

The Book of Judges

Characters: Jesus (m) Stage Manager (m or f), 5 actors who will play all the different roles (m or f)
You can also cast a different actor for each Judge, up to 14 different characters)

JUDGES 1-2

Jesus: Hello, everyone. Welcome to the Book of Judges. My name is Jesus and I will be your tour guide through... well, let's just call a spade a spade... the most violent book of the bible, and that's saying something. How did it get this bad? Well, a little back story... Moses, we all know Moses, wasn't allowed into the Promised Land. So after his death, Joshua went in and took the land by force. Joshua mostly did a good job, except this one little thing. Joshua didn't drive out all of the Canaanites. He let many stay. And as the Israelites lived amongst them, their lack of moral fiber started to infect the Israelites. And they sunk lower and lower and lower, which is exactly why God told them not to let the Canaanites stay. Judges starts out bad - with the cutting off of fingers and toes - and it only gets worse. Over and over the people fall into making terrible, violent choices, and over and over, God sends someone to save them. Each judge seems to get worse and worse until... a civil war breaks out among the Israelites. The book's last line is literally "At that time there was no king in Israel. People did whatever they felt like doing" They had become just like the people they were supposed to drive out of the land. And this sets us up nicely to meet the family who will eventually give us King David - who led to me. And as you know, I am the final judge. But instead of giving punishment, I took all punishment on myself. What can I say? I'm the GOAT. Alright, I think that's good. Thanks for coming to see the show and I hope you enjoyed the show. Stay safe out there and -

Stage Manager: Whoa whoa, we have to give them more than that.

Jesus: Did you not hear what I just said about the violence and the other - awful weird stuff? Don't we need to keep this family friendly?

SM: We do. But... they came to see a show. We have to give them something. What if we just have each judge sell their story and we'll see which one we like best?

Jesus: Then we tell that one as the actual show?

SM: Yes!

Judges: We don't have enough actors to play all the judges.

SM: Each actor can play more than one judge.

Jesus: Not a bad idea. OK, crew! Front and center! (*All other actors come on stage*) First up, we have Othniel.

JUDGES 3

Othniel: The first part of Judges does a little back tracking and into all the different lands that we were given. Then it talks about Joshua dying and all the people of that generation, the last generation to see the amazing things God did during the Exodus. We were the next generation and we weren't great. We would do stupid things and get in trouble, then cry out to God to save us. He would send a judge to tell us what to do. We would live ok as long as that judge was around. But when that judge died, the cycle started all over. I was up first. I was Caleb's nephew. I assume you all remember Caleb? Of Caleb and Joshua who went into the promised land and told Moses we could take it! Anyway, I won some wars and kept things God fearing and peaceful for 40 years or so. Then I died.

SM: And the people went right back to their evil ways and broke the covenant. God acted accordingly.

Jesus: The people cried out and God had pity on them.

SM: Enter Ehud.

Ehud: Hello, my name is Ehud. I'm known as the left hand judge from the right hand of God.

SM: Explain that.

Ehud: OK... well, see some people are born and they want to use THIS (*holds up his right hand*) to write and carve, etc. While others were born wanting to use THIS (*holds up his left hand*) hand -

SM: NOT that! Explain what "from the right hand of God" means.

Ehud: Oh. Right. I'm from the tribe of Benjamin and their name means "Son of my right hand" so people started referring to the tribe of Benjamin as The right hand of God. Don't tell me God doesn't have a sense of humor. Anyway, my claim to fame is a little gross. I'll just say that I was able to kill an enemy king because no one checked for my LEFT-HANDED weapon when I asked to see the king. I subdued the Moabites and kept things quiet for 80 years.

SM: And the people went right back to their evil ways and broke the covenant. God acted accordingly.

Jesus: The people cried out and God had pity on them.

SM: Enter Shamgar.

Shamgar: I used a cattle prod to single handedly kill 600 Philistines.

SM: And?

Shamgar: That's it. I get one line in the bible.

SM: Oh. Sorry.

Shamgar: It's fine. I brought a book to read for the rest of the show. (He goes to sit down and reads)

SM: And the people went right back to their evil ways and broke the covenant. God acted accordingly.

Jesus: The people cried out and God had pity on them.

SM: Enter Deborah. That's right. A girl! She was a judge and a prophet and she held court under a palm tree.

JUDGES 4-5

Deborah: I also had a pretty bloody story that we don't really need to get in to. But I have something that no other judge has.

Jesus: Yes, you do!

SM: What?

Jesus and Deborah (*both using jazz hands*): A song!

Deborah: We're not going to sing it right now but just know that it's pretty awesome. Things stayed peaceful for 40 years.

SM: And the people went right back to their evil ways and broke the covenant. God acted accordingly.

Jesus: The people cried out and God had pity on them.

SM: Enter Gideon!

JUDGES 6-7

Gideon: Here I am! You guys all probably already know me from Sunday School.

SM: I like this confident fellow.

Jesus: He didn't start out so confident. God actually found him hiding in an old wine skin.

Gideon: That's because the Midianites were so cruel to us.

Jesus: And he pulled a Moses and said, "Not me Lord".

Gideon: OK, yeah, I did do that.

Jesus: You even tested God with a fleece multiple times to make sure He meant what he said.

Gideon: I also saw God face to face and didn't die.

SM: Wow.

Gideon: May I tell my story now?

Jesus: Oh, yeah. Go for it.

Gideon: The Angel of GOD came and spoke to me – and that's Capital A, Capitol G like as in GOD himself in Angel form standing in front of me. Anyway, He said I was the one to save Isreal. I tested him a few times and then went on to save Isreal from one of the most oppressive enemies we'd had to that point. I lived a nice long life and died and -

SM: Say it with me - the people went right back to their evil ways and broke the covenant. God acted accordingly.

Jesus: The people cried out and God had pity on them. Although the next judge sort of appointed himself.

Abimelech-

JUDGES 9

SM: We'll call him Abe.