

Appendix 1D, II

JUDGES

The era from Joshua through judge-commander Samuel--commonly called the "period of the Judges"--is estimated roughly at 330-350 years, ending with selection of Saul as the first named king.¹ "[I]n days those, there was no king in Israel; each man the right in his eyes did." *Judges'* accounts reflect obeisance to different judges by differently-grouped tribes at varying times and that, "in many cases, the judges were contemporaries of one another, exercising authority over limited tribal areas."² Twelve male and one female judge-commanders, apart from Joshua and Samuel, are identified, as will be detailed below.

Elsewhere the record provides interim (Levi-Aaron-) chief/high priest descendancies, including transfer of authority for a long period from the (Aaron-) Eleazar branch to that of (Aaron-) Ithamar.³ However, no data is provided over the *Judges* era for individual chief/high priest functions or functionaries until high priest Eli, under whom Samuel was reared at the Shiloh sanctuary. The 40-year tenure of (Ithamar...-) Eli, which is not described in *Judges*, is taken as contemporaneous with the terms of Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon and perhaps a portion of Samson's. Opponents over the years of *Judges* ranged from all compass points: Moabites, Midianites and Ammonites from the east and southeast and Philistines from the southwest, as well as tribes from north of the Sea of Galilee.

A major non-sequential feature of *Judges* is the placement at its end of a report of a civil war arising from an incident at Gibeah, which otherwise appears to have occurred *circa* the beginning of the era during the lifetime of Aaron's grandson, Phinehas/Phineas.⁴ Lineage data compiled from other scriptural texts, as noted below at judges Jair, Jephthah and Abdon, also touch on *Judges'* sequencing. The first judge reported by *Judges* is Othniel. The *Book of Jasher* (which both agrees with the canon and relates additional material) would indicate a chasm, however, in the scriptural account--that, prior to Othniel, Caleb judged Israel 12 years and was succeeded for a time by Jasher, with Othniel then succeeding Jasher.⁵ The summary of *Judges* presented here includes that sequence. A question mark in the Tribal Affiliation column indicates the relationship is not stated directly and is subject to potential derivations:

<u>Descendancy</u>	JUDGE	<u>Tribal Affiliation</u>
Son of Kenaz ⁶ + ? -	OTHNIEL, Caleb's younger brother. ⁷	Judah

Under Othniel's command "the sons of Israel" were freed from an eight-year servitude to one "Chushan- Rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia. ... And the land had rest for 40 years, and died Othniel...."

¹ *Judges* 21:25. (Archeological work of recent decades, which has spurred re-estimates of the Late Bronze and Early Iron ages, poses new considerations in dating this as well as other ancient periods, as has been reviewed in current biblical archaeology literature, such as the *Biblical Archaeology Review*.)

² *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* as quoted in *Aid*, pp. 336-37.

³ Refer to Appendix 3B, II, "Chief/High Priesthood," part II.

⁴ That account is related at the end, also, of this summary.

⁵ Refer to Appendix 1C, sub-part II, "Hezronic Period."

⁶ See Appendix 1A, Attachment 1, Kenaz, and Appendix 1F, Kenite.

⁷ *Judges* 3; *Jasher* 34:22.

Descendancy JUDGE Tribal Affiliation

**Benjamin + ?-
[Bela?] - Gera + ? - EHUD⁸ Benjamin**

Judge Ehud effected an end to an 18-year bondage by Moab's King Eglon (who had taken possession of Jericho⁹) and was allied with Ammon and Amalek. The final battle with Moab ensued after Ehud went to Eglon at Gilgal on the pretense of paying tribute; left in private audience with the king, Ehud ran him through with a sword. Ehud "blew on the horn in the hills of Ephraim and went down with him the sons of Israel from the hills...and captured the fords of the Jordan against the Moabites," of whom 10,000 were struck down. "And had rest the land, eighty years."

Son of Anath¹⁰ + ? - SHAMGAR¹¹ Naphtali?

No time period is assigned to Shamgar, who "struck the Philistines, 600 men...and delivered also he, Israel." According to *Josephus*, Shamgar died in his first year.

The next named foe is King Jabin of "Hazor"¹² who oppressed sons of Israel for 20 years. "And a prophetess [Deborah]...was judging Israel at that time...."

? + ? - DEBORAH¹³ Zebulon?

Deborah was a "wife of Lapidoth." She dwelled in the hill region of Ephraim between Ramah and Bethel. There, "sons of Israel would go up to her for judgment." The *Book of Jasher* relates that, after Deborah's "husband was slain before Makkedah when Israel went out to fight for the people of Gibeon," Deborah built her own city, "Debir."¹⁴

(Abinoam¹⁵ -) Barak "out of Kedesh-Naphtali" joined leadership with Deborah in a Naphtaliite/Zebulonite coalition, versus king Jabin's force commanded by a man named Sisera. Ten thousand of Deborah participated in the battle when it took place in the torrent valley of the Kishon, in the low plain of Jezreel at the east edge of Issachar and Zebulun territory, vicinity of Mount Tabor.

Sisera fled on foot and took refuge in the tent of Jael, a wife of (Hobab-) Heber,¹⁶ a Kenite, who was at peace with Jabin and tented near Kedesh.¹⁷ Sisera was faint and fell

⁸ *Judges* 3. Benjamin descendancy to and via Ehud during this time is unclear--refer to Appendix 1C, sub-part VI, D, "Manasseh-Benjamin 'Shuppim and Muppim' Puzzle," and the chart of relationships in 1C, Attachment 2, column (1).

⁹ "the city of palm trees" *Judges* 3:13.

¹⁰ Possibly *Beth-Anath*, a Naphtaliite city about 12 miles E of Acco between upper and lower Galilee (for Acco, see Appendix 1D, I, fn. 14 [d]).

¹¹ *Judges* 3:31.

¹² For relating this *Judges* event with *Joshua*, see at Appendix 1D, I, following fn. 8.

¹³ *Judges* 4. (See Appendix 2A, *Debir*, re a [Jasher -] *Deborah*.)

¹⁴ (a) *Jasher* 35:28ff.; (b) there is no other use of "Lapidoth;" some scholars have considered whether he and Barak, the next-listed judge, were one and the same; (c) for *Ramah*, *Bethel* and the various *Debirs*, see Appendix 2A.

¹⁵ (a) *Abinoam* is an only use but similar to *Ahinoam* of two uses--wife of Saul, and a Jezreelite wife of king David; (b) *Kedesh-Naphtali*, also called "Kedesh in Galilee," linked to a small plain about 4 miles NW of the Huleh basin; also see fn. 17; (c) *Tabor*, Appendix 2A.

¹⁶ Who "had broken from the Kenites of the sons of Hobab, father-in-law Moses," involving a complicated period that involved a Moabitic Kenite branch connected to the descendancy of "Shaharaim;" see Appendix 1A, Attachment 1, (ee) *Heber/Hepher* and (ii) *Hobab*, and Appendix 1C, Attachment 2, column (1) of "Benjamin Descendancy" after Ehi/Ehud.

¹⁷ It not clear as to which of the following: (a) *Kedesh-Naphtali/Kadesh* in Galilee following fn. 15, apparently a (Levi-) Gershon **App1D, II**

asleep. While he was unconscious, Jael killed him by hammering a tent peg through his temple. Deborah's involvement in or knowledge of the Jael plan appears implied in the report that she told Barak, before the fact, that Sisera would fall at the hands of a woman. With Sisera dead, Deborah and Barak prevailed over Jabin. They sang a song of victory, "and had rest the land forty years."

Next reported is seven years of oppression, during which Midian destroyed crops sown by sons of Israel who were living "in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds."¹⁸

Joash, the Abiezerite + ?- GIDEON¹⁹ Manasseh/[+Benjamin?]

"Midian and Amalek, and the sons of the east...were camped in the valley of Jezreel." Gideon, who lived at Joash's Ophrah, was recruited by a "messenger."²⁰ Gideon won Ophrahite allegiance; the Abiezerites assembled behind him; and he issued a call throughout Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali.

Gideon's first force of 300 routed an enemy camp. Joined by others, they overcame Midianite princes Oreb and Zeeb, continued in pursuit, struck the army of Midianite kings Zebah and Zalmunna, and conquered Succoth.²¹ Gideon captured and killed kings Zebah and Zalmunna; certain men that Zebah and Zalmunna had killed in Tabor were Gideon's "brothers, sons of my mother."

Gideon collected gold from the peoples he had saved (who had "*rings of gold...because Ishmaelites, they*"²²). From the gold Gideon made an "ephod" that he put in his city of Ophrah. The ephod is said to have become "a snare" to Gideon and his house; conversely, reference to Gideon as *Jerubaal* appears derived from his destruction of a *Baal* shrine at Ophrah.²³ After Midian was subdued, "had rest the land, forty years, in the days of Gideon." Gideon lived in his own house, had many wives and 70 sons. Gideon's firstborn was Jether, who, when told by Gideon to kill the captured Midianite kings, wasn't able.²⁴

Regional power was contested after Gideon died. A "concubine" of Gideon in Shechem had born him a son named Abimelech. Abimelech assembled men to him and went to the house of his mother's father at Shechem. "[R]emember, that your bone and your flesh I [am]," he told his relatives. With their aid he garnered support of Shechem's leaders, who "caused Abimelech to reign as [their] king." Abimelech was supported by "all the leaders of Shechem and all the house of Millo." But back at Ophrah he killed all but one of his brothers and/or half-brothers; however, the youngest Gideon son, Jotham, was

enclave in Naphtali believed some 4 miles NW of the Huleh Basin; (b) *Kedesh* (1 *Chronicles* 6:72)/Kishion (*Joshua* 12:22, 21:28), a (Levi-) Gershon city in Issachar; possibly a site 2-1/2 mi. SE of Megiddo; a third *Kadesh*, Introductory Summary, fn. 5.)

¹⁸ Here commencing with *Judges* 6.

¹⁹ See the Gideon explorative chart at Appendix 3B, II, sub-part II.

²⁰ (a) "Ophrah" also was name of a city assigned to Benjamin in *Joshua* 18:23; actual location(s) is/are not known (b)

Textwise, later varying renderings of *Hebrew* "malakh," *messenger*, as "angel" affects the distinction of a biblical envoy *vis-a-vis* his dispatcher (*refer to* Appendix 4 D, "Some Terms of Interest," "*messenger*" v. "*angel*").

²¹ See Appendix 1C, fn. 38.

²² *Judges* 8:24; italics supplied.

²³ See Appendix 2A, *Ephod*, and "*Deities, Miscellaneous, Baal*."

²⁴ To *Judges* 8:31. Appendix 1A, Attachment 1, *Jether*.

Descendancy

JUDGE

Tribal Affiliation

hidden and escaped death.²⁵

Enmity arose on the part of some Shechemites, who were admonished by their leader, Gaal, to “serve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem!” Abimelech battled the resurgent Shechemites, burned the city’s tower and felled a thousand men and women. He then besieged Thebez, some 10 miles to the northeast. But as he drew near to burn its tower “a certain woman” dropped a millstone on his head from the city wall. Abimelech commanded his attache to put him out of his misery with a sword,²⁶ “lest they say of me, ‘a woman killed him.’” In all, Abimelech ‘ruled over Israel’ three years.

Puah of Dodo + ? - TOLA²⁷

Issachar

All that is said of Tola is that he lived in Shamir/Shamar/Samaria “in the hills of Ephraim,”²⁸ that he rose up after Abimelech, judged “Israel” 23 years, and was buried in Shamir.

“a Gileadite”

JAIR

Manasseh

Judges reports only that Jair had 30 sons “who rode on 30 ass colts; and 30 cities they had...in the land of Gilead,” and that he died and was buried in Kamon.²⁹ “A Gileadite,” *Judges*’ simple antecedent for Jair, may reflect the complicated intertribal relationships following the “Hezronic” period, as Jair’s lineage elsewhere is derivable;³⁰ and the same issues possibly also are reflected in the antecedents given for Jair’s successor, Jephthah.

Judges next names as foes Ammon and Philistia. The text focuses first on an 18-year struggle with the Ammonites, who had overrun Gilead, pushed the easterners west to the Jordan and beyond, and forayed into Benjamin and Ephraim. With an Ammonite force camped in Gilead, the Gileadite chieftains gathered at Mizpeh³¹ and sought a leader.

Machir + ?- Gilead

+ “a prostitute/harlot” - JEPHTHAH³²

Manasseh

The Gileadites solicited Jephthah, who earlier had been driven away by his younger half- brothers and was living with a band of men in the land of “Tob,” identified by some with a region about 40 miles E/SE of the Sea of Galilee. Jephthah took command, conditioned on an agreement that if victorious he would remain as chief of Gilead. It also is reported he vowed that, should he win, “the thing outcoming, which comes out from the doors of my house to meet me when I return... shall belong to [Tet.], and it I will offer a burnt offering.”³³

²⁵ (a) Other *Abimelechs*, see Introductory Summary *at and in* fn. 15; (b) *Millo* (9:6), unknown.

²⁶ Through *Judges* 9.

²⁷ *Judges* 10:1-2. (a) *Tolaites* were counted in the second registration; (b)(1) Leah + Jacob-Issachar + ? ... *Puah/Puvah*; (b)(2) *Puahites*/aka *Punites* were counted in the second registration; (b)(3) *Puah* (with Shiprah) was a midwife who sought to save Hebrew males at birth contrary to a pre-exodus pharaohnic order; (c) two of king David’s mighty men were *Dodo/Dodai*-descended—see Appendix 2B, parts IV and V.

²⁸ The name varies with text sources, although “Samaria” is a much later term of considerable range—see Appendix 3A, VI, Attachment 3, *Samaria*.

²⁹ “Kamon’s” location is unknown; speculation centers on two sites, respectively about 11 and 12 miles S of the Sea of Galilee.

³⁰ *Judges* 10:3. Refer to chart in Appendix 1C, Attachment 1, D, concerning *Jair* lineage, and Appendix 4C, *Jair/Jairus/Joare*.

³¹ Appendix 2A, *Mizpeh/etc*.

³² *Judges* 11. Only use of the name *Jephthah*; see descendancy chart at Appendix 1C, sub-part VI, C.

Descendancy

JUDGE

Tribal Affiliation

After striking the Ammonites from Aroer to Minnith (20 cities),³⁴ Jephthah “came to” Mizpeh, “to his house.” The first thing to greet Jephthah from his house when he returned was his [unnamed] daughter, his only child. “And it came to pass...he did to her his vow which he had vowed; and she never knew a man....” That text has been interpreted as a murder by Jephthah of his daughter as the “burnt offering,” although it is unclear why she plead for and received a two-month delay “to weep for her virginity” instead of for her life, before her father complied with his vow. Where Jephthah’s house was situated can’t be answered because of the general vagueness of biblical Mizpehs/Mizpahs.

Ephraimites rose up against Jephthah after his military success, for not engaging them also in the fight with Ammon. Civil war ensued, in which the Gileadites captured “the fords of the Jordan before Ephraim,” where it is reported 42,000 Ephraimites were killed as they attempted to return.”³⁵

“And judged Jephthah Israel six years; and died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in the cities [sic.] of Gilead.”

Of the next three judges named, little is said:

“of Bethlehem” **IBZAN**³⁶ ?

Ibzan had “...30 sons; and 30 daughters he sent abroad, and 30 daughters he brought for his sons from abroad. And he judged Israel seven years. And died Ibzan and was buried at Bethlehem.”

? + ? - **ELON**³⁷ **Zebulun**

After Ibzan, Elon “judged Israel ten years. And died Elon, the Zebulonite, and was buried in Aijalon, in the land of Zebulun.”³⁸

Hillel the Pirathonite + ?- **ABDON**³⁹ ?

³³ *Judges* 11:31. 2 *Samuel* 10:6 mentions 12,000 men of Tob (“Ish-tob”) along with Syrians and Maacahites in an Ammonite force battled by Joab/David. (*Tob* reappears in the name, *Tobiah*, Appendix 3B, I.)

³⁴ To *Judges* 11:39. (a) *Aroer*, Appendix 2A; (b) “Minnith,” site unknown.

³⁵ The Ephraimites “crossing northward” (*Judges* 12) to confront Jephthah, combined with the Tob reference, could confirm his Mizpeh as the one in the northeast; *Judges* 11:29 is especially confusing in this respect, as well as the reported linguistic differences between involved foes at *Judges* 12:4-6 (cf. *Matthew* 26:73)—see Appendix 1B, “Ephrathah,” preceding fn. 4.

³⁶ *Judges* 12:8.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 12:11. Other Elons: (a) Hittite whose daughter married Esau (Appendix 1A, Attachment 2); (b) second of Zebulun’s three children who existed before entry into Egypt; (c) a town near the border of Dan’s initial apportionment, uncertainly located between Ithlah (possibly 9 miles W/NW of Jerusalem) and Timnah (of which two are mentioned—one at the Judah/Dan boundary about 2 miles W of Beth-shemesh [see Appendix 2A, *Beth-Shemesh*] and the other at modern Tibnah about 2 miles N/NW of “Gibea” [2A, *Geba*, etc.].)

³⁸ One other use of Aijalon/Ajalon is a (Kohath-) levitical city in Dan territory (*Joshua* 19:42 and 21:24), but 1 *Chronicles* 6:69 seems to put it in Ephraim. Per 1 *Chronicles* 8:13 the heads of Aijalon’s fathers were (Benjamin... *lapse*...) Beriah and Shema (see *Shaharaim* descendancy and related apparent Benjamin/Manasseh intertribal absorptions—Appendix 1C, Attachment 2). Saul’s Jonathan would strike Philistines from Michmas/h (placed some 7 miles NE of Jerusalem) to Aijalon; Solomon’s successor-son Rehoboam would fortify Aijalon; and more than two centuries later it would fall once more to the Philistines.

³⁹ *Judges* 12:13. Uses of *Abdon*: (a) (Hushim + *Shaharaim*-Elpaal-Beriah-Shashak-) *Abdon*, Appendix 1C, Attachment 2; (b) a Gershon/Gershom levitical city in Asher territory, its possible site being identified at the foot of the hills of Galilee (*Joshua* 21:27-30; 1 *Chronicles* 6:71-74); (c) (Maacah + Jeiel-) *Abdon*, a granduncle of Saul (see “Jeiel,” Appendix 3B, I); (c) *Abdon*/Achor, of King Josiah’s court (2 *Chronicles* 34:20; 2 *Kings* 22:12).

Descendancy

JUDGE

Tribal Affiliation

Abdon had “40 sons, and 30 sons of sons, who rode on 70 he-asses, and he judged Israel eight years. And died Abdon, the son of Hillel, the Pirathonite, and was buried in Pirathon (possibly six miles W/SW of Shechem) in the land of Ephraim, in the hills of the Amalekites.”

Manoah of Zorah
“of the family of the
Danites” + ?-

SAMSON⁴⁰

Dan [+ Judah?]

Per the prologue of *Judges* 13, Philistines dominated the Israelites for 40 years. It is not said exactly what part of that time constituted Samson’s stated 20-year tenure. Samson’s Philistine battles appear as regional incidents, subsequent to his attempt to form a peaceful alliance.

Samson’s quest to wed a Philistine daughter of Timnath(/?Timnah)⁴¹ bears some marks of a challenged union not palatable to all concerned. A seven-day betrothal feast was held at Timnath, at which Samson was surrounded by 30 “companions,” at first introduction seemingly friends of his and to whom he riddled a riddle.⁴² If they gave the correct answer, they would receive 30 linen garments/shirts and 30 changes of clothes; if not, they would provide the same to Samson.

The “companions” threatened Samson’s fiancée they would kill both her and her father unless she got the answer for them; she was forced to wheedle it out of Samson and divulge it to “the sons of her people.” Losing the bet, Samson then went “down to Askelon [a principal Philistine Mediterranean seaport city] and struck of them 30 men and took their plunder.” He gave “the changes” to those who had answered the riddle and went back to his father’s house.

Later, just before wheat harvest, Samson went to claim his betrothed at her house and discovered that her father had betrothed her, instead, to one “who had been best man for” Samson. Samson declined the father’s entreaty to take a younger daughter and furiously took revenge by destroying Philistine crops. In turn, the Philistines “burned her and her father.” Samson then “smote them...a slaughter great,” and retreated.⁴³

The Philistines forayed in Judah territory, pitched a camp, and informed the Judaeans they were after Samson. Three thousand men of Judah “went down to Etam”⁴⁴ to confront Samson, saying, “...you know that ruling over us, the Philistines.... And what this you have [brought upon] us?” They bound Samson and turned him over to the Philistines. Samson broke free, killed 1,000 of his foe and escaped. He next is reported in Gaza, in the residence of a “harlot” where he evaded Philistines seeking to capture him.

⁴⁰ *Judges* 13 through 16. (a) *Zorah/Zoreah*, very near Philistia, was in Judah-assigned territory but just across the line from Timnah/Timnath in Dan-assigned territory; (b) Samson’s unnamed mother received a visitation from an alternately-called “angel”/“man,” announcing her barrenness would end and she would bear a son—“a Nazirite to [Tet]...from the womb until the day of his death.” (*Ibid.*, 13:5-7)

⁴¹ In Judah allotment (*Joshua* 15:33); on Dan’s border (*Joshua* 19:41); refer to Appendix 1A, Attachment 1, *Timna/Timnah*.

⁴² Puzzles/riddles, as well as dream interpretation, being an ancient method of testing worthiness through demonstrated intelligence—as examples, the Daniel and Cyrus discourses (Appendix 3A, II, C(2)(b) and the Zerubbabel “contest” of Darius (Appendix 3A, V, 1A and E).

⁴³ to a “cleft of the rock of Etam”—(possibly an isolated crag about three miles E/SE of Zorah, affording a wide view of the surrounding low hills. A Simeonite enclave city named Etam in Judah territory is connected also with a site SW of Jerusalem, as well as an inclusion under sons of Judah in *1 Chronicles* 4:3 of “the father of Etam,” in the confusing Ephratah/Hur descendancy—Appendix 1C, Attachment 1, A.

⁴⁴ *Judges* 15:11.

Samson left in the middle of the night, divesting the city of its gates as he went.

Philistine rulers then bribed a woman named Delilah of the valley of Sorek (in the same general area east of Timnath/Timnah), and to whom Samson was attracted, to help them capture Samson. Once she had gained his trust, Samson's enemies ambushed him in her room, put out his eyes and imprisoned him in Gaza. At some later point, the Philistines put Samson on display for the crowd's entertainment. Summoning all of his strength, he toppled two middle pillars that supported the structure above him, causing the death of many. Samson also died in the building's collapse. His brothers and all of the house of his father retrieved his body, which was laid to rest in his father's burial ground between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Judges chapters 17 and 18 report that the Danites--still without secure territory--sent out five men from Zorah and Eshtaol to spy land. Crossing over into Ephraim territory they came to the place of one Micah, who had a house of worship. There they encountered a young "Levite from Bethlehem of Judah" whom Micah had hired as a priest. Encouraged by the priest as to their quest, the Danites pursued the land search and settled on Laish, a Sidonian colony in the north but inland and remote from Phoenicia's main coast cities of Sidon and Tyre. Based on the spies' assessment,⁴⁵ 600 Danites from Zorah and Eshtaol readied for war and camped at Kiriath/Kirjath-Jearim.

Danites passing over to Ephraim congregated before Micah's house while five representatives entered, took "the graven image and the ephod, and the household idols, and the molten image," and convinced the Levite priest to accompany them. Micah and his flock challenged the Danites but, outnumbered, were warded off. The Danites then proceeded to conquer and sack Laish, after which they rebuilt the city and renamed it Dan. At Laish/Dan, the Danites set up for themselves Micah's graven image(s) "which he had made, all the days was the house of [Tet.] in Shiloh; " and Jonathan [--taken to be the priest priorly unnamed in the account--], the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh [or Moses?⁴⁶], he and his sons were priests for the tribe of Danites until the day of captivity."

The last three chapters of *Judges* (19-21) report events connected to a civil war in which all the other tribes were joined against Benjamin. The time is not specified; it happened "in days those, when king was not in Israel."

The initial incident was as follows. A Leviite "on the far side of the hill country of Ephraim" had an adulterous wife/concubine, a woman of Bethlehem-Judah, who had returned to her father's house. After some time the Leviite, accompanied by a young man, went to retrieve his woman. He was welcomed gracefully both by her and her father.

Five days later the Leviite left for home at evening time with the young woman and his companion, planning to look for that night's lodging in Gibeah of Benjamin. An elder Ephraimite living in Gibeah offered to be their host. While they were at ease in his home some local ne'er-do-wells circled the house and demanded the master bring out the stranger. (It is not clear whether they meant the Leviite or his young male companion, but the text here--especially the host's admonitions to the aggressors--implies they had sodomy in mind.) The host offered to give the brigands his virgin daughter, instead, and/or the Leviite's wife/concubine, to do as they willed. The Leviite's woman was given to them, and they "abused her all night." In the morning she was found dead at the door.

⁴⁵ (a) Micah, Appendix 3B, I; (b) Dan and Kiriath/Kirjath-Jearim, Attachment 2A.

⁴⁶ The Hebrew text referenced in this work does show here the consonants for "Manasseh;" it is unclear why the encyclopedia referenced states that it should say "Moses," although Gershom/Gershon, first son of Zipporah and Moses, might fit actual sequencing?

The Leviite brought the body home, cut it in 12 pieces “to the bones,” and “sent her into all the borders of Israel.”⁴⁷ Heads of all the tribes and a large war party assembled at Mizpeh.⁴⁸ When Benjamin refused to turn over the guilty Gibeahans, the other assembled tribes waged war by lots, with Judah first to do battle.

The Benjaminites prevailed in the first two days’ battles, with numerous “Israelite” casualties. The tide turned after the Israelites sought counsel from the chief priest at Bethel (“The ark of the covenant was there and Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, was standing before it in those days....”⁴⁹) They destroyed the city and “the sword was put” to all Benjaminites, man and beast, and cities set on fire. At war’s end all that remained of Benjamin were 600 men who had fled to desert cliffs, when they remained four months.

Judges 21 reports that all had taken an oath at the Mizpeh assembly that (1) anyone who gave a daughter to Benjamin would be “cursed,” and (2) any Israelites who did not join in the retaliation would be put to death. But in chapter 21 the tenor is changed. Grievous lamentation is described among the involved tribes over the decimation of Benjamin, and they considered how to revive their brother-tribe without breaking the oath.

“Numbering” themselves, they found that Jabesh-Gilead⁵⁰ had not answered the summons to Mizpeh. As had been said, any who did not “surely shall die.” A force was committed to strike Jabesh-Gilead “with the edge of the sword, even the women and little ones...every male, and every [non-virgin] woman.” Four hundred young Jabesh-Gilead virgins were brought back, and they were sent with the Israelite’s peace offering to the 600 Benjaminites surviving at a desert refuge. There were not, however, enough females to go around. A plan was proffered to make up the difference: at an upcoming feast day at Shiloh, the surviving Benjaminites could surprise and capture daughters of Shiloh when they came out to dance. Thus it could be said no daughters had been given voluntarily and no oath broken, with tribal leaders taking it upon themselves to pacify the women’s fathers.

The surviving sons of Benjamin followed the plan, “took women according to their number,” and “returned to their inheritance, built the cities, and lived in them. And went up and down from there the sons of Israel,” then, “each to his tribe, and to his family, and they departed from there, every man to his inheritance. In those days there was no king in Israel, each man the right, in his eyes, did.”

⁴⁷ Saul similarly summoned tribes after a barbaric attack on Jabesh by Nahash, the Ammonite (Appendix 2A, Nahash), by cutting up oxen and sending their pieces throughout the territories with a message, “Whoever does not come out after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen.” 2 *Samuel* 11:7.

⁴⁸ Which Mizpeh is not clear; see Mizpeh, etc., Appendix 2A.

⁴⁹ *Judges* 20:26.

⁵⁰ See Appendix 2A, Jabesh-Gilead.