:1 ¶ After a while, in the time of wheat harvest, it happened that Samson visited his wife with a young goat. And he said,

"Let me go in to my wife, into *her* room."

But her father would not permit him to go in. 2 Her father said, "I really thought that you thoroughly hated her; therefore I gave her to your companion. *Is not her younger sister better than she?* Please, take her instead." 3

And Samson said to them, "This time I shall be blameless regarding the Philistines if I harm them!" 4 Then Samson went and caught three hundred [*300*] foxes; and he took torches, turned *the foxes* tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails. 5 When he had set the torches on fire, he let *the foxes* go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up both the shocks and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards and olive groves. 6

Then the Philistines said, "Who has done this?" And they answered, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken his wife and given her to his companion." So the Philistines came up and burned her and her father with fire. 7 Samson said to them, "Since you would do a thing like this, I will surely take revenge on you, and after that I will cease." 8

So he attacked them **hip upon [and] thigh** [*ruthlessly, tearing them limb from limb*] with a great slaughter; then he went down and dwelt in the cleft of the rock of Etam [*"lair of wild beasts"*].

Samson Kills 1,000 With a Jawbone

9 ¶ Now the Philistines went up, encamped in Judah, and deployed themselves against Lehi [*"jaw"*]. 10 And the men of Judah said, "Why have you come up against us?" So they answered, "We have come up to arrest Samson, to do to him as he has done to us." 11 Then three thousand [*3,000*] men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines rule over us? *What is this you have done to us?*" And he said to them, "As they did to me, so I have done to them." 12 But they said to him, "We have come down to arrest you, that we may deliver you into the hand of the Philistines." Then Samson said to them, "Swear to me that you will not kill me yourselves." 13 So they spoke to him, saying, "No, but we will tie you securely and deliver you into their hand; but we will surely not kill you." [*Literally, "killing we will kill you not".*] And they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock. 14 When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting against him.

Then **the Spirit of the LORD** came mightily upon him; and the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds broke loose from his hands. 15 He found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached

out his hand and took it, and killed a thousand [1,000] men with it. 16
Then Samson said:

“With the jawbone of a donkey,
Heaps upon heaps,
With the jawbone of a donkey
I have slain a thousand [1,000] men!” 17
And so it was, when he had finished speaking, that he threw the jawbone from his hand, and called that place Ramath Lehi [“height of a jawbone”].

18 ¶ Then he became very thirsty; so he cried out to **the LORD** and said, “You have given this great deliverance by the hand of Your servant; and now shall I die of thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?” 19
So God split the hollow place that is in Lehi, and water came out, and he drank; and his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore he called its name En Hakkore [“spring of One calling”], which is in Lehi to this day. 20

And he judged Israel twenty [20] years in the days of the Philistines. [390 + 20 years, so 410 total.]

April 7

Judges 16

Samson Goes to a Harlot in Gaza

16:1 ¶ Now Samson went to **Gaza** and saw a **harlot** there, and went in to her. 2
When the Gazites were told, “Samson has come here!” they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They were quiet all night, saying,

“In the morning, when it is daylight, we will kill him.” 3

And Samson lay low till midnight; then he arose at midnight, took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two gateposts, pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.

Samson Falls for Delilah

4 ¶ Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek [“choice vines”], whose name was **Delilah** [“feeble”; by later cutting his hair, she enfeebled Samson]. 5
And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, “Entice him, and find out where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred [1100] pieces of silver.” 6
So Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me where your great strength lies, and with what you may be bound to afflict you.” 7

(1) Bowstrings

And Samson said to her, “If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man.” 8
So the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven [7] fresh bowstrings, not yet dried, and she bound him with them. 9
Now men were lying in wait, staying with her in the room. And she said to him,

“The Philistines are upon you, Samson!”

But he broke the bowstrings as a strand of yarn breaks when it touches fire. So the secret of his strength was not known. 10
Then Delilah said to Samson, “Look, you have mocked me and told me lies. Now, please tell me what you may be bound with.” 11

(2) New Ropes

So he said to her, “If they bind me securely with new ropes that have never been used, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man.” 12
Therefore Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!”
And men were lying in wait, staying in the room. But he broke them off his arms like a thread. 13
Delilah said to Samson, “Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me what you may be bound with.”

(3) Seven Locks of Hair in a Loom

And he said to her, “If you weave the seven [7] locks of my head into the web of the loom ...” 14
So she wove it tightly with the batten of the loom, and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!”
But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled out the batten and the web from the loom. 15
Then she said to him,

“How can you say, ‘I love you’, when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three [3] times, and have not told me where your great strength lies.” 16

(4) Shave Off My Seven Locks

And it came to pass, when she persecuted him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death, 17 that he told her all his heart, and said to her, “No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.”

Samson Captured and Blinded

18 ¶ When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, “Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart.”
So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand. 19
Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven [7] locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. 20
And she said, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!”
So he awoke from his sleep, and said, “I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!”
But he did not know that **the LORD had departed from him**. 21
Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes,

and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison.

Samson Regains His Strength

22 ¶ However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven. 23 Now the lords of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon [*“a fish”; a Philistine deity of fertility; represented with the face and hands of a man and the tail of a fish*] their god, and to rejoice. And they said:

“Our god has delivered into our hands Samson our enemy!” 24

When the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said:

“Our god has delivered into our hands our enemy, The destroyer of our land, And the one who multiplied our dead.” 25

So it happened, when their hearts were merry, that they said,

“Call for Samson, that he may perform for us.”

So they called for Samson from the prison, and he performed for them.

And they stationed him between the pillars. 26 Then Samson said to the lad who held him by the hand,

“Let me feel the pillars that support the temple, so that I can lean on them.” 27

Now the temple was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there — about three thousand [*~3,000*] men and women on the roof watching while Samson performed. 28 Then Samson called to the LORD, saying,

“O Lord God [*Adonai YHWH*], remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one blow take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!” 29

And Samson took hold of the two [2] middle pillars that supported the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left. 30 Then Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines!”

And he pushed with all his might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead

that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life. 31

And his brothers and all his father’s household came down and took him, and brought him up and buried him between Zorah [*“hornet”*] and Eshtaol [*“entreaty”*] [*where the Lord had begun “to move upon him”: 13:25*] in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had judged Israel twenty [20] years.

[Same 20 as 15:20.]

[390 + 20 years, so 410 total.]

End of Accounts of Judges

[The story of Micah and the 600

Danite robbers (17:1-18:31) was moved into Joshua, following 19:48.]

[The story of the reduction of the tribe of Benjamin to 600 (19:1-21:25) was moved to precede 1:1.]

April 7 cont’d:

Forward to: [Ruth](#)

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