
JUDGES 10:1 After Abimelech there arose to save Israel Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he lived in Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim.

Tola judges Israel twenty-three years, Jdg 10:1, Jdg 10:2. Jair is judge twenty-two years, Jdg 10:3-5. After him the Israelites rebel against God, and are delivered into the hands of the Philistines and Ammonites eighteen years, Jdg 10:6-9. They humble themselves, and God reproves them, Jdg 10:10-14. They put away their strange gods, and gather together against the Ammonites, Jdg 10:15-17. The chiefs of Gilead inquire concerning a captain to head them against the Ammonites, Jdg 10:18.

Verse 1

Tola the son of Puah - As this Tola continued twenty-three years a judge of Israel after the troubles of Abimelech's reign, it is likely that the land had rest, and that the enemies of the Israelites had made no hostile incursions into the land during his presidency and that of Jair; which, together continued forty-five years.

JUDGES 10:2 He judged Israel twenty-three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.

JUDGES 10:3 After him arose Jair, the Gileadite; and he judged Israel twenty-two years.

JUDGES 10:4 He had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkey colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havoth Jair to this day, which are in the land of Gilead.

Verse 4

He had thirty sons, etc. - It appears that there was both peace and prosperity during the time that Jair governed Israel; he had, it seems, provided for his family, and given a village to each of his thirty sons; which were, in consequence, called Havoth Jair or the villages of Jair. Their riding on thirty ass colts seems to intimate that they were persons of consideration, and kept up a certain dignity in their different departments.

JUDGES 10:5 Jair died, and was buried in Kamon.

JUDGES 10:6 The children of Israel again did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals, and the Ashtaroah, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Sidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and they abandoned the LORD, and didn't serve him.

Verse 6

And served Baalim - They became universal idolaters, adopting every god of the surrounding nations. Baalim and Ashtaroah may signify gods and goddesses in general. These are enumerated:

1. The gods of Syria; Bel and Saturn, or Jupiter and Astarte.

2. Gods of Zidon; Ashtaroth, Astarte or Venus.

3. The gods of Moab; Chemosh.

4. Gods of the children of Ammon; Milcom.

5. Gods of the Philistines; Dagon.

See 1Kgs 11:33 (note), and 1Sam 5:2 (note). These are called gods because their images and places of worship were multiplied throughout the land.

JUDGES 10:7 the LORD's anger was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the children of Ammon.

Verse 7

The anger of the Lord was hot - This Divine displeasure was manifested in delivering them into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites. The former dwelt on the western side of Jordan; the latter, on the eastern: and it appears that they joined their forces on this occasion to distress and ruin the Israelites, though the Ammonites were the most active.

JUDGES 10:8 They troubled and oppressed the children of Israel that year. For eighteen years, they oppressed all the children of Israel that were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead.

JUDGES 10:9 The children of Ammon passed over the Jordan to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was very distressed.

JUDGES 10:10 The children of Israel cried to the LORD, saying, "We have sinned against you, even because we have forsaken our God, and have served the Baals."

JUDGES 10:11 The LORD said to the children of Israel, "Didn't I save you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines?"

Verse 11

And the Lord said - By what means these reproofs were conveyed to the Israelites, we know not: it must have been by an angel, a prophet, or some holy man inspired for the occasion.

JUDGES 10:12 The Sidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, oppressed you; and you cried to me, and I saved you out of their hand.

JUDGES 10:13 Yet you have forsaken me, and served other gods: therefore I will save you no more.

JUDGES 10:14 Go and cry to the gods which you have chosen. Let them save you in the time of your distress!"

JUDGES 10:15 The children of Israel said to the LORD, "We have sinned: do you to us whatever seems good to you; only deliver us, please, this day."

Verse 15

We have sinned - The reprehension of this people was kind, pointed, and solemn; and their repentance deep. And they gave proofs that their repentance was genuine, by putting away all their idols: but they were ever fickle and uncertain.

JUDGES 10:16 They put away the foreign gods from among them, and served the LORD; and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.

Verse 16

And his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel - What a proof of the philanthropy of God! Here his compassions moved on a small scale; but it was the same principle that led him to give his Son Jesus Christ to be a sacrifice for the sins of the Whole world. God grieves for the miseries to which his creatures are reduced by their own sins. Be astonished, ye heavens, at this; and shout for joy, all ye inhabitants of the earth! for, through the love whence this compassion flowed, God has visited and redeemed a lost world!

JUDGES 10:17 Then the children of Ammon were gathered together, and encamped in Gilead. The children of Israel assembled themselves together, and encamped in Mizpah.

Verse 17

The children of Ammon were gathered together - Literally, they cried against Israel - they sent out criers in different directions to stir up all the enemies of Israel; and when they had made a mighty collection, they encamped in Gilead.

JUDGES 10:18 The people, the princes of Gilead, said one to another, "What man is he who will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

Verse 18

What man is he that will begin to fight - It appears that, although the spirit of patriotism had excited the people at large to come forward against their enemies, yet they had no general, none to lead them forth to battle. God, however, who had accepted their sincere repentance, raised them up an able captain in the person of Jephthah; and in him the suffrages of the people were concentrated, as we shall see in the following chapter. In those ancient times much depended on the onset; a war was generally terminated in one battle, the first impression was therefore of great consequence, and it required a person skillful, valorous, and strong, to head the attack. Jephthah was a person in

whom all these qualifications appear to have met. When God purposes to deliver, he, in the course of his providence, will find out, employ, and direct the proper means.