In this chapter, the Song of Deborah is reconstructed according to the changes proposed in Chapter One and the outline presented at the end of Chapter Two. Changes made to the MT are marked by the customary sigla:

( ) explanatory additions in English translation

[ ] editorial deletion from the Hebrew text

< > editorial addition to the Hebrew text.

Italicized words in the English indicate translations which are new with this study of the Song of Deborah. Meter and syllable count are listed at the left of the Hebrew text. Metrical balance in the poem is discussed in Chapter VII. Changes in the consonantal MT and vocalization, listed above in Chapter I, are discussed in the commentary in Chapter Six.

There has been no attempt to make the Hebrew text fit a historiographic agendum (as did Cheyne [see Appendix], who forced the text to support his “Jerahmeelite theory”). Were this poem a legendary ballad completely outside the sphere of history (דְּבָרָי הָיְמִים), and were the words of Pesahim 6b also true for the Deborah–Barak–Yael tradition in Judges 5, that דָּגַם בָּנְכַּדְרָּא רָחַב יְהוָה “there is no chronological order [of events] in the Torah,” the Hebrew text of Ju 4:23–5:31 and the translation of the “Song of Deborah” would still read as follows.
I. Prose prologue: 4:23–24

4:23 God subdued in that day Jabin, King of Canaan, before the Israelites. 4:24 Yea, the hand of the Israelites bore harder and harder on Jabin, King of Canaan, until they finally destroyed Jabin, King of Canaan.

II. Poetic prologue: 3:31; 5:6–7, 5:1–2b

3:31 Then later Shamgar ben-Anat appeared on the scene!

He smote with a mattock *two marauding bands*;

he *plundered* hundreds of men with a(n) (ox)goad.

He was *appointed overseer*, and gained victories

by himself for Israel!

5:6 From the days of Shamgar ben-Anat,

from the days he *used to attack (covertly)*, caravans ceased

and *caravaneers* had to travel roundabout routes.

Warriors *deserted*, in Israel they *failed to assist*,

until the arising of Deborah, the arising of a Mother in Israel!

5:1 Then Deborah made Barak ben-Abinoam

*march forth* on that day

when the *heroine called for heroism* in Israel,

when the militia was summoned,

(by her) saying:
I. Prose prologue 4:23–24

לכמים אלהים בובו ניה ואית יבש מלך כנעני
ולכמים בני ישראל
והלכת יד בני ישראל הלך פשח על יבש מלך כנעני
ועד אשאר הדרים ואית יבש מלך כנעני.

II. Poetic Prologue 3:31; 5:6–7, 5:1–2b

12
3+2
וַהֲדֹר גֵּדֶי ויִדְּתִי שְׁמוֹר בּׁ שְׁנֵה
15
3+3
וַקּוֹטֵט אָנָה פְּלֶששָׁה תַּשְׁמָּז אֵשׁ בִּנְעֵמָה
12
2+2+2
בִּכְרֵךְ רְשֵׁי נָא הוֹא אָתֶּל שִׁירָא.
2+3
בְּנֵי טַמְשָׁר בּׁ שְׁנֵה
16
בֵּנים יִתֶּרֶךְ לְהַדְלָל אֲרֶבֶת
17
3+2
וַהֲלַל תְּנוֹבָה לִבּוֹ הַדְּרוֹת עֶקֶלְקָלוֹת
13
2+2
וַהֲלַל פְּרוֹן בְּיִשְׁרֵאֵל הַדְּלוֹל
15
3+3
עַד שְׁקֵמוֹת הָדוֹרֵהֶת שְׁקֵמוֹת אָס בְּיִשְׁרֵאֵל
2+2+2
וַהֲקָצָאֵרָה דָּרוֹר
17
בְּרֵךְ בּׁ נַעֲנָה בִּיָּמָה
18
3+3
בָּפָדִית פְּרַעֲת בִּיִשְׁרֵאֵל בְּדוֹרָהֶת נָה
לַאוֹרַה
III. Deborah’s exhortation: 5:2c–4, 5:8–9

5:2c  “PRAISE YAHWEH!
Hear, O kings! Listen, O princes! I am for Yahweh!
I, yes I, I will attack, I will fight for Yahweh, the God of Israel.

5:4  O Yahweh, when you went out from Seir,
when you marched from the plain of Edom,
the earth trembled noisily, the heavens dropped open,
the clouds dropped torrentially.
The waters of the mountains flowed from the presence of Yahweh,
the One of Sinai,
from the presence of Yahweh, my God.

*God will provide strength.*

5:8  God will muster the *recruits.* When *the brave ones* battle,
shield, *moreover,* and spear
will appear among the forty thousand in Israel.

*Respond to the call,* O leaders of Israel!
*O you who are summoned* for the militia!

5:9c  PRAISE YAHWEH!”
### III. Deborah’s exhortation: 5:2c–4, 5:8–9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebrew Text</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>סְמוּעַ מְלָכֶם אֲבֹテンי דַּוִּיתְאֵלוֹד</td>
<td>Hear the words of the kings of Israel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>אָנָכַי אֵשֶר הָאָמַר לִיהוּדָה אָלָּלִיר</td>
<td>And the one who spoke to Judah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>רֹדֵה בֵּנָאָלקְר מְשֹׁפְר מַעֶּפֶר מַשָּׁדַא שָׁרָא</td>
<td>The one who stationed his army on the hillside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>אֱלֹּא גַּעֲשָה נַכֶּם נַכֶּם נַכֶּם נַכֶּם נַכֶּם</td>
<td>Do not craze to each other, do not craze to each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מִרְז מֹרוֹז נֹלֶל</td>
<td>Be merciful to each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מְסַהֵר יְהוּדָה</td>
<td>Release Judah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>שִׁמַּר אֶל בָּחָר אָלָלִיר וְרֹמָה</td>
<td>Keep to the choice of the Lord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>אָלָּלִירָּהֵל &gt; שֶׁנִּרְבּוּ</td>
<td>May the Lord increase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מַנְנָא אֲלֵהוֹ רֹמָה</td>
<td>May the Lord multiply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>בְּאָדוּנֵי אֲלָלִיר בִּישָׁרָא</td>
<td>And in the days of the Lord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לְפָּרָה &gt; לְוַיְשָׁרָא יְשָׁרָא הוֹדִיד וֹדִיד</td>
<td>And the Lord will be firm and firm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>בִּרְפָּא יְהוּדָה</td>
<td>And the Lord will be firm.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Muster the troops: 5:10–13

5:10 Riders on young donkeys,
those sitting on mules,
and those walking along the way

5:11 hastened on mountain-roads,
hurrying between the mountain-passes,
where the victories of Yahweh would be given—
the victories of his two warriors in Israel,
when the very storms would descend from Yahweh.

5:12 The troops of Deborah roused themselves
to rout the troops of the pursuer.
Barak made preparations to attack,
ben-Abinoam to take prisoners.

5:13 When the caravan-leader went forth against the nobles,
(when) the militia of Yahweh descended,
they were accompanied by (heavenly) warriors.
IV. Mustering the troops: 5:10–13

רבעים נמזים ebooks
ושבעים על אחרים
והלב על דרכך
졌遺ף על משאבים
בש שנים עדיך יהוד
גזרכון הנופים יהודא
וא perd על שעריemente יהוד
שורי עלバラ
ишרא קרב
ורשה שנא מנה
וא perd שריר לאפרים
עם יהוד irr
ל ASTM נברים

112
V. Strategy of the forces: 5:14–16

5:14 Some from Ephraim, hastening through Amalek,
would strike at the rear;
Benjamin from concealment would attack.

5:15 From Machir commanders would go down.
Yea, from Zebulon, (those) brandishing the marshal’s mace,
and officers from Issachar along with Deborah.
That he might inflict defeat, Barak was concealed in the plain.
Dispatched with his footmen along the tributaries was Reuben.
Gad had joined them.

5:16 Those of true courage circled about
to wait between the ravines,
to listen, to look for stragglers along the tributaries,
to triumph over the cowardly chieftains.
V. Strategy of the forces: 5:14–16

3+3+3

בַּעַמָּלֵךְ אָרֵי יִכְרֶה

בְּנָמוּת בְּנַמֵּס יִכְרֶה

3+3

רָנוּבּוֹלֵךְ מְשַׁכְּבוּ בְּשָׁמָי הָאָרֶץ

3+3

וֹשֵׁר בְּנישָׂכָר עַם בְּרֹדֶה.

2+2

רָפְעֵשֶׂר כַּרְכּ רֶם הָאָרֶץ.

2+2+2+2

שִׁלַּח בְּרִכְלִי בֶּפֶלֶנַּת רַאוֹב.

10

גֶּ으 לָא

14

חֵקָק לְלַחֲמִי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּנַיְמִשְׂפָּתָה.

14

לְשֹׁמַע שְׁמֵר הָאָרֶץ טֵרָה לֶפֶלֶנַּת.

21

רָאָה בַּן [ו] וְרֻלִּים חִדְרִי לָא.
VI. Israelite attack: 5:17–18

5:17 Gilead in Trans-Jordan went on alert.
then Dan boldly attacked ships;
Asher assailed along the water’s edge
and struck against its harbors.

5:18 Zebulon swam (underwater), risking his life;
Naphtali attacked Merom.

VII. Canaanite counterattack: 5:19

5:19 The kings were forced to come. They fought.
(But) when the kings of Canaan fought,
from Taanach along the waters of Megiddo,
silver spoils they did not take.
VI. Israelite attack: 5:17–18

3+2+2

גַּלֶּלֶת בֶּקֶר הָוָרָדַּדְךָ

19

וֹרֵךְ לְפָה וּגְוָר אַנְיוֹת

2+2+3

ואֶת יְהֹבֹלַחְךָ מִימָּשׁ

17

עוֹל מְפָרְצִי יְשָׁכּוֹ.

2+3+3

נִבְּלָנָה נַפְּחָה נְשֵׁי לְפָה

19

נְפֶלִים עַל מְרוּדֵי שֵׁד.

VII. Canaanite counterattack: 5:19

3+3

הַבָּא מִלְכֵּים נְלָחֵם

18

אֶל מִלְכֵּים נְלָחֵם נְנִים

3+3

מִשְׁעַנָךְ עַל מִי מָנְדוּ

16

בָּצַע חָסִיק לָא נְלָחֵם.
VIII. The defeat of the Canaanites: 5:20–23

5:20 From the heavens fought the stars,
from their stations they fought against Sisera.

5:21 The Wadi Kishon swept them [the chariots] away,
the Wadi surged seaward.

The Wadi Kishon overtook (them), it overflowed, they sought refuge.

5:22 Then retreated up the slopes their horses (and their) chariots —
his chariot, his stallions.

5:23 Doomed to die, they panicked—Yahweh had sent a cloudburst!
Their riders were in total panic!

Truly victorious were the ones going forth for the Warrior Yahweh,
for the Warrior Yahweh, with the (heavenly) heroes!
VIII. The defeat of the Canaanites: 5:20–23

3+3

מן שמים נלחם הענבים

22

מעסלים נלחם עם סיפרא

3+3

נהל קורן נרפס נהל קורם ים

12

נהל קורןهرד נפש וגו.

3+2

אא הלמו תעבש סיפרנ> דחרות

11

דהרות אברוו

3+2+2

אא או הסירוא> גג רימ לאך והוה.

20

שא אברר ישביהו

2+3+3

כי לא> אא להוה להוה

18

לוהוה והוה בנבורה

19

40 102
IX. Assassination of Sisera: 5:24–25, 5:27a, 5:26, 5:27b

5:24 Most blessed among women is Yael, wife of Heber the Kenite, among women in tents she is most blessed.

5:25 Water he requested, milk she gave, in a truly magnificent goblet she brought cream.

5:27a Between her legs he drank, he fell to sleep.

5:26 She stretched her hand to the tent-pin, her right hand to the workmen’s hammer. She hammered Sisera, battered his head, shattered and pierced his neck.

5:27b Between her legs half-conscious he fell; motionless, powerless, there he fell slain.
IX. Assassination of Sisera: 5:24–25, 5:27a, 5:26, 5:27b

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Hebrew Text</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3+3+3</td>
<td>ננשָם יְאָשֶׁת הָבְר֔וֹקָה</td>
<td>mountains of the Hebrews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+2</td>
<td>מִשָּׁתְּלֹךְ הַלֶּב</td>
<td>in the depths of the heart.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+2</td>
<td>בְּכַפֵּן לֹא יְדַרְדוּ הָכְרֵיָּה הַמַּאֲהָה</td>
<td>and their hearts will not be divided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+3</td>
<td>בְּנֵי הָרַגִּילָה כּרְעֵה נֵפֶל שְׁכָּבָה</td>
<td>and the sons of the ravine lay down in sleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+3</td>
<td>וַיַּלְכֵר שְׁכֵלְהָה</td>
<td>and he covered the shekel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>רְחוֹמִיָּה לַהֲלוֹמָה עֵמְלָמוּ</td>
<td>mercy for the evil deeds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+2+3</td>
<td>הִיוָה לָהֶם כּוֹדֶשׁ מַצְּוָא רַאֲשָׁה</td>
<td>it was for them a holy command.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>וַֽמִּשְּׁכֵּבָה הָלוֹמָה רַכְּבָה</td>
<td>and it lay down the evil deed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2+2</td>
<td>בְּנֵי הָרַגִּילָה כּרְעֵה נֵפֶל</td>
<td>and the sons of the ravine lay down in sleep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+2</td>
<td>בֵּאֵשׁ הָבְרָעָה שֶֽׁנֵּפֶל שְׁרֵדָּרָה</td>
<td>in the flames of the Hebrews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>112</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
X. Anxiety in Sisera’s court: 5:28–30

5:28 Through the window she peered—but (only) emptiness!
The mother of Sisera inquired (at) the lattice:
“Why tarries his chariot’s arrival?
Why so late the sound of his chariots?”

5:29 The clairvoyants among her damsels divined.
Indeed, her soothsayer reported to her:
5:30 “The victors have forded (the water);
they are dividing the spoil—
a wench or two for the head of the hero—
spoil of dyed cloth for Sisera, spoil of the best cloth,
an embroidered cloth or two for the spoiler’s neckerchiefs.”

XI. Poetic conclusion: 5:31a

5:31a Thus may all the enemies of Yahweh perish.
(May) His lovers (be) like the rising of the sun
because of His power.

XII. Prose epilogue: 5:31b

5:31b And the land was at peace for forty years.
X. Anxiety in Sisera’s court: 5:28–30

בַּעַד חָלֶלָנָי נַכְפֶּה וְיָרָבָה.

אֶפְסֶר אֶל פַּנוּת אָנָּנָּב.

מְרוֹע בֵּשָׁה רַכְבֵּה לָאָּמָּא.

מְרוֹע אֶל בַּעַר מַרְבִּבוּתָו.

חָכָמָה שְׁלָמִיָּה חוֹנְיוֹת.

אֱלֹה יְבִיא שְׁמַרְיָה לְהָיֶה.

דַּלַּאֲרוֹ נֶאֶר חִלֵּק שְׁלָל.

רָחַב רַחַמְתֵּם לְאָמֵא נֶבֶר.

שְׁלָל נֶעֲנוּ הַלְּסָרָא שְׁלָל נֶעֲנוּ נַעְנָעֵה.

רַכְמוֹ רַכְמוֹת לְאָמֵא שֵׁלָל.

XI. Poetic conclusion 5:31a

כְּפֶר יְבֵא נֵל זֵוָר וְיָדָה.

וּפַדְתֵּנִי כְּפֶר מַעֲשָׁה בַּנְבָּרָה.

XII. Prose epilogue 5:31b

וֹשֵׁקָם והָאֶרֶץ אֵלְבַעְנִי שֶׁנָּה.