

Week #:	211	Series:	God's Judgment	Title:	Judge #9, 10, & 11 – Ibzan, Elon, & Abdon
Scriptures:	Judges 12:8-15				
Songs:	Awesome God – Rich Mullins (3:02)				
	Shout to the Lord – Darlene Zschech (4:37)				
	Prayer	Plead the Blood – Chris Davenport (8:38)			
Videos:	Judges Song – What's in the Bible #4 (Time- 31:31-33:25)				

The first eight judges in our study have been:

1. Othniel: He was Caleb's nephew. Israel lived in peace after him for 40 years.
2. Ehud: He was known for the physical feature of being left-handed. Israel lived in peace after him for 80 years.
3. Shamgar: He was known for killing 600 Philistines with a farm tool, an oxgoad.
4. Deborah: She was a female prophetess, whom God used to free the people from Jabin [Yavin], King of Hazor, and his commander Sisera.
5. Gideon: Called God's valiant hero. Israel lived in peace for 40 years, until he died.
6. Tola: Lived in Shamir and judges Israel for 23 years
7. Jair: Had 30 sons who governed 30 cities; judges Israel for 22 years
8. Jephtha: He was the son of a prostitute, and led a band of misfits before God used him to bring an end to the oppression of the Ammonites. He judged Israel for only 7 years

Judge #9: Ibzan

Judges 12:8-10

⁸ After him, Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel. ⁹ He had thirty sons. And he gave away thirty daughters in marriage, and brought in thirty daughters from elsewhere for his sons. He judged Israel seven years. ¹⁰ Then Ibzan died and was buried at Bethlehem.

The era of Jephthah is over, and after him came Ibzan. Practically nothing is said of him, we're not even sure of his tribal affiliation. Some say that he must have been of the tribe of Judah because he was from Beit-Lechem. But just like other place names, there were a number of Bethlehems in Canaan; and since Ibzan took over from Jephthah he would either have ruled over the north central part of Canaan, or over Gilead on the east bank of the Jordan, maybe both. Its exceedingly unlikely therefore that this Bethlehem is the one we think of today, in the territory of Judah, in the south of Canaan.

That the Judge Ibzan had 30 sons and 30 daughters indicates a wealthy aristocrat. It draws an interesting contrast between this man who immediately followed Jephthah, and Jephthah who had only ONE child total, and that was a daughter who was ultimately killed in her youth. The 30 daughters were actually daughters-in-law, wives for his sons that he brought in from abroad. The CJB, I think, has a pretty bad translation where it states that Ibzan had 30 biological daughters AND also brought in 30 foreign women for his biological sons to marry. Rather it was the same 30 "daughters," and they were foreigners.

This fits well with the constantly deteriorating condition of Israel (to get non-Hebrew women as wives for his Hebrew sons). Not only is this against the Torah commands, but also highlights

how the Israelites were more interested in following typical Middle Eastern customs as practiced by their gentile neighbors than in obeying God. This bringing in of foreign wives was predicated on one purpose alone: making peace treaties with nearby pagan kingdoms. Inter-marriage was then, and remained for centuries, the primary means of creating an alliance between nations.

We see that Ibzan only judged for 7 years, one more than Jephthah. Again we need only compare his short rule with his poor leadership and lifestyle to understand why such a relatively brief period of judging. Yet, by all accounts, he was a judge anointed by God to judge Israel and in no way a pretender.

Judge #10: Elon

Judges 12: 11-12

¹¹ After him, Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel. He judged Israel ten years. ¹² And Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried at Aijalon in the country of Zebulun.

After Ibzan came the Shofet Elon of the tribe of Zebulun. Even less is told of him; he ruled 10 years and died.

Judge #11: Abdon

Judges 12:13-15

¹³ After him, Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel. ¹⁴ He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy young donkeys. He judged Israel eight 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.

Next came Abdon who had 40 sons and 30 grandsons. That these sons rode on ass colts says that this was a very royal and aristocratic family. So many children also indicate many wives (he probably had well more than 40 daughters in addition to his sons), but also that he ruled during a time of peace and prosperity (although from the time of his divine anointing until his death was but a mere 8 years).