

THE SONG OF DEBORAH:
POETRY IN DIALECT

CHAPTER SIX

COMMENTARY AND NOTES

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I. Prose prologue: Ju 4:23–24

In light of the conclusions reached in Chapter Two that Ju 4:23–24 is the prose prologue to the epic poetry of Judges 5, rather than the conclusion of the prose narrative of Ju 4:1–22, it is possible to read Josh 11:1–16 as an expanded commentary on Ju 4:23–24. However, since only these two verses are related to the Joshua passage, the proposals by Hertzberg (1953: 77) and Eissfeldt (1975: 544) to equate the events of Judges 4–5 with the battle depicted in Joshua 11 can now be rejected.¹¹²

The proposed emendation of וַאֲחֵר to וַאֲהוּר and צַבָּאוֹ to צְבוּאוֹ (pages 38–40), coupled with the transposition of וַיִּמְכְּרֵם יְהוָה from Ju 4:2a to 4:3a, restores these verses to their more original form and brings Ju 4:2 into conformity with the tradition in 1 Sam 12:9 that “he [Yahweh] sold them into the hand of Sisera [who had been] an officer in the army of Hazor (וַיִּמְכַּר אֹתָם) (בִּיד סִיסְרָא שֶׁר צַבָּא חֲצוּר).”

These minimal changes to the text permit the accounts in (a) Josh 11:1–16 and Ju 4:23–24 and (b) Ju 4:23–5:31 and Ju 4:1–22 to be read as chronologically sequential texts and thus support the claim that Joshua’s destruction of Hazor and the death of Jabin preceded the rise and fall of Sisera.

4:23. God subdued וַיִּכְנַע אֱלֹהִים
(See above, pages 29–32.)

This phrase is the first element of a pre-Deuteronomic formula which usually included the phrase וַתִּשְׁקַט הָאָרֶץ “and the land was at peace” as a second element. Here the first element appears in a prose *incipit* to the poem; the second element occurs in 5:31, in a brief prose *inclusio*.

¹¹² Note also Maass 1961: 111.

4:23. At that time

ביום ההוא

(See above, pages 81–88.)

The defeat of Jabin of Hazor has been dated to 1221 B.C.E., on the assumption that the fall of Hazor XIII (which has been dated on archaeological evidence around 1220 B.C.E.) prompted Merneptah's campaign to restore control in Egypt's Asian province. Merneptah's campaign is generally dated 1221. The eventual defeat of Sisera must have occurred shortly after 1190, and evidently prompted a campaign by Ramesses III after his defeat of the Sea Peoples to reassert Egypt's hegemony in Palestine.

4:23. Jabin, King of Canaan

יבין מלך כנען

It is now widely recognized that the identification of Jabin as “king of Canaan” rather than “the king of Hazor” (as in Josh 11:1) is an anachronism reflecting a tradition found in Josh 11:10 that, “Hazor formerly was the head of all those kingdoms.”¹¹³ Malamat (1960: 17–19), in a survey of extra-biblical texts (primarily from Mari) which corroborate Hazor's supremacy in the Middle Bronze Age, has demonstrated the correctness of this anachronistic title for the king of Hazor. Included in his evidence is the fact “that the ruler of Hazor, unlike most other rulers, is called ‘king’ (*šarrum* in Akkadian) both in the Mari archives . . . and in the el-Amarna letters.” One Mari letter even mentions a king of Hazor named *Ibni-Adad*, the first element being the Akkadian equivalent of the West Semitic *Iabni* (= יבין). Malamat cited this as evidence of strong Babylonian influence at Hazor, at least in court circles. Such influence continued into the Late Bronze Age, as evidenced by the recovery of a fragment of the Gilgamesh Epic from the debris of Megiddo VIII and the Megiddo ivories from Stratum VII, which reflect Assyrian influence as well as Egyptian, Hittite and local motifs.¹¹⁴ The Babylonian influence was not restricted to the Canaanite community since Akkadian loanwords (e.g., *sārid* = שריד “caravan

¹¹³ See Boling 1975: 99.

¹¹⁴ On the Gilgamesh fragment, see Cross and Wright 1955: 44; Aharoni and Yadin 1977: 836. For the Megiddo ivories, see Loud 1935: 10–11 and Schofield 1967: 319.

leader” [5:10b] and *kudan* = כַּדִּי “mule” [5:13a]) were used by the poet of Judges 5, suggesting that the early Israelites were also susceptible to this influence.

II. Poetic prologue: Ju 3:31; 5:6–7, 5:1–26

Albright (1967: 208) suggested that some of the prose in Judges was originally composed in poetic form. He recognized Ju 1:14–15 as an adaptation from an older poem and believed it could be turned into “excellent mixed verse” with a 3 + 3 / 3 + 3 / 2 + 2 + 2 metrical pattern. Ju 3:31, with little alteration of the MT, reads even more easily as fine poetry.

3:31. Then later appeared on the scene וַאֲחֵרֵי הָיָה

The MT וַאֲחֵרֵי הָיָה has long been recognized as being “awkward and unparalleled.” A. van Selms (1964: 294–295) concluded that, since this phrase has no exact parallel in Judges, Shamgar was out of place in a list of minor judges and could be completely omitted from the book without disturbing its chronology. The NEB translators went back to Ju 3:26 for the antecedent of the 3ms suffix and translated, “After Ehud there was Shamgar of Beth Anath.” As demonstrated above (pages 32–36, 71–72), Shamgar provides a clue for establishing the unity of the poem and the chronology of the era. The isolated 3ms suffix of MT וַאֲחֵרֵי does not impose insurmountable problems.¹¹⁵

The emendation וַאֲחֵרֵי הָיָה restores the well-attested infinitive absolute הָיָה or הָיָה (Gen 18:18; 1 Kgs 12:31; Jer 15:18; Ezek 1:3). It removes the awkwardness of the phrase which resulted from Deuteronomic editorial activity, or more simply from a scribal error. The translation “appeared on the scene,” has been adopted from BDB (225b). Sperling (1988: 326) has also noted the use of הָיָה “to reign” in Jer. 34:5 and Ps 45:17 (NJV). This meaning, he noted, parallels the use of כִּוַּן “to be, to exist” in the Phoenician phrase ʿš *kn lḥny* “who reigned before me.”

¹¹⁵ Note also Moore 1898b: Pt. 1, 159; Burney 1918: 77.

3:31. Shamgar ben-Anat

שמגר בן ענת

(See above, pages 44–53.)

The use of “Shamgar” throughout this study, rather than “Samgar,” is an accommodation to old traditions. Evidence presented above (pages 49–50) suggests that the name, composed of the vocables שׁיִם and גֹּר, meant “the charging assailant.” Yeivin (1971: 105) thought that Shamgar was but a metathetic variant of Gershom, but van Selms (1964: 296) had more convincingly noted that the name is without an obvious parallel in Israelite nomenclature. However, van Selms’ conclusion, that Shamgar’s name contributes to an “un-Israelite impression” and “strangeness” of this verse, is itself not very convincing.

The identification of an Israelite cannot be determined by the commonness of a name. David’s name, like Remaliah’s (2 Kgs 15:25), is without parallel in Israelite nomenclature. Whether or not the name David was related to the Amorite *dawidum*, no one would dare argue that David was a non-Israelite since his name was unique.¹¹⁶ Shamgar’s name is no more unique than the name David, aside from the infrequency of its appearance in biblical texts (twice, versus over eight hundred times for David) and its being a compound like שֶׁדִּי־אֹרֶךְ (Σεδουρ) in Num 1:5. Moreover, Mendenhall (1973: 162) in a different context noted that, “at this early period there exists no linguistic line of demarcation between Israelite and non-Israelite names, other than theophoric.”

I have already presented above (pages 50–60) my arguments that the name Shamgar ben-Anat does not contain a theophoric element, that בֶּן עֲנַת does not mean “Beth Anath,” and that the name need not be associated with the goddess Anath. Moreover, van Selms’ speculation (1964: 303) that, “the historical figure of Shamgar was drawn into the mythological sphere which was the intention of those who gave him this ‘metronymikon,’” is hardly persuasive in light of the other options presented.

Additional support for the claim that Anat is an Israelite name derived from עֲנַת “to help” has been provided indirectly by Ben Yehuda (1908: 3155), Zorell (1956: 455), Kopf (1958: 187–188), and Dahood (1968: 172, 322, 333). MT בַּעֲנֵן or בַּעֲנֵן in Ps 71:3;

¹¹⁶ Compare *CAD* 4: 14 and the views of Huffmon 1965: 181; Parrot 1967: 141; Soggin 1975: 154–155, note 10; and MacDonald 1976–1977: 52–71.

90:1; and 91:9 has been recognized by all four (Kopf citing Ben Yehuda, and Dahood citing Zorell) as being derived from עון, a cognate of Arabic عون “to help, give succor,” and has been equated with the nouns معونة and معوان “help, aid.” Like Hebrew מעון, ענת, מענת, מעון in Psalms 71, 90, and 91, it is synonymous with עזר or ישע and their feminine derivatives with the prefixed מ. The עני of Zech 9:9, coupled with נושע “savior,” is probably from this root also.

Benz (1972: 170) included עזרתבעל in his study of Punic and Phoenician names. This name parallels the Hebrew names עזריהו (compare עזרת יהוה in 5:23b) and עזראל. The use of the feminine עזרת with the theophoric בעל element is an exact parallel to the Elephantine ענתיהו, which is composed of the “feminine” noun ענת (the ת suffix being a masculine titular form, rather than the feminine ending) and the theophoric יהו element.

Since the vocable עון is sufficiently attested in Biblical Hebrew, as demonstrated above (pages 53–60), conjecture that the ענת component in biblical names must be related to the goddess Anath is no longer compelling. Among Israelites in the twelfth-century B.C.E. and in the Jewish colony at Yeb in the fifth-century, ענת could simply mean “help, helper, savior.”

3:31. He smote with a mattock ויכסא <אָה
(See above pages 34–35, 60–61.)

The MT *waw*-conversive ויך (for ויכה or ויכס¹¹⁷) is a case of the haplography of an א or another example of a defective spelling of a 3ms imperfect of a ל"ה verb, attested also in Num 21:14 (discussed above, pages 10–12) and in Ju 5:14. The emendation here replaces the *waw*-conversive with an emphatic *waw*, followed by an imperfect used to express continuous or repetitive action. The imperfect here suggests that Shamgar’s action was more an extended one man war of attrition fought against marauders than a single heroic feat like Samson’s killing of a

¹¹⁷ See Blommerde 1969: 29 for the emphatic ו, and GKC 107^e for the imperfect *modus rei repetitae*. The stem וכס for וכה occurs in Isa 17:7 and elsewhere; see note 30. See GKC 75^{tt} for a list of א"ל = ל"ה verbs.

thousand men in an isolated ambush with the jawbone of an ass (Ju 15:14–15), or Abishai’s spearing three hundred men (2 Sam 23: 18), or Jonathan’s stand at Micmash (1 Sam 14:1–15), passages in which the frequent use of the *waw* consecutive imperfect is conspicuous.

Contrary to the pointing in the MT, the first **אָר** in the verse is not the *nota accusativi*, but the noun **אָר** “plow, mattock,” used in the very familiar phrase of Isa 2:4 and Mic 4:3, **וְכַתְּתוּ חַרְבֹתָם לְאֵתִים** “they shall beat their swords into plowshares.” It is a cognate of Akkadian *ittu* “seeder-plow” (*CAD* 7: 312).

The LXX B-text kept alive the tradition of Shamgar’s use of a plow (*ἀροτρόπου*) but clearly assigned this meaning to **מַלְמַד** (see below), not to the **אָר** in this verse. The use of **אָר** and **מַלְמַד** in synonymous parallelism in 3:31 balances Yael’s use of two weapons in 5:26, the **יָתֵר** “tent-pin” and the **הַלְמוֹת** “hammer.” Such balanced use of parallelism reflects one aspect of the poet’s unifying style and, as noted (pages 60–61), finds its parallel in the ax and pick mentioned in a Sumerian *Königshymne*.

3:31. Two marauding bands פְּלִשְׁתִּים
(See above, pages 64–72.)

It was suggested by van Selms (1964: 304–306) that shortly after 1200 B.C.E. Shamgar fought against destroyers and pillagers from among the Sea Peoples “long before the settlement of the Philistines in the south-western plain of Palestine” But in the same statement van Selms (306) identified Shamgar’s victims as Philistines: “. . . a separate task force of Philistines was repulsed by Shamgar and his companions. The Philistines could not embark on any serious war against the dwellers of the hill country” This apparent contradiction or implicit appeal to an anachronism can be eliminated if, instead of *transliterating* **פְּלִשְׁתִּים** as “Philistines,” the word is *translated*, following the Greek *ἀλλοφύλοι*, as “(foreign) pillagers or plunderers.”

It has already been established (pages 64–69) that **פְּלִשְׁתִּים**, traditionally taken to be the “Philistines,” is better read as a dual of the feminine collective noun **פְּלִשְׁתָּ** “plunderers, marauding troops,” with Aramaic-Syriac cognates **בַּלְשַׁ** and **פַּלְשַׁ**. This is the first of five dual forms used in the poem, including the obvious **רַחֲמַתִּים** and **רַקְמַתִּים** in 5:30, and the less obvious suffixed forms

in 5:11 (פרונו "his two warriors") and 5:22 (MT עקבי = עקבו, "[the wadi's] twin banks"). This generous use of the dual, spread throughout the poem, reflects another feature of the poet's unifying and archaic, if not archaistic, style.

3:31. He plundered hundreds of men שש מאות איש

If the MT שש מאות איש is retained, the poetic structure and basic meaning of the verse remains unaffected. "Six hundred men" would be the synonymous parallel to "two marauding bands" (a-b-c/c'-b'). But reservations have been expressed about the figure six hundred. Boling (1975: 89) translated "brigade," commenting that the figure is not to be taken literally since it is an optimum figure for a military unit. Similarly, van Selms (1964: 306) noted, "600 is an indication of a military group intended to operate independently, a battalion sent out for an individual task We need not interpret our text so literally as to presume that exactly six hundred corpses were left on the battle field."

But שש is probably not the number six in the first place. It is part of a *yqtl-qtl* sequence of synonymous verbs, נכה and שסס, with complete parallelism (a-b-c/a'-c'-b'). MT שושתי in Isa 10:13, translated "I plundered" and equated with the verbs שסה and שסס "to plunder, to despoil," provides the clue. In IQIsa^a, the MT שושתי has survived as ש[ו]שית, a *po'el* of שסה, written ששה.¹¹⁸ The שש here is a *qal* of the ע"ע stem usually spelled שסס. Otherwise, the stem may be שש and a cognate of Ugaritic *tš* "to attack, to despoil" or be related to the Egyptian verb *s3s3* "to force back, to repel" (Faulkner 1962: 211). When שש "six" is read as שש "he plundered," Shamgar's heroism becomes all the more noteworthy—hundreds of marauders were themselves plundered by a single despoiler.

3:31. With a(n) (ox)goad במלמד

As proposed above, במלמד without the *nomen rectum* can mean "oxgoad." It is so used in Sirach 38:25, "how will he that

¹¹⁸ See Fenton 1969: 65–66.

handles the (ox)goad (מלמד) acquire wisdom, or he that takes pleasure in brandishing a lance (מהעיר בחנית)?”¹¹⁹ The synonymous parallelism of מלמד and חנית removes some of the ambiguity about the nature and use of מלמד as a quasi-weapon (variously translated ἀροτροποδι, αρωτροποδι, αρωτρι, αροτρι, διδακτηρι, εχτλη, εχετλη). The use of מלמד without the *nomen rectum* separates מלמד from הבקר—without changing the meaning of the phrase במלמד . . . שש “he plundered . . . with a goad.”

Boling’s preference (1975: 89) for the conflated reading מלבד מלמד, “single-handedly, using an oxgoad,” based upon the A-text doublet (αροτροποδι εκτος = מלבד מלמד), with its alliteration, is very attractive and scans well (3 + 2 / 3 + 2 + 2 / 2 + 2 and a syllable count 7:5::8:4:6::6:6 or 12:18:12). Moreover, מלבד would anticipate the idea expressed by גם הוא “by himself.” But the A-text doublet for הבקר (μωσχων “calves” and βωων “bulls/cows”) makes it more likely that αροτροποδι and εκτος are also just another doublet that does not require a different *Vorlage*.

3:31. He was appointed overseer הבקר
(See above, pages 60–64.)

On the basis of the name ben-Anat, Craigie (1972b: 239–240) relegated Shamgar to the status of a mercenary (in an unspecified army) who was closely associated with the warrior goddess Anat. But the tradition of Josephus (*Antiquities* 5: 4: 3; Naber 1888: 1: 304), Σανάγαρος ὁ Ἀνάθου παῖς αἰρεθεὶς ἄρχειν ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τῆς ἀρχῆς ἔτει κατέστρεψε τὸν βίον, “Sanagaros, the son of Anath, having been chosen to rule, in the first year of his rule ended his life,” remains more credible. If Josephus’s biblical text here was essentially the same as the MT, he apparently understood the הבקר of Ju 3:31 as a passive verb, in the sense attested at Qumran where the noun מבקר occurs as a synonym for פקיד, “overseer, judicial official.” If Josephus’s comment on the premature death of Shamgar is correct, it is then self-evident why the tradition about him is so brief.

¹¹⁹ Levi 1951: 46. van Selms’ translation (1964: 307) has been adopted.

3:31. Gained victories by himself וישע גם הוא את ישראל

The plural “victories” is intended to reflect the imperfect *modus rei repetitae* for ישע, as with ויך or וכא above (note 117). MT גם הוא את ישראל appears more prosaic than prosodic, but a cursory survey of Mandelkern’s concordance (1967: 267–268) exhibits numerous examples of גם as a particle used in poetic texts as a ballast variant or for emphasis (e.g., Isa 31:2 and Nah 3:10–11). Although there has been a tendency to excise the *nota accusativi* (Freedman 1977: 6), את is attested in fine poetic texts, and thus the blanket removal of the particle from poetry seems arbitrary.¹²⁰ The את here in 3:31 functions as much as an emphatic particle as it does as a *nota accusativi*, balancing the emphatic גם הוא and providing aural coherence with את פלשתים.¹²¹

5:6. From the days בימי יע<ו>ל
he used to attack (covertly)

The death of Shamgar was followed by Sisera’s oppression of the Israelites (Ju 4:3), the consequences of which are listed in 5:6. The use of ב “from” (see note 42) in this verse has gone unrecognized, contributing to the obscurity of the text. Burney (1918: 162) sensed the meaning but felt it necessary to emend the text to *miyyamáy* [*sic*] (= מִיָּמַי).

The name of Yael here in the MT is the major problem. It has been deleted as a gloss or emended in various ways, including העל, יאיר, יבין, עתניאל, or עלם. But none of these suggestions has won wide acceptance.¹²² Actually, consonantal יעל is only a coincidental homograph of the name Yael. It is a verb (*scriptio defectiva*) in a construct chain (see GKC 130^d), a *hiph^cil* of

¹²⁰ For a discussion on the particle את, see Blau 1954: 7–19; Walker 1955: 314–315; Blau 1956: 211–212; Saydon 1964: 192–210; and J. Macdonald 1964: 264–275.

¹²¹ For other occurrences of aural coherence in Judges 5, see Globe 1975: 172–175.

¹²² See pages 46–47; Moore 1900a: 30; and Piatti 1946: 89. Schulte (1990: 181) followed Soggin, Sellin, and Grether in reading על for יעל.

עול “to attack, to kill covertly.” This verb was noted by Pope (1965: 192) in Job 30:13, and by Driver (1967: 61) in Mic 2:9. The root is attested also in the following passages:

- (a) 2 Sam 3:34, עולה נפלת, “as one falls before the *assassins*, you have fallen”;
- (b) Isa 61:8, שנא גזל בעולה, “I hate robbery (committed) with *violence*” (note the similar idea in Luke 3:14, “Rob no one by violence or by false accusation . . .”);
- (c) Job 6:18, ילפתו ארחות דרכם יעלו בתהו ויאבד, “caravans are overthrown along their way, they are *attacked* from the desert-waste and they perish”;
- (d) Ps 58:3, אף בלב עולת תפעלון, “Nay, in your heart you devised acts of *violence*.”

MT על in 5:6 could also be read as a vari-temporal *hoph'al*, which would permit the translation of (בימי יעל (= יועל)) as “from the time he was assassinated,” which is suggested in part by Josephus’s account of Shamgar’s premature death.

Several proposals have been made to delete or emend בן ענת. Stuart (1976: 123, 133) revived Sievers’ proposal to delete the patronym for metrical reasons, and Blenkinsopp (1961: 70) with reservation endorsed Slotki’s (1931: 343) emendation, בימי ענת. Stuart’s deletion of בן ענת and ילכו seems to create meter rather than to restore it; and Blenkinsopp’s (1961: 70) introduction of Anath as a third party (בן ענת בימי ענת) only compounds the problem.

5:6b. Caravans ceased

חדלו ארחות

MT ארחות “highways” has the support of the versions; but the tradition, even if exaggerated, of Sisera’s having nine hundred chariots would hardly corroborate the idea that the roads of Galilee were deserted. If Sisera’s oppression was real, the roads had been well-traveled. According to Ju 5:30, Sisera’s mother and the ladies of her court assumed Sisera was raiding

a caravan for the spoils of cloth and silver, which were common items of caravan trade, attested in Old Assyrian trade documents (Veenhof 1972: 89, 152–154, 181). The words from Sisera’s court suggest a well-established practice of deploying chariots to despoil caravans, which led to circuitous caravan movements.¹²³

The repointing of the MT, proposed by many commentators, including Burney and Smith, has been adopted by the RSV and the NEB. The NAB translation, “slavery caravans ceased,” appears to be a gloss to enhance Yael’s reputation. Since Yael really does not appear in the poem at this point, the text need not be paraphrased to make her appear virtuous in stopping *slave* trade. Freedman’s translation (1975: 13), “In the days of Jael, they enriched themselves, From caravans . . . ,” is problematic in that

- (a) it assumes the poem lacks a sequential structure, since a reference here to the enjoyment of the spoils of victory precedes any reference to the battle itself;
- (b) it assumes that Shamgar was a contemporary of Yael in spite of the tradition of Ju 3:31;
- (c) the preposition “from” is lacking in the MT.

Freedman’s reading here of לָדָל II “to be fat, to be plump”¹²⁴ instead of לָדָל I “to cease” would be acceptable if the subject of the verb were Sisera’s troops which kept the Israelite caravaneers

¹²³ Note Schloen’s (1993: 34–35) discussion of Old Assyrian donkey caravan practices:

They tried to dodge the taxes, tolls, and duties that ate into their profits. Using “secondary, unusual and probably difficult tracks” they smuggled their goods past the toll stations or towns which caravans had to pass on the way to their eventual destination. So commonly was this done that there were payments and contracts for services by professional smugglers. Local rulers, of course, tried to prevent smuggling and confiscated illegal shipments. Under similar conditions, no doubt, the caravans of the Song of Deborah kept to “roundabout routes” (Judg 5:6) in order to avoid excessive tolls.

¹²⁴ See Thomas 1956: 14–15; Calderone 1961: 451–460 and 1962: 412–419. Since the Israelites could not literally eat everything they plundered, Gottwald (1979: 507) conjectured that לָדָל stem II “to be plump” would in this context have “a metaphorical sense of ‘feasting upon’ the plunder as a nutritional source for building up the emaciated socioeconomic body of Israel.”

on the run. In light of the re-establishment of an Egyptian presence in Galilee by Ramesses III after 1190 B.C.E., it seems unlikely that Israelite tribes after the defeat of Sisera could have sustained a prolonged period of supremacy which would have permitted the kind of piracy which Freedman's translation suggests. Thus, חָדַל I "to cease" remains preferable—even though it has been abandoned in the NRSV—since it is compatible with the demonstrable cause-and-effect sequence structured into the poem.

5:6c. Caravaneers had to travel וְהַלְכֵי נְתִיבוֹת יִלְכוּ

The first ׀ of וְהַלְכֵי is retained as an emphatic ׀. The paralleling of אֲרָחוֹת "caravans," and נְתִיבוֹת הַלְכֵי suggests that the latter term is equivalent to Akkadian *ālik ḥarrani* "caravaneer, traveler, or expeditionary force" (*CAD* 1: 1: 342; Albright 1968: 60). The foot-traveler (הַלְכֵי עַל דְּרֶךְ) is mentioned in 5:10, where a preposition appears in the construct chain, unlike *ālik ḥarrani*. The verb יִלְכוּ cannot be deleted as Stuart (1976: 124, 133) proposed, but should be read as an imperfect having the modal force of necessity.¹²⁵ The synonymous parallelism of אֲרָחוֹת "caravans" and נְתִיבוֹת הַלְכֵי "caravaneers" is balanced with aural coherence by אֲרָחוֹת in 5:6a and אֲרָחוֹת in 5:6b, like the use in 3:31 of both אֵת "plowshare" and the (emphatic) direct object indicator אֵת. Lindars (1995: 237) failed to recognize aural coherence as a poetic device and preferred to delete אֲרָחוֹת as "poor near-repetition."

5:7a. Warriors deserted . . . failed to assist פְּרוּזִין חָדְלוּ . . . חָדְלוּ

The LXX A-text transliteration φραζων for MT פְּרוּזִין reflects the uncertainty about this word. Frequently it has been translated "peasants" on the basis of פְּרוּזָה "a village or hamlet" and פְּרוּזֵי "a

¹²⁵ GKC 107^o treats the modal idea of necessity with the negative, and GKC 107ⁿ briefly cites several examples of "obligation or necessity according to the judgment of another person." One can compare the *yqtl* of necessity in Ugaritic, e.g., 1 Aqht 215 (*CTA* 19. I. 215), *qhḥn wtšqyn yn*, "Take, and you must drink the wine." Note *UT*, sections 9.5 and 13.58.

village dweller” (e.g., Lindars [1995: 29] “villagers”) or “peasantry” (Fewell and Gunn [1990: 402]). Rashi surmised the poetic line to mean “open cities without walls ceased to be inhabited” (noted by Rosenberg 1983: 37) and Rashi’s understanding was followed by Budde (1897: 42), Gottwald (1979: 505 “rural-populace”), Stager (1988: 225), and Schloen (1993: 20), “villagers in Israel held back [from volunteering for battle.]”

Rabin (1955: 127) interpreted פִּירוֹן as “championship,” and Seale (1962: 344–345) proposed a by-form of פִּיר “to distribute generously,” whereas Garbini (1978:23–24), followed by Couturier (1989: 226), equated the word with בְּרוֹן “iron” and argued that Israel could not get iron.

However, early translations of פִּירוֹן in Hab 3:14 (LXX δυναστω, Targum’s גִּיבְרִי, and the Vulgate’s *bellatorum*) provide the clue for פִּיר “warrior” or “caravan guard.” The B-text δυνατοι and Lucianic κρατουυτες of Ju 5:7 may be references to “warlords” and “battle champions.” Also, contra Stager (1988: 224), three words from Papyrus Anastasi I (*p-r-t* “warrior,” *p-r-c* “hero,” and *š-r-š* “to hasten”) clarify several cruces in Judges 5, including this one. Albright (1968: 43) recognized the connection between *p-r-t* and פִּירוֹן. Jer 51:30–32 provides a parallel collocation of גְּבוּרִים, אֲנָשֵׁי מִלְחָמָה, and the verb חָדַל I. It reads, “the heroes of Babylon fled from fight (חָדְלוּ גְבוּרֵי בָבֶל לְהִלָּחֵם) . . . the soldiers panicked (וְאֲנָשֵׁי הַמִּלְחָמָה נִבְהָלוּ).” This identification is also supported by the Arabic برز في الحرب “he went forth into battle.”¹²⁶

In Ju 5:6b, Jer 51:32b, and Deut 15:11 (*niph^{al}*), חָדַל III is the cognate of خذل “he abstained from or neglected aiding him, [6] he fled from fight” (Lane 1865: 713). (The ځ = ך, instead of ך, appears also with קָדַר “to be dark” and قذر “to be dirty.”)

Freedman’s translation (1975: 13–14), “the yeomanry enriched themselves,” and Boling’s reading (1975: 102), “the warriors grew plump,” would be more convincing if the lines were

¹²⁶ See Lane 1863: 186. Craigie (1972a: 349–350) summarized the Arabic evidence and concurred with “warrior.” This interpretation is rejected by Kaltner (1996: 77) and Stager (1988: 225) who, preferring “village tribesmen,” says, “Craigie has gone fishing for etymologies in the vast reservoir of Arabic and hooked a root (*baraza*, ‘going forth to battle’).” J. Gray (1988: 428, note 19) would settle for a collective singular פִּירוֹן or plural פִּירוֹים “champion(s).”

transposed to the poem's end. But in their present position before the battle scene, the prepositions "from . . . until" belong to the statement of cause for the conflict between Sisera's coalition and the Israelites. Lewis (1985: 105–108), followed by Schloen (1993: 20), convincingly argued against the existence in Hebrew of the stem חָדַל II (= خَدَلَ "to become plump in the shank and forearms"). But Hoppe in the NRSV (1991) followed Boling and Freedman and translated "the peasantry prospered in Israel, they grew fat on plunder," with the "plunder" reflecting the MT עַד .

5:7b. Until the rise of Deborah $\text{עַד שְׁקַמְתִּי דְבוֹרָה}$
(See above, pages 73–77.)

Boling (1975: 102–109) translated עַד as "again" and put it with the preceding poetic line. By contrast, Freedman (1975: 13–14) translated "booty,"¹²⁷ based upon the Ugaritic *mgd* which appears in parallelism with *lhm*. But the traditional understanding of עַד "until" remains preferable. As stated above (page 36), שְׁקַמְתִּי is not the 1cs *qal* or 2fs *shaph'el* of קָם , but the feminine participle with the prefixed relative שְׁ and the affixed *hireq compaginis*. This שְׁקַמְתִּי can be added to Robertson's (1972: 69–76) list of twenty-six occurrences of the morpheme ' (= -i) attached to participles. Reading the participle here has the support of the B-text ἕως οὗ ἀναστῆ . Since the *hireq compaginis* goes without notice in the LXX, one need not assume that the LXX had the *Vorlage* קָמָה or קָמָה . In this context, קָם means "to rise to power," attested in Ex 1:8, Deut 34:10, and Prov 28:12, 28. Poetic balance is achieved by the repetition of שְׁקַמְתִּי (like the earlier repetitions of בִּימֵי and חָדַל and the wordplays on אֲרָחוֹת and אֵה), the synonymous parallelism of דְבוֹרָה "Ladyship" and אֵה "Mother," and the balanced use of the עַד and אֵה .

5:1a. Then Deborah made $\text{וְתִשָּׂא דְבוֹרָה בָּרַק}$
Barak march forth

Schulte (1990: 179), in line with current studies, noted that 5:1 "ist sicher redaktionell und dient dem Einbau in den Kontext. Möglicherweise war ursprünglich nur Debora genannt . . ."

¹²⁷ See Calderone 1961: 451, who argued for עַד "booty" in 1 Sam 2:5.

Traditionally, Deborah's role has been defined on the basis of Ju 5:1, 3, and 12 which, seemingly, have the verb שִׁיר "to sing." She has been viewed as the singer whose chanting "would be a source of inspiration to the warriors on the battlefield" (Craigie 1969a: 260), which presupposes a very small and quiet battlefield or a very powerful voice. However, שִׁיר is not the verb of choice for understanding this verse, which is integral to the poem.

When Judges 5 is read *in toto* as a battle ballad, verse 1 becomes the poetic parallel to the prose account of Deborah's sending Barak into battle (Ju 4:6–7). Minimal changes in the MT of 5:1 are required to restore the original meter, syllable balance, and alliteration (compared to deleting part or all of the verse as a redactor's gloss). These include the repointing of וַתִּשֶׁר as a causative form, the deletion of the conjunction ו before Barak's name, and the transposition of לְאַמֵּר from 5:1a to 5:2a.

These changes result in a brief "commission" motif which has been identified as one of five sequential motifs common to the "call schema."¹²⁸ This verse with its "commission" motif links the "allusion to distress" motif—which precedes in 5:5–6 (which for other reasons discussed above [pages 35–36] must follow 3:31 and precede 5:1)—to the motifs of "assurance" and "signs" which follow in Deborah's exhortation (5:8 and 5:13, as translated above). Only the "objection" motif is lacking in the poem. Otherwise it would match the typical "call schema."

Just as the LXX ἤσαν could be parsed as a contraction of ἤσαν, 3rd sing. imperfect of εἶμι "to go," as well as the first aorist of ᾄδω "to sing" (Liddell and Scott⁹ 1940: 489, 778), so too the MT תִּשֶׁר can be parsed as a feminine imperfect of several stems in addition to שִׁיר "to sing." The וַתִּשֶׁר need not be a *waw*-conversive, nor viewed as the feminine counterpart to יִשֶׁר מִשְׁהָה in Ex 15:1. It is only a coincidence that שִׁיר and תִּשֶׁר are *yqtl* preterits and come from vocables that produce homographs.¹²⁹ The MT תִּשֶׁר in 5:1 is a *hiph'îl* of one of the following stems:

¹²⁸ See the excellent study of Ackerman, 1975: 5–13.

¹²⁹ On the *yqtl* preterit see *UT*, sec. 9. 4; Cross 1950: 54–56; Dahood, 1970: 417–419; Cathcart 1973: 136; Kuhnigk 1974: 97; and Penar 1975: 86. A proposal to read the MT שִׁיר of 5:12 as אִשִּׁיר (= אִסִּיר) has been made by J. Gray (1988: 433, note 33); see page 161.

- (a) שׁור I “to proceed, to travel, to journey,” a cognate of Akkadian *šāru*, attested in Isa 57:9, “you journeyed (וַיִּשָּׁרְךָ) to the king with oil” and also in Ezek 27:25 “the ships of Tarshish traveled for you (שָׁרוּתֶיךָ)”;
 (b) שָׁרָה “to strengthen” found in the A-text doublet in 5:12, ἐνισχύωσιν ἐξανίστασσο, Βαρακ, καὶ ἐνίσχυσοσιν, Δεββωρα, τὸν Βαρακ, “being strong, rise up and out, Barak, and, Deborah, strengthen Barak”;
 (c) אָשַׁר “to march,” cognate of Ugaritic *ʿatr* (UT 369: 424) and attested as a *piel* causative in Isa 3:12, 9:15 (where אָשַׁר is in collocation with אָרַחֲוֹת and דַּרְךְ), and Prov 23:19, “move your heart in the way (וְאָשַׁר בְּדַרְךְךָ לְבָבְךָ)”;
 (d) שׁור III “to attack, to leap upon, to assault,” a cognate of Ugaritic *šry* (Driver 1956: 148), Arabic سار (سور) (Lane 1872: 1464, 1483), and Syriac ܣܘܪ (J. Payne Smith 1903: 596), and attested in Hos 13:7, כַּנְמֹר עַל דַּרְךְ, אֲשׁוֹר, “like a leopard I will attack (them) along the way.”¹³⁰

Even though there is support from the Greek variants for reading שָׁרָה here, the stem is most likely שׁור III or אָשַׁר (corresponding to the variants וַיִּסַּר and וַיִּאֲסַר in Ex 14:25 and the variants הַאֲסוּרִים and הַסּוּרִים in Ecc 4:14.) The elision of the א (like the יָהֵל for אָהֵל in Isa 13:20) occurs frequently enough (GKC 68^{h,k} and note 245 below) that it need not suggest a scribal error. The addition of the א in the restored תִּשְׁאִיר is for conformity and clarity, to preclude misreading it as שִׁיר “to sing.”

In Ju 5:2, in contrast to the A-text which has προαιρέσει “preference, goodwill” and the B-text ἐκουσιασθηγαί “willing,” the Lucianic MS n (which contains several doublets) reads προελυσει “going forth” (Liddell and Scott⁹ 1940: 532, 1477). This

¹³⁰ On the meaning of שׁור in Hos 13:7, compare Guillaume 1960–1961: 32–33. Wolfe (1974: 226), following RSV, translated “lurk,” based upon שׁור “to watch”; but שׁור must be a verb of violence matching the אֲפַנְשָׁם of the next stich (13:8), which he translated “I will attack them.”

προελευσει can hardly be a variant for the נָרַב or the פָּרַע of 5:2 (see pages 122–126). Rather, it is a remote variant translation of the תָּשַׁר of 5:1, and a synonym of ἦσαν = ἦισαν “she was going.” Thus, προελευσει reflects an *early* reading in which ותָּשַׁר was derived from שׁוֹר or אֲשַׁר, suggesting—along with the τὸν Βαρακ of the A-text discussed next—a *Vorlage* having only בָּרַק rather than the וּבָרַק now in the MT with the prefixed conjunction וּ.

Moreover, the A-text doublets in 5:12 (ἐνίσχυων [= שִׁיר] ἐξ-ανίστασο [= קוֹם] Βαρακ and καὶ ἐνίσχυσον [= וְשׁוֹר or וְשׁוֹרִי] Δεββωρα τὸν Βαρακ) appear at first glance to be a variation of the MT of 5:12, דְּבַרֵי שִׁיר קוֹם בָּרַק or שִׁיר קוֹם בָּרַק (see page 23 and note 164)—as though דְּבַרֵי equals דְּבַרָה as שִׁיר equals שִׁירָה. But it is much more likely that MT דְּבַרֵי שִׁיר קוֹם בָּרַק of 5:12 attracted to itself a variant belonging properly to 5:1, namely the καὶ ἐνίσχυσον, Δεββωρα, τὸν Βαρακ from a *Vorlage* which had וְתָשַׁר דְּבַרָה וּבָרַק instead of the MT וְתָשַׁר דְּבַרָה וּבָרַק.

Thus, the Lucianic and A-text remote or misplaced variants (προελευσει [= תָּשַׁר] and καὶ ἐνίσχυσον, Δεββωρα, τὸν Βαρακ [= וְתָשַׁר דְּבַרָה וּבָרַק]) provide very important evidence that early translators of 5:1 credited Deborah with marching forth rather than having Deborah and Barak singing *duets*, as still suggested by Fewell and Gunn (1990: 400), or having Deborah singing a *solo*, as James (1951: 61) earlier envisaged: “We may picture Deborah moving in and out through the companies, kindling afresh their combat-fury in the name of Yahweh.” To the contrary, she roused Barak and the Israelites by the power of her spoken word and the authority of her office. Her poetic summons survives in her exhortation in 5:2c–4 and 5:8–9.

This interpretation of 5:1 requires that all but one letter (the וּ of the MT וּבָרַק) be retained as part of the original introduction to Deborah’s exhortation.

5:2a. When the heroine called for heroism בְּפָרַע פְּרַעוֹת

Despite numerous studies, פָּרַע remains a crux in Ju 5:2 as well as in Deut 32:42, “I will make arrows drunk with blood . . .

from the ‘long-haired’ (פִּרְעוֹה) heads of the enemy.”¹³¹ The desiderated vocable is one that makes sense in both passages. Hebrew lexica generally list three meanings for פִּרְע, namely,

- (1) “leader,” a cognate of Arabic فَرَعَ “he overtopped, he excelled,” which is clearly reflected in the LXX A-text of Ju 5:2 and in Theodotian (ἐν τῷ ἄρξασθαι ἀρχηγούς). Lindars (1995: 225) cited the Old Latin *dum inperant principes* which, as Lindars noted, is preserved in the commentary of Verecundus in addition to Codex Lugdunensis. This meaning has been adopted by RSV, NEB, and NAB (“the leaders took the lead”);
- (2) “long hair,” a cognate of Arabic فَرُوعٌ “long or full hair,” which is the basis for the “locks are long” in the NRSV 5:2 and the RSV “long-haired heads” in Deut 32:42, even though the LXX (followed by the NEB and NAB) has κεφαλῆς ἀρχόντων “head of rulers” in 32:42;
- (3) “to let alone, to let go,” a cognate of Arabic فَرَعَ “it became vacant, it became empty or void.” (Lane 1887: 2378, 2379c, 2381a; BDB 828).

Smith (1912: 85) and Lindars (1995: 227) chose פִּרְע I; Meek (1927: 384), Cross (1959: 27), Freedman (1975: 15), Stuart (1976: 128), Seale (1978: 51), O’Connor (1980: 219), and the NRSV (1992) opted for פִּרְע II in Ju 5:2 (“when locks were long” or “when locks hung wild”); Pedersen (1953: 672), T. H. Gaster (1969: 418, 529), Boling (1975: 107),¹³² Janzen (1989: 393), and Schloen (1993: 22), respectively, selected פִּרְע III (“for vehement action,” “when they cast off restraint [inhibitions],” “when they cast off restraints,” and “letting loose”); Burney (1918: 107), followed by P. D. Miller (1973: 87–88), combined

¹³¹ Note particularly Rabin 1955: 128–133; and Craigie 1968: 397–399.

¹³² Contrary to Boling’s statement (1975: 107), neither Craigie (1968: 399) nor Lane (1872: 2381) cited فَرَعَ used in the sense of volunteering for war. That meaning is attested with بَرَعَ [5] or نَدَب [1] and [8].

פרע II and III (“when locks hung loose”); and the JB, in Lucianic fashion, introduced all three meanings (“the warriors in Israel unbound their hair”).

On the basis of Prov 29:18, *פרע* “without a vision people have no restraint,” Soggin proposed (1981c: 84) “having regained liberty.” J. Gray (1988: 423) hesitatingly concurred, preferring Soggin’s reading or Craigie’s translation (1968: 398) “because of total commitment in Israel” instead of Weiser’s (1957: 72) “*beim Hängenlassen des (sonst hochgebundenen) Haupthaars*” and Weiser’s relating the hairdo to Akkadian ritual and liturgical texts.

Rabin (1966: 131–133) argued against reading “long hair” or “leader” in both Ju 5:2 and Deut 32:42. In response to Burney’s (1918: 107) appeal to the long hair of the wild Enkidu in the Gilgamesh Epic (I. ii. 36) and Seale’s (1962: 346) appeal to the disheveled hair of the Bedouin fighters, Rabin noted, “The only Arabic reference known to me shows that before a decisive battle the warriors shave their heads.” He concluded, “The rendering [‘when hair was worn long’] does not fit Dt. XXXII, 42, *פרעות*, *בראש אויב*, if only because ‘the long-haired heads of the foe’ in Hebrew would be *ראש אויב*.”

Craigie (1968: 397–399) argued that *פרע* was used in synonymous parallelism with *נרב*. He argued that since *נרב* meant “to volunteer, to offer oneself willingly,” *פרע* could be the cognate of the Arabic *فرغ* when used idiomatically (as in a threat) meaning, “he applied himself exclusively (to someone).” He translated *פרעות*, *בפרע*, “when men wholly dedicated themselves,” which fits the context of Ju 5:2, but not Deut 32:42. Rabin (1966: 133) had challenged the translation of *התנרב* in Ju 5:2 as “volunteered”; and he suggested instead the Arabic cognate *ندب* “he called or incited someone to do his duty in war, he responded to duty without being summoned.” Rabin took *פרע* as the cognate of Arabic *فرض* “to notch or to share” and *أقترض* “to receive pay,” and of Syriac *ܦܪܥ* “to pay or to repay” (mediated through Aramaic, since *ض* became *צ* in Hebrew but *ܥ* in Aramaic). He argued that *פרע* could mean “give someone his due,” and translated 5:2, “when duty was done in Israel, when the God-blessed people answered the call.” But this argument is less convincing than the one on *נרב* since it is based on semantic

extensions of questionable cognates. In addition, it offers no solution to the crux in Deut 32:42.

A more likely solution was offered by P. D. Miller (1973: 221) in a footnote which called attention to the Egyptian *pr-c* “hero” and *pr-c-ib* “courageous, heroic.”¹³³ This word is no doubt related to Arabic *فرع* and its by-form *برع* “he excelled in knowledge, or courage, or other qualities,” as found in the expressions *فرع صاحبه* and *برع صاحبه* “he became superior to his companion” (Lane 1863, 1893: 189b, 2379b). It is precisely this meaning which is attested in Papyrus Anastasi I (28: 2. 3), “I know how to hold the reins more skillfully than thou, there is no *pr-c-3* (hero / champion) who is my equal.”¹³⁴

Without citing the Egyptian *pr-c* “hero,” Bordreuil (1967: 29–36) argued that *פרע* provided the clue to the enigmatic pun in the “Report of Wenamun,” which is further evidence of the use of this word in Canaan around the time of Deborah. According to Bordreuil, Penamun (the Egyptian cup-bearer serving Zeker Baal) must have told Wenamun, “the shadow of the *pr-c* (“hero, chief, champion”), your lord, has fallen on you.” This was misunderstood by Wenamun as meaning, “the shadow of the *pr-c-3* (Pharaoh), your lord, has fallen on you.”¹³⁵ This accounts for Zeker Baal’s irritation with Wenamun and for the use by Wenamun of the formulaic “life, peace, health” after an apparent reference to the Pharaoh.

Bordreuil also noted the *לפרע* on the seal inscription from the Beirut area published by Reifenberg (1939: 197) which may be the title *פרע* “hero.” Such occurrences of *פרע* in Syria, along with the Ugaritic *pr-c* and *pr-c-t* “chief, prince, princess,” lend support for the translation here of Hebrew *פרעוה* “heroine,”¹³⁶ a

¹³³ See Erman and Grapow 1897: 527–528; and Gardiner 1966: 565.

¹³⁴ See Gardiner 1911: 29–30; and Albright 1931: 217.

¹³⁵ Compare the interpretation offered by Goedicke (1975: 100–102).

¹³⁶ For another occurrence in Gen 14:2, see note 48.

title of prestige and power. This meaning brings into sharp focus the nature of Deborah's leadership. It was not so much a matter of her doing her duty as it was her going beyond the call of duty, as the tD stem, *تبرع*, indicates, "he engaged unbidden in war" (Lane 1863: 189).

This derivation and translation fits not only Ju 5:2, but also Deut 32:42, "I will make my arrows drunk with blood . . . from the head of the hero (פרעות) of the enemy." The ת- suffix functions as a title for males (see page 205), like ספרת and קהלת (GKC 122^r). The plural פרעות in Deut 32: 42 (but פרעת in the Samaritan text) and Ju 5:2 can be retained as honorific plurals, like the חכמות in Prov 1:20. The feminine פרעות "heroine" would be a synonym for גבורה. The LXX A-text ἀρχηγούς (used elsewhere to translate אלוף, נשיא, ראש, and שר) reflects the MT, but it missed the military nuance of פרע and its original honorific plural.

The ב of בפרע is the circumstantial ב, which is followed by the (*piel*) infinitive absolute having the force of a finite verb or with the ellipsis of the finite verb;¹³⁷ and "the eager pursuit of an action [expressed by a *piel*] may also consist in urging others to do the same" (GKC 52^g). The twenty manuscripts cited by Ken- nicott (1780: 488) having the *qal* infinitive בפרוע (= MT בפרע) reflect late *scriptio plena*.

5:2b. When the militia was summoned בהתנדב עם

The cognates of Hebrew נדב II are Arabic ندب "he summoned or he (someone to war)," ائتدب "he obeyed the summons or call (to war)," ندبة "a summons," and مندب "a place to which one is summoned" (Lane 1893: 2778c–2779). As Rabin (1966: 129, note 37) stated, this vocable is distinct from the denominative נדב I "to volunteer" (from נדבה "a freewill offering"), which was "possibly borrowed from Accadian *nidbu, nin-dabu* 'voluntary food offering,' a word etymologically isolated in Acc. and hence perhaps of non-Semitic origin."

¹³⁷ GKC 113^{y-eg}; McDaniel 1968b: 208–210; and note 151, below.

Reading ׁע as a “militia” follows Boling (1975: 71, 101) who noted, “In conquest traditions *hā-‘ām* alternates with *‘am ham-milhāmā*, the people-at-war.” Yadin (1962: 44) had noted this use of ׁע in the Qumran War Scroll: “Here the term *‘am* (as also in the description of the battle, viii, 9 . . .) marks, as in the O. T., the military character of the congregation organized for war.”

5:2c. (by her) saying, ל]אמר

The word ל]אמר could be deleted as a gloss, but it is attested sufficiently in poetry (Ps 71:11; 105:11; 119:82; Job 24:15; Amos 8:5; Isa 14:24; Jer 10:14) that unless it really messes up the meter or the syllable balance it should be retained. When transposed to its present position, it contributes to the 2 + 2 + 2 / 3 + 3 meter and functions as a quotation marker introducing Deborah’s exhortation. Once ותשר was read as “she sang,” בפרע was taken to be the initial word of Deborah’s song (or of Deborah and Barak’s duet). As a result, ל]אמר was shifted to precede בפרע.

Since the imperative phrase יהוה ברכו was the original opening phrase of Deborah’s exhortation, the direct quotation indicator has been transposed in this study to precede this initial imperative. The doublets in the LXX which treat ל]אמר as a finite form (εἰπευ in MSS a₂b₂bhlptvwy, εἰπov in MSS MNcdgn, and εἰπαυ in MSS ax) suggest that the ל of ל]אמר was a late addition, and for that reason it could be deleted.

III. Deborah’s exhortation: Ju 5:2c–5, 8–9

5:2d. Praise Yahweh! ברכו יהוה

Rabin (1955: 133) and Stuart (1976: 123, 128) emended MT יהוה ברכו to ברוכי יהוה, making it a modifier of עם, translating respectively, “the God-blessed people” and “the consecrated of Yahweh.” But the meter and the syllable balance of 5:1–2b and 5:2c–4 favor the MT, which does not treat the phrase as a modifier of עם. Contrary to O’Connor (1980: 219), who read a 3ms, the MT יהוה ברכו serves as the *incipit* to Deborah’s exhortation, which ends in 5:9 with the same words serving as the *inclusio*.

The exclamatory “Praise Yahweh!” was Deborah’s affirmation of her allegiance to Yahweh as much as it was an appeal for covenant loyalty from the Israelite tribes. The ברכו יהוה of the *incipit* and of the *inclusio* were original extra-metrical elements used to demarcate the exhortation. But the misplaced quotation marker, [ל]אמר, and the editorial insertion of part of the Shamgar tradition into the middle of the exhortation (see pages 33–36) obscured the original function of ברכו יהוה in 5:3 and 5:9.

A “blessing of Yahweh” survives in Josh 22:22 (although without the use of the word ברך). It was made at the beginning of a confrontation between the nine Cis-Jordanian tribes and the three Trans-Jordanian tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, when it was learned that the eastern Israelites had built an altar to Yahweh in Canaan, along the Jordan. The Reubenite coalition affirmed when confronted by the chiefs of Israel:

אל אלהים יהוה אל אלהים יהוה
הוא ידע¹³⁸ וישראל הוא ידע

“Yahweh is God of gods! Yahweh is God of gods!
He acknowledges, yea, he gives recognition (to) Israel!”

The crisis ended with another blessing of Yahweh by the tribes. The exact wording of the blessing is not given (Josh 22:33) but the results of such a blessing is clearly stated:

ויברכו אלהים בני ישראל
ולא אמרו לעלות עליהם לצבא

“and the Israelites blessed God and spoke no more of making
war against them [Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh].”

It seems clear that the exclamation ברכו יהוה need not have been restricted to cultic events or limited strictly to hymnic literature. Consequently, the ברכו יהוה of Ju 5:3 and 5:9 need not require a cultic interpretation of this war ballad. The exclamatory

¹³⁸ The ך is emphatic (see Blommerde 1969: 29; Dahood 1970: 401). Both verbs are participles, with ידע being here the technical term of covenant recognition. This verse can be added to the list of relevant texts noted by Huffmon (1966: 31–37) and Huffmon and Parker (1966: 36–38).

phrase evidently functioned in early Israel in the same way that *الله أكبر* “God is great!” (Lane 1885: 2587) still functions in the Islamic world.

5:3b. I am for Yahweh!

אֲנֹכִי לַיהוָה

Lindars (1995: 228) faulted the *řebia*^c accentuation of אֲנֹכִי, as well as Burney and Moore for following it and translating “I, to Yahweh will I sing.” He also rejected Weiser’s and McDaniel’s interjection “I am for Yahweh.” He preferred “I will to Yahweh, I will sing,” wrongly identifying אֲנֹכִי לַיהוָה אֲשִׁירָה as a “repetitive parallelism.” This call is Deborah’s affirmation of allegiance to Yahweh. Similar expressions appear in Ju 7:18, אֲנֹכִי לַיהוָה וְלִגְדֵעוֹן, “for Yahweh and for Gideon!” and Josh 5:13, הֲלֵנּוּ אִתָּה “are you on our side?” There was perhaps a need for Deborah to declare her allegiance to Yahweh since this “Mother in Israel” seemingly had a Hittite connection (as discussed above, pages 73–78). Her words have the ring of a battle cry,¹³⁹ and embedded in her summons for a militia was a declaration of war against the Canaanite coalition, stated with synonymous parallels (but not synonymous parallelism) which follow her exclamation.

5:3c. I will attack, I will fight

אֲנֹכִי אֲשִׁירָה אֲזַמֵּר

Muraoka (1985: 49) recognized אֲנֹכִי here as an emphatic pronoun. Exegetical tradition has identified the verbs as שָׁר “to sing” and זָמַר “to make melody,” which are often attested in synonymous parallelism (as in Pss 27:6; 101:1; 104:33 and 105:2) and occur together in Ugaritic, *dyšr wyđmr*, “who sings and chants.”¹⁴⁰ But hymnic terms in Deborah’s exhortation are out of place, since it was a summons to battle rather than a post-battle hymn of victory. In this context, אֲשִׁירָה can be identified as a *qal* cohortative of שָׁר III “to attack, to assault,” a cognate of Ugaritic *šr*, South Arabic *šwr* and Arabic سار (سار) (see 121–122).

¹³⁹ On the use of ל in a battle-cry, see Jones 1975: 650.

¹⁴⁰ *UT* (Supplement), 551; Blau and Greenfield 1970: 12.

Synonymous parallelism also supports taking the **אשירה** to mean “to attack, to assault.” In this summons to war, **זמר** is surely related to the Arabic **ذمر** “he incited, or urged (to fight),” as in (a) **ذمره في الحرب** “I instigated war,” (b) the verbal noun **ذمار** “an urging to fight,” and (3) **يوم الذمار** “the day of war.”¹⁴¹ If the **זמר** is read as an intensive *piel*, it also matches the Arabic **ذمر** in forms [1] and [6], “the eager pursuit of the action, and causing others to do the same,” as reflected in Ju 4:6, 4:9 and 5:1, as translated in this study. The thematic *i* vowel of **אשירה**, instead of the anticipated *u* vowel, may be the reverse of the *Qere* and *Ketib* **שור/שיר** in 1 Sam 18:6.¹⁴² As noted (page 121), **שור** III

¹⁴¹ Lane 1872: 977c–978a. Compare Ugaritic *ḏmr*, (*UT*, 388 no. 727), and Akkadian *šummuru* (*CAD* 16: 92), used with reference to the pursuit of the enemy. The equation **זמר** = *ḏmr*, translated “strong, brave,” has been widely discussed. Cognates are attested in Amorite, Old South Arabic, and Phoenician. It has been identified in numerous biblical texts (see KB³ 263), including:

- (1) Gen 43:11, **זמרת הארץ**, “the strength of the land” (KB³ 260b);
- (2) Ex 15:2, Isa 12:2, and Ps 118:4, **יה וזמרת יה**, “my might and my defense are Yahweh” (Cross 1950: 101–103; Cross and Freedman 1955: 243);
- (3) 2 Sam 23:1, **נעים זמרות ישראל**, “the favorite of the defense of Israel” (Cross and Freedman 1955: 243);
- (4) Isa 25:5, **זמיר עריצים יענה**, “the strength of the ruthless was brought low” (Tur Sinai, *Commentary to Job* [in Hebrew], cited by Sarna 1964: 351);
- (5) Ezek 8:17, **שלחים את הזמורה**, “they sent out strong men” (Sarna 1964: 351);
- (6) Nah 2:3, **וזמריהם שחתו**, “their soldiers they slaughtered” (Cathcart 1973: 88–89);
- (7) Ps 59:18, **אזמר**, “I am safeguarded” (Dahood 1968: 74);
- (8) Ps 119:4, **זמרות היו לי**, “they have been my defense” (Sarna 1964: 351; Dahood 1970: 180);
- (9) Job 35:10, **נתן זמרות בלילה**, “who gives strength in the night” (Tur Sinai, cited by Sarna 1964: 351; Pope 1965: 228–229).

¹⁴² See Gordis 1937: 80–81, 128, and 182 note 248.

occurs in Hos 13:7.¹⁴³ It appears also in Ps 92:11, “My eyes have seen the downfall of my attackers (שׁוֹרֵי = MT 92:12), and my ears have heard the doom of my evil assailants (קָמִי).” (Following the LXX’s τοῖς ἐχθροῖς μου, the NRSV has “my enemies” in parallelism with קָמִי “my assailants.”

Deborah’s exhortation: 5:4–5

Globe (1974: 168–178) surveyed critical opinions on these two verses. It will suffice here to note only a few illustrative opinions. Several scholars have proposed numerous deletions in 5:4–5. For example, Lipinski (1967: 199), who had no difficulty with 5:4a, translated 5:4b–5, “la terre tremble, les cieux vacillent (נטפו) et (פ) les montagnes s’aplatissent, devant le Sinaitique, devant Yahwe, le Dieu d’Israel.” This reading called for the deletion of six of the eighteen words of 5:4b–5 (the first יהוה, then גם, then עבים נטפו, and then מים).

Likewise, Cross (1973: 100–101) deleted seven of the eighteen words, viewing the phrase גם שמים נטפו “yea, the heavens shook” as an “ancient oral variant” for הררים נולו “the mountains shuddered.” He treated גם עבים נטפו מים “yea, the clouds dripped water” as a secondary attraction to the oral variant גם שמים נטפו, once it had become incorporated into the tradition and was reinterpreted to mean, “yea, the heavens dripped.” Similarly, Richter (1963: 69–71; 1964: 400) deleted eight words (גם עבים, נטפו מים, זה סיני, הררים נולו, נטפו מים). By contrast, Stuart (1976: 123–133) deleted only מים and גם, but he added a third מפני זה סיני before to restore complete repetitive parallelism.

Blenkinsopp, Boling, Globe, and P. D. Miller accepted the consonantal MT, and J. Gray (1988: 424) retained the MT *nātāyū* [sic] (= נטפו) with the Targum, but followed the Targum and the Septuagint in reading נולו “were convulsed” rather than “flowed

¹⁴³ Compare Dahood 1968: 25, 337. He treats שׁוֹרֵי as a variant or a corruption of שׁוֹרֵי. The vocables שׁוֹר and שׁרר may be by-forms, like many other ע"ו and ע"ע verbs. The meaning “assailant, attacker” for שׁוֹרר in Pss 54:7; 56:3; and 59:11 fits the context better than Dahood’s “defamer,” which seems appropriate only for Ps 27:11, where שׁוֹררֵי is in parallelism with שקר “false witnesses.”

down.” In view of the repetitive parallelism and the use of aural coherence throughout the poem, there is no reason to single out the repeated גַּם and נִטְפוּ as unnecessary glosses. The use of גַּם “noisily” and גַּם “copiously, torrentially” is another example of aural coherence, like אֵת and אֵת in 3:31, בַּצֵּעֶדֶךָ and בַּצֵּאתֶךָ in 5:4 and אֶרְחֹת and אֶרְחֹת in 5:6. Repeated words include אֲנֹכִי and לַיהוָה (5:3), יְהוָה מִפְּנֵי (5:5), בִּימֵי (5:6), חֲדָלוּ (5:6–7), and שִׁקְמָתִי (5:7). Both גַּם and נִטְפוּ fall into this pattern.

Satisfactory meter and syllable balance come with reading מֵי־הַרִים הָרִים (i.e., the enclitic ם attached to a noun in the construct) as the subject of נוֹלוּ, meaning “the waters of the mountains flowed.” Simple prosaic repetition disappears once גַּם is recognized as a homograph of two different adverbs (above, pages 21–22; Klein 1987: 102). The schema of 5:4b scans as a–b–c/a’–b’/c’–a’–b’ (with נִטְפוּ for the b’ and b’’).

5:4a. O Yahweh, when you came from Seir
יהוה בצאתך משעיר

The theophanic references used by Deborah in her exhortation are attested also in Pss 18:7–15; 28 *passim*; 68:6–9; 77:16; 97:4–6; 144:5; Deut 33:2–3; and Hab 3. They served the purpose of encouraging confidence in those being summoned for battle. The reference to the theophany of Seir-Edom was more than an affirmation of Yahweh’s cosmic power, and had nothing to do with Yahweh’s sacred mountain. The theophany referred to Yahweh’s presence earlier when the Israelites moved from Seir-Edom into a hostile Moab (Num 21:14–15 [see page 10] and 24:17–19 [NEB], in contrast with Deut 2:8–27, which claims a peaceful passage). The theophany references alerted the recruits to the Israelite strategy for combating Sisera.¹⁴⁴ Victory would

¹⁴⁴ Note Hab 3:12–13, where צֵעַר and צֵעַר are followed twice by the sequential infinitive לִישַׁע: “thou didst bestride the earth . . . thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people . . . for the salvation of thy anointed.” Compare Seale (1962: 343) who noted, “We may therefore rightly conclude that what we have here [i.e., the motif of storm and quake] is a traditional opening which Hebrew poets used irrespective of the proper subject of a particular poem.” To

be achieved by Yahweh's sending heavy rains and surging wadis. The militia was needed for a mop-up operation after the storm.¹⁴⁵

5:4b. The earth trembled noisily ארץ רעשה גם

Boling (1975: 101) translated גם both times in 5:4b “with thunder,” following Dahood's (1970: 269–270) suggestion that Hebrew גם may be the same as Ugaritic *gm* “aloud.” The duplicate of this verse in Ps 68:9 has אף instead of גם. But, contra Lindars (1995: 232), this is not decisive in favor of גם “also.” Palache (1959: 8) related אף to the stem אפף “to flood” so the אף of Ps 68:9 may be a synonym of the second גם “copious (water),” discussed next. The meter and the syllable balance permit reading the first גם as a modifier of the preceding רעשה, in chiasm with the second גם. The noise could refer more to the rumble of an earthquake than to the reverberations of thunder.

5:4c. The clouds dropped torrentially גם עבים נטפו
(See above, pages 21–22.)

G. R. Driver (1936: 101) convincingly demonstrated that, “the LXX exhibits a number of translations which are explicable only

the contrary, the appeal to theophany in Deborah's exhortation appears to be deliberately well-chosen. Hauser (1987: 270–273) offers a helpful study on the water motif in Ex 15 and Ju 5. However, it is difficult to concur with his one statement that, “The poet is teasing the reader, suggesting that, despite vv. 4–5, water may not be under Yahweh's control, may not be available to help with the Israelite victory.” The exhortation strongly hints that water would be Yahweh's weapon of choice, just as it was in the flood story of Genesis 6–9.

¹⁴⁵ Bibliography on the theophany is provided by Lipinski 1967: 199, note 95. Compare J. Gray's (1988: 426) attempt to contextualize here:

Thus we consider it likely that the theophany of Yahweh in Judg 5:4cde and 5a represents the sublimation of the traditional theme of the enthronement of Baal at the autumn festival in Canaan in the advent of the Israelite God of Sinai at a Palestinian sanctuary . . . to the liturgy of which we refer the Song of Deborah. If, however, the actual *Sitz im Leben* of Judg 5:2ff was . . . the first celebration of this festival after the exploit of Zebulun and Naphtali at the Qishon, . . . [there] may well have been more than an oblique reference to the rainstorm . . .

from cognate Semitic, especially the Arabic, languages and that the words thus recovered may be added to the slender store of Hebrew words found in the Old Testament.” The second גַּם of Ju 5:4 can be added to Driver’s list of such LXX translations. The LXX B-text δρόσους “dews, waters” (as in ποταμίᾳ δρόσῳ “in river water” or δρόσῳ ἐναλίᾳ “in sea water”) generally renders טֶל “dew” and שֶׁלֶג “snow,” but here it must translate גַּם, which is the cognate of Arabic جَم “abundant or copious (rains)” (Lane 1863, 1865: 228a, 449 and Klein 1987: 102). Given the interchange of גַּם and גַּמ in the Panammu inscription (Palache 1959: 20), Hebrew אֲגַם “pool of water” may be a by- form of גַּם (= جَم).

5:4d–5a. The waters from the mountains flowed מֵיִם הַרִים נוֹלוּ

MT נוֹלוּ need not be repointed as the *niph^eal* of זָלַל “to shake, to tremble,” as proposed by Schreiner (1957: 40) and Cross (1973: 100–101), and as noted in BH³ and BHS. The subject of נוֹלוּ is not הַרִים, but מֵיִם הַרִים, “mountain waters,” a construct noun followed by an enclitic ם. A similar use of the enclitic ם (or preposition) occurs in Ps 77:18, where MT זָרְמוּ מֵיִם עֲבוֹת should be read with Robertson (1972: 93, 102) as זָרְמוּ מֵיִם עֲבוֹת, “the water of the clouds pours forth.” The reference here in Ju 5:4–5 to flash floods through the wadis links the exhortation with the events depicted in 5:21–23, another example of the poem’s unity. G. A. Smith (1912: 56, 86) sensed this meaning and translated הַרִים נוֹלוּ as “the mountains streamed.”¹⁴⁶

5:5b. The One of Sinai זֶה סִינַי

Critical opinion has long been divided over the integrity of זֶה סִינַי. In BHS, as in BH³, both words have been marked as a gloss.

¹⁴⁶ On the construct noun followed by the enclitic ם, see Albright 1944: 219, note 83; Gordis 1965: 104; Blommerde 1969: 32; and Christensen 1975: 51, note 81(c). See also Layton 1990: 155–197, for an in-depth study of mimimation and the enclitic ם in proper names.

Richter (1963: 69–70, note 35) concurred with twelve commentators who dismissed the epithet as a gloss, citing only Grimme, Albright, and Blenkinsopp as those who related יְהוָה to the Arabic *خو*. But treating יְהוָה as a gloss creates a bigger problem, for glosses were added to *clarify* obscure words, not *introduce* them.¹⁴⁷

In light of evidence from Proto-Sinaitic, South Arabic, Arabic, Ugaritic, and Amorite, many now follow Grimme and Albright (1935: 204), including Cross (1973: 19–20), Dahood (1968: 139, citing Habel 1964: 90 and Meek 1960: 331), Globe (1974: 169–171), J. Gray (1967: 278; 1988: 425), Lipinski (1967: 198), P. D. Miller (1973: 224), Stuart (1976: 123), O'Connor (1980: 220), Soggin (1981c: 85), and Schloen (1993: 22). The Proto-Sinaitic evidence cited by Cross consists of the epithets *ḏ ṭb* “the Merciful One,” *ḏt bṭn* “the Serpent Lady,” *‘il ḏ ‘lm* “El, the Ancient One,” *ḏ gt* “(Lord) of Gath,” and *ḏ p'id* “the Compassionate.”

Although not as widespread in Northwest Semitic as in South Semitic, יְהוָה is attested in divine epithets, and יְהוָה סִינַי can be retained as an archaic epithet of Yahweh, similar to the “Yahweh of Teman” designation in the Kuntillet ‘Ajrud inscription and analogous to Gabriel’s title, *خو مرة*, “the one of strength.”

5:5a. My God

אלהי

MT *אלהי ישראל* originally was not a construct chain. Rather, *ישראל* must have been *אל ישראל*, i. e., the verb *ישר* followed by its subject, introducing the next element in the exhortation (see below on 5:5d). Consequently, *אלהי* should be read as the suffixed noun. Deborah’s acknowledgment of Yahweh, the One of

¹⁴⁷ Note Lindars’ (1995: 209) rendering “(this means Sinai)” and his wild conjecture (233–234):

Thus the name [יְהוָה סִינַי], if accepted, must be regarded as a chance survival of an obsolete title, perhaps that of a god worshiped by proto-Israelite groups (mentioned with the Shasu in Egyptian texts) before the arrival of the Moses group in Palestine. . . . If the proposal is not accepted the phrase must surely be a gloss . . . on the verse as a whole: ‘this means [the theophany of] Sinai.’ It is likely that the gloss was first incorporated into Psalm 68 . . . and came from there into the present context by analogy (*gēzera šawa*) . . .

Sinai, as “my God” emphasized her earlier bold affirmation, אֲנִכִי לַיהוָה “I am for Yahweh!”

The transposition of part of the Shamgar tradition (now labeled 5:5–6) into the middle of Deborah’s exhortation (see pages 32–36) separated the clause אֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל “God will provide strength” from its parallel clause יְבַחֵר אֱלֹהִים “God will muster.” Once this happened, the consonant cluster אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל was understandably, but incorrectly, misread “the God of Israel”—thereby obscuring (1) the parallelism of אֵל and אֱלֹהִים, (2) the balanced use of *yqtl* forms, and (3) the a–b/ a’–b’–c schema.

The *Vorlage* behind the Κυρίου Ἐλωεί in the B-text and the variants κυ ελωιμ (MS s), κυ του θυ (MSS gnw), and κυριου θεου ελωι (MS 209), was אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה, with the θεου ελωι of MS 209 being a doublet of the אֱלֹהֵי (translated *and* transliterated). What is striking is the transliteration of אֱלֹהֵי as well as its translation. The Ἐλωεί in the B-text cannot be a gloss on אֱלֹהֵי since there is no apparent reason why a translator would have introduced a gloss of a *transliterated* אֱלֹהֵי instead of the translation θεός—for a word so obvious as אֱלֹהִים—in lieu of a transliteration of אֱלֹהֵי. Evidently, the translator chose this option to reflect an appellative use of אֱלֹהֵי which was unrelated to the אֵל (= θεος) coming in the next phrase on the line, i.e., the אֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל.¹⁴⁸

The several spellings, Ἐλωει, Ἐλωι and Ἐλωιν, reflect a singular אֱלֹהֵי with the 1cs suffix, like the Ελωι “my God” in Mark 15:34, or like the 3ms suffixed אֱלֹהֵי “his God” in Hab 1:11. These variants add solid support to the argument advanced below to read אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל for the MT אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל.

Deborah’s exhortation: end of 5:5 and 5:8–9

Burney (1918: 117), following Cooke (1892: 36), considered Ju 5:8 to be the greatest crux in the Song of Deborah, and many critics like Goodwin (1944: 261) and C. A. Simpson (1957:18)

¹⁴⁸ Compare Lindars’ (1995: 288) speculation, “As it is unthinkable that Ἐλωεί is a case of transliteration instead of translation, it must be a rare instance where a word from the second column of the Hexapla has come into the text at the wrong place.” But the introduction of any word from the second column of the Hexapla would be out of place in any translation of the text.

have concurred, asserting that 5:8 was irrecoverable even through appeal to emendations. Moore (1900b: 172) left the verse untranslated in his commentary, and Lindars (1995: 239) noted, “Moore is probably right in maintaining that the true solution will never be found.” More optimistic scholars have offered generous emendations to restore this verse. Richter (1963: 71–74 and 400) listed twelve of these proposals, including his own.¹⁴⁹

However, the emendations he cited have not been well accepted, although Burney’s translation (“Armourers had they none; Armed men failed from the city”) was adopted by Meek (1927: 385) and endorsed by Goodwin (1944: 261). More recent translations are equally divergent but no more helpful than the older emendations. Most noteworthy are the following:

1. Rabin (1955: 127) “May God love young men : when there was fighting at the gates”;
2. Margulis (1965: 69) “When Elohim sharpened ‘arrows’ / Then was there war at the gates (of the enemy)”;
3. Hillers (1965: 124) “They chose new gods; indeed they desired demons”;

¹⁴⁹ He cited, with references, the following emendations of the MT
 או לחם שערים

- | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|----------------------|
| (a) | | או לחם שרי ערים |
| (b) | | או לחמש ערים |
| (c) | | או חלשם ערים |
| (d) | | אזל לחם שערים |
| (e) | | אזל חם שערים |
| (f) | | מאז לא שערום |
| (g) | | מאז לא לחם שערים |
| (h) | בחר אלהים חרשו | אזל לחם משערים |
| (i) | חסרו להם חרשים | אזלו חמשים מעיר |
| (j) | וכחד כליהם חרשים | או להלחם שערו |
| (k) | לא יבחר אלהים | או שערום אלהים חרשתם |
| (l) | או ירדו לערים עם יהוה | לשער אל לחם |

The last one (l) is his own proposal, but it is no more convincing than the others since it amounts to rewriting the verse. It required the deletion of MT או יבחר אלהים חרשים and the transposition of 5:11c to 5:8a to fill the lacuna.

4. The Jerusalem Bible (1966: Ju 5:8) “Those that should stand for God were dumb”;
5. Cross (1973: 122–123), followed by Stuart (1976: 124, 129) “They chose new leaders, Yea, they took for themselves captains (lit. ‘bucks’)”;
6. Cathcart (1977: 111–112) “They chose new gods; indeed *lahmu* demons of the gates”;
7. Seale (1978: 48) “God chose to do new things. There was fighting at the fronts”;
8. O’Connor (1980: 222) “He chose new gods. He served them food”;
9. Lindars (1983: 168; 1995: 209) “Then the armed men of the cities came forth”;
10. Stager (1988: 226) “They did battle with the gates” (i.e., “as a metonymy for the fortified cities . . .”).

What is required is not just one more attempt to stumble upon the correct emendation to recover the irrecoverable. Rather, the basic assumption that the verse is corrupt needs to be challenged. Except for the absence of a 3mpl verbal suffix, common in the older orthography, nothing in the MT of 5:8 is really corrupt or unintelligible. The problems are not textual but contextual. The verse is part of Deborah’s exhortation, her summons to mobilize for battle. Any translation of this verse must make sense in this summons-to-battle and must make sense as a direct quotation of Deborah addressed to (a) Israel’s adversaries (“Listen, O kings”) or (b) to the summoned militia (“O leaders of Israel, O you who are summoned”). For this reason all of the translations and emendations I have found to date are unacceptable.

As established above (pages 34–36), Ju 5:6–7 was not a part of Deborah’s exhortation, but was a part of the Shamgar tradition and must be transposed to its initial position in the poem. Consequently, Ju 5:8–9 is not logically or sequentially related to 5:6–7, but to 5:5. In this context, verses 8–9 become intelligible (with really *minor* emendation) by appeal to a larger lexicon than that traditionally used by scholars, but readily available to the author of the Song of Deborah.

The *repetition* of אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל “the God of Israel” in 5:3 and 5:5 was probably not in the original poem. Contrary to the MT

vocalization, 5:5 reflects the poet's use of aural coherence, not repetition. The text must be redivided to read אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, restoring the end of one colon and the start of the next, as follows:

. . . before Yahweh my God.	: . . מפני יהוה אֱלֹהֵי:
God will provide strength;	יִשְׂרָאֵל
God will muster (the) recruits.	יבחר אלהים חדשים:

A similar misdivision of words occurs in the MT of Ps 73:1, which should be divided to read as

אֵד תּוֹב לְיִשְׂרָאֵל
אֱלֹהִים לְבָרִי לְבָב

Truly *El* is good to the upright,
Elohim (is good) to the pure of heart

instead of “Surely God is good to Israel, To those who are pure in heart!” (NAS, following the MT).

5:5d. God will provide strength יִשְׂרָאֵל

The use of אֱלֹהֵי along with יהוה and אֱלֹהִים in this part of Deborah's exhortation finds a parallel in the collocation of the nouns אֱלֹהִים יהוה אֱלֹהֵי in the blessing of Yahweh in Josh 22:22, noted above (pages 128–129). The verb יִשְׂרָאֵל can be interpreted in two ways. First, it can refer to the equipping of the militia. If so, it would be a *yqtl* of שָׂרַר stem I or of its by-forms שָׂרַר and שָׂרַר “to strengthen,” which is attested in Jer 15:11, שָׂרַרְתִּי לְטוֹב “I will greatly strengthen you” (NEB). The same meaning appears in the LXX for the MT of

- (a) Hos 12:4–5, שָׂרַרְתָּ אֶת אֱלֹהִים וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל מִלְּאֵךְ, ἐνίσχυσεν πρὸς θεὸν καὶ ἐνίσχυσεν μετὰ ἀγγέλου (note Luke 22:43, ἄγγελος ἀπ’ οὐρανοῦ ἐνισχύων αὐτόν found in MSS aDKLXQPY);
- (b) Gen 32:29, כִּי שָׂרַרְתָּ עִם אֱלֹהִים, ὅτι ἐνίσχυσας μετὰ θεοῦ;
- (c) Hos 14:9, וַאֲשׂוּרֵנוּ, καὶ ἐγὼ κατισχύσω αὐτόν;

- (d) Ju 5:12, in the doublets of the A-text where MT שִׁיר was translated ἐνισχύων and ἐξανίστασο and ἐνίσχυσον (see above, pages 23–24, 122);
- (e) Ju 5:14, in the A text’s remote doublet ἐνισχύοντος ἠγήσεως for the MT וְשָׁרִי סִפֵּר of 5:14–15, which Tov (1978: 229–231) rightly recognized;
- (f) Ju 5:30, in the remote doublet ἰσχυς αὐτης in Lucianic MSS dgl̄nptvw for MT שְׁרוּתִיהָ of 5:29.

The “giving of strength” by providing weapons appears in 1 Macc 1:34, “they strengthened [themselves] (ἐνίσχυσαν) and stored up arms and provisions,” and in 6:6, “they grew strong (ἐπίσχυσαν) by means of weapons (ὄπλοις) and a [military] force (δυνάμει) and abundant spoils (σκύλοις πολλοῖς) they had taken from the armies they had defeated.”

Secondly, שָׁר may provide the transition from the earlier theophany at Seir to the moment at hand when history would be repeated with God’s sending torrents. In this case, the verb is the *hiph^cil* of שָׁר II (or the by-form שָׁרָה II), a cognate of Arabic ثرى “to soak (the earth with rain), to moisten” and of Aramaic שָׁר which is attested as the noun שָׁר “rain” in the Deir ‘Alla texts, where it may be a Hebrew loanword (Lane 1863: 336a; Hoftijzer and van der Kooij 1976: 352).

The affirmation “God will send torrential rains” would have been more than just a hint of Deborah’s strategy. It would have encouraged an enthusiastic Israelite response to her summons for battle. Although שָׁר I has been adopted in the translation, שָׁר II is just as likely. One cannot overlook the probability that the poet intended a *double entendre*, “God will provide strength” (שָׁרָה) and “God will send rain” (שָׁר).

5:8a. God will muster the recruits יבחר אלהים חדשים

In Akkadian, בַּחַר has a strong military nuance which is reflected in *bēhīru* “(Soldaten-)Werber,” *bēru* “elite troop,” and *bēru* “to select (young men/ fighters) (*CAD* 2: 211–212; *AHW*: 1: 118). Craigie (1972a: 350–351) noted the military nuance of בַּחַר in Hebrew, without appealing to this Akkadian evidence, citing

its use Ex 15:4, 17:9, and Lam 1:15. The use of בַּחַר as a verb and a noun with definite military overtones in 2 Sam 10:9 is also of interest: וַיִּבְחַר מִכָּל בַּחֲוֵרֵי [בְּ]יִשְׂרָאֵל “he [Joab] mustered from all the elite troops of Israel.”

Rabin (1955: 127) translated חַדְשִׁים as “young men” and cited the Arabic cognate احدات “recruit, civil militia” (Dozy 1927: I, 258), a synonym of Arabic غمر and Ugaritic *gmr* “inexperienced fighter, recruit.” The noun occurs in Hos 5:7, “Yea, an inexperienced fighter (חַדֵּשׁ) will devour them (and) their territory.”¹⁵⁰ In light of the contextually appropriate military nuance of both בַּחַר and חַדֵּשׁ, there is little need to emend the text to חַרֵּשׁ “to be deaf” as did Zapletal (1923), cited and followed by Hertzberg (1959:171) and noted favorably by J. Gray (1988: 428).

The use of חַדְשִׁים is another indication of the poem’s logical consistency. The poet had noted that “warriors had disappeared from Israel,” so Deborah could not have mustered the בַּחֲוֵרִים “elite troops,” or the גְּבוּרִים “skilled soldiers.” The summons had to be for the חַדְשִׁים, the untrained recruits. The use of חַדְשִׁים suggests that the summons was made, in the words of Num 1:20, 22, to “every male from twenty years old and upward, all who were able to go forth to war.” As Ramesses III was rescued by נַעֲרֵיִן “recruits” along the Orontes (Breasted 1906, 3: 133, 155), the חַדְשִׁים “recruits” would deliver Israel along the Wadi Kishon. Schloen (1993:30) noted, “The farmers and herdsmen [of the Israelite hills], many of whom also worked as caravan guards and donkey drivers, ambushed the ambusher and routed his troops.”

The use of חַדְשִׁים “new (gods)” in Deut 32:17 has been considered by Weiser (1959: 75), Hillers (1965: 124), Freedman (1975: 18) and, apparently, J. Gray (1988: 429) to be the appropriate parallel to the יִבְחַר אֱלֹהִים חַדְשִׁים, i.e., the Israelites chose “new (gods).” The suggestion could be sustained if this verse were not part of Deborah’s exhortation. However, any reference to allegedly improper religious conduct is out of context in this summons-to-battle. Indeed, J. Gray (1988: 430) even conceded, “it must be admitted that a confession of apostasy in the

¹⁵⁰ Compare the NRSV, “Now the new moon shall devour them with their field,” the NEB, “Now an invader shall devour their fields,” and Wolfe (1974: 95), “Now <the locusts> shall devour their fields.”

Covenant sacrament would be expected before rather than in the middle of vv 6–8.” But apostasy is a false issue because the Israelites are identified in 5:31 as the “lovers of Yahweh.”

5:8b. When the brave ones battle אִז יִלְחַמוּ <ו> שְׁעָרִים

These three words have been variously translated, including (1) “Barley-bread failed (?),” (2) “Armed men failed the city,” (3) “indeed they took for themselves champions,” (4) “then there was war in the cities,” (5) “then they fought at the gates,” (6) “he served them food,” and (7) “then the armed men of the cities came forth.”¹⁵¹ I concur with Rabin (1955: 125) that, “in this epic fragment, in contrast to the ‘Classical’ Hebrew usage, ³*az* means ‘when,’ and not ‘at that time’.” It corresponds thus to Arabic *idh*” The MT לָחַם can be read as an infinitive absolute or emended to the 3mpl יִלְחַמוּ. The absence of the final ו is widely attested, as in the MT and 1QIsa^a variants יִקְרְאוּ (ו), יִחַלְפוּ (ו), and יִשְׂמְעוּ (ו) in Isa 1:26, 2:18, and 6:10, respectively. In view of five other cases in Ju 5 where the ו of the 3mpl is lacking, MT לָחַם is read יִלְחַמוּ “they fought.”

MT שְׁעָרִים is the metathetic variant of the Arabic شَرِيع “courageous, fearless,” شُرَاعَة “bravery” (Lane 1872: 1535c) and South Arabic *sr* “brave men.” This corresponds to the metathetic variations in stems that have a ר and an ע (for example, שְׁעָר “a gate,” which is ثَغْر in Arabic and ṭgr in Ugaritic but תַּרְע in Syriac and Aramaic). The ἀρχοστῶν in the B-text doublet in 5:8 suggests that the translator knew the Hebrew cognate of the Arabic سرعان الناس “the first or foremost of men” (Lane 1872: 1350a) used in reference to horsemen and soldiers.¹⁵²

Seale (1978: 53–54) suggested ثَغْر “frontier” as the cognate of שְׁעָר. But “frontier” is only a secondary meaning of ثَغْر. Its

¹⁵¹ See Appendix, *sub loco* Smith, Burney, Stuart, Coogan, Fishelis, O’Connor, and Lindars, respectively.

¹⁵² The stem שְׁעָר “brave” occurs in a negative sense in Ps 68:22, “Surely God will smite . . . the crown of the courageous one (שְׁעָר) who walks in his guilt,” i.e., those with “courage” for violence (Mic 3:1–3 and Amos 2:13–16).

undesigned size. Mendenhall (1958: 62) concluded that אֶלֶף here was a tribal unit or sub-unit and “forty units” was a conventional idiom for the “whole tribe” of Israel. Craigie (1972a: 351) suggested “forty chiefs,” and Boling (1975: 110; 1982: 176) proposed “forty contingents.” Freedman (1975: 14) presented a case for just “four hundred men.”¹⁵⁶

But if the census list in Num 1:46 and 26:51 (603,550 and 601,703) can be interpreted with Mendenhall (1952: 61) and Noth (1968: 21–22, 204) to mean 598 “troops” composed of 5,550 men and 596 “troops” composed of 5,730 men, the 40,000 figure is reasonable as a round figure for the entire population. The ratio of 1 out of 7 (5,700 :: 40,000) levied for military service would be high but not unrealistic in a time of crisis. The 10 to 1 ratio cited in Ju 20:10 for the recruitment of those who would provide for the troops offers a good parallel. A population of 40,000 would mean about 4,000 available untrained males of fighting age from the ten tribes (including Gilead who was “on alert”), more than a sufficient number to sustain a three-pronged surprise attack (see below on 5:14–18) against an adversary with 900 chariots. Even if the Song of Deborah were pure fiction, lacking any historical basis, the sizes of the forces and the general population were given a realistic ratio.

However, the much discussed אֶלֶף “troop” could be an acronym, rather than a number per se, in which the א = אֶלֶף or אֵיל “chief” (the ראש אֶלֶף), the ל = לַחֲמִים = הַמְלַחֲמָה “the fighting men,” (Ps 35:1), and the פ = פְּקִידִים “the officers” (2 Kgs 25:19); or the ל = 30 = שְׁלֹשִׁים = “the officers,” and the פ = פְּלֹנִי “unnamed others” = “rank-and-file.” Lehmann (1972: 46–51) noted that abbreviations, common in post-Biblical Hebrew, have been spotted in a few biblical texts, like the שֶׁפִי in Num 23:3, which Rudolph (BH³) and Greenstone (1939: 253) read as an abbreviation for שֶׁפִי יְהוָה אֵת פִּי יְהוָה “to ask for a revelation.”

¹⁵⁶ Freedman (1975) stated, “The term ²*elep* is to be understood in its etymologic sense as a village or population center, which was responsible for providing a unit of troops. . . . If the average number of men in an ²*elep* was 10, that would make a fighting force of 400 at full strength, a substantial army for the hill country of Palestine.” See also Noth (1968: 21–23, 204) who noted that requests in the el-Amarna letters (108: 66 ff. and 133: 16 f.) were for emergency contingents of ten and twenty men. See note 208.

addressed the Israelite rank-and-file (מתנדבים) as well as the leaders (חוקקים). Either way, the summoned commanders or the commanders and their summoned militia are indirectly urged through the *inclusio* to praise Yahweh. The *inclusio* served as a reminder that this was a “Yahweh war” to which the tribes were being summoned. Deborah appears elsewhere only in 5:12 and 5:15 where, contrary to the MT vocalization, she is addressed in the third person. J. Gray’s (1988: 431) interpretation should be noticed for contrast with the one I present:

The Song of the Well is significant for our understanding of the *hammit-naddēbīm* in Judg 5:9, which we understand as those who truly proved themselves leaders of the community, like *nēdibē ‘ammō* in Ps 113:8 Thus in Judg 5:9 we would find no reference to leadership or volunteering for war, but to the notables of the various groups of the sacral community who convened the assembly for the renewal of their solidarity on the cultic occasion after the battle of the Qishon. Hence we translate v 9: “I notice the leaders in Israel [/] Who proved themselves nobles among the people.”

IV. Mustering the troops: Ju 5:10–13

The difficulties inherent in these verses are well-illustrated by Moore (1900: 172). Stuart (1976: 124, 129) offered no translation of 5:10–11. The difficulty stems from the failure thus far to isolate correctly the limits of Deborah’s exhortation. Ju 5:10 is not part of Deborah’s summons but a description of the responses to her call-to-arms, thus marking a major transition in the poem.

J. Gray (1988: 433–435) interpreted Ju 5:14–17 “as the gathering of the various members of the community through their representatives” to celebrate the victory at the Kishon. In support of his thesis, Gray had to emend the MT in 5:14–18 as follows in order to come up with the “headmen” who did or did not show up to represent the tribes at the sacral assembly:

MT	Gray
שרשם	שרים
בעמלק	בעם
אחריד	אחריו
בעממיד	בעממיו
בשבת ספר	בשבת
ושרי	ושרי

בישכר	ישכר
וישכר	ונפתלי
כן	בנו
חקקי	חקרי
ודן למה	ודן
אניות	אנה

In agreement with Weiser, Gray asserted that “there is no reference to the participation in the campaign of any but Zebulun and Naphtali in v 18, which would accord with the prose account of the campaign of Barak and Deborah in Judges 4.” He concluded that of the ten tribes of the sacral community, only two fought Sisera and four of the other eight tribes “were not able, or chose not, to attend” even the sacral event celebrating the battle.

Lindars (1995: 241), similarly opting for a cultic interpretation, thought that this section of the poem included only verses 9–11, commenting,

The stanza functions as an expression of pride in the splendid response to Deborah’s prophecy, which [response] in my view has just been indicated in v. 8 [“the armed men of the cities came forth”] These verses may well be a liturgical addition, inviting celebration of the victory at cultic occasions . . . [or] a theme for constant praise, like the constant recitation of the Shema (Deut 6:6–8).

What I identify as “the strategy of the forces,” Gray interpreted as “an assembly of the sacral community” and Lindars labeled “a story to tell” at cultic occasions. The interpretation presented below is quite different and requires far fewer emendations. Ju 5:10–13, in my opinion, tells of Israel’s mobilization for battle, while Ju 5:14–18 deals with the strategy and actions of the Israelites which precipitated Sisera’s counterattack. Far from being a celebrative response to Deborah’s *prophecy* (the exact content of which Lindars never specified), these verses deal with the tribal response to Deborah’s *summons* for a militia.

5:10a. Riders on young she-asses רכבי אתנות צחרות

This is the first element of the compound subject of שיחו “they hastened.” Most translators have treated צחרות as a color, with Albright (1961: 39) admitting, “the exact meaning of צחרות eludes us, but it refers to a light color.” The NAB, JB, and NRSV

read “white asses,” following Rashi (לבנות) and Medieval and Modern Hebrew (Klein 1987: 545) which uses צָהָר for “white,” in contrast to the Arabic *ṣaḥar* which denotes the yellowish-red color of the desert (the Ṣaḥara), as well as being “used of a camel or she-ass in which there is white or red” (Burney 1918: 124).

The Akkadian *emaram ṣa-aḥ-ra-am* “a small or young donkey” (*CAD* 16:183–185) may be the masculine counterpart of אֲתִנּוֹת צָהָרוֹת. Akkadian *ṣiḥru* is generally considered the cognate of צֶעִיר “young.” Given the interchange of פ and ע (e.g., עֵנֶק “neck and חִנֵּק “to strangle”), צָהָר (= *ṣiḥru*) here may be a by-form of צֶעִיר “young.” The poet appears intent on depicting the speed with which the militia was mobilized. A yearling or older ass of any color would have speed and, although the tawny ass is a prized animal today (Soggin 1981c: 87), a reference to color seems less likely in a context of mobilization than a reference to the endurance of younger animals.

5:10b. Those sitting on mules

יֹשְׁבֵי עַל כַּדִּיִן

Although Burney’s emendation (1918: 122–125) of MT יֹשְׁבֵי עַל כַּדִּיִן to עַל מַדִּיִן “let them recall it to mind” won no recognition, his study of this Hebrew phrase and of the Greek translations (λαμπηγῶν “covered chariots,” κριτηρίου “making judgments” or a “court of judgment,” and συνέδρω “council, Sanhedrin”) remains an excellent survey of the issues.

Albright’s emendation (1968b: 44), <יֹשְׁבֵי עַל מַדִּיִן > עִיר, “ye who sit on caparisoned <male donkeys>,” is possible but equally problematic. He cited Hillers’ oral proposal that מַדִּיִן is a dissimilated by-form of Ugaritic *mdl* “to saddle.” But this hypothesis needs to be reconsidered in view of the proposal of Greenfield (1964: 534) that, “Ugaritic *mdl* is . . . a metathesis of לְמַד in the technical usage known from Mishnaic Hebrew and Syriac . . . and is another instance of consonantal change for differentiation of meaning.” A development which would accommodate metathesis and dissimilation (מַדִּיִן > מַדֵּל > לְמַד), while possible, is unlikely. As for more recent conjectures, J. Gray’s emendation (1988: 431) of the MT to יֹשְׁבֵי עַל לְבָבָם “lay to heart,” which is very similar to Burney’s wording, is not likely to gain general acceptance either.

The A-text $\lambda\alpha\mu\pi\eta\upsilon\omega\nu$, used also in the LXX at 1 Sam 26:5–7 for עגלה “cart” (= MT מעגל “encampment”), may indicate a *Vorlage* having מרין instead of מדין . The word מרין is known from the Ugaritic and the Egyptian *myrn* “chariot-warrior.”¹⁵⁸ If so, the מרין here could mean “chariot-warrior” or “chariot,” just as רכב can mean “chariot” (רכיב) or “charioteer” (רכָּב). However, there is no evidence of Israelites with access to chariots prior to their victory over Sisera. Thus, even if $\lambda\alpha\mu\pi\eta\upsilon\omega\nu$ translated מרין , it is not likely that מרין was original.

Seale (1978: 54) proposed Arabic مدن “to settle in a place, to be sedentary,” noting, “Both passages [vv. 6–7, 10] refer to three groups of people: mountain travelers, pedestrians, and the settled part of the population.” But Seale’s paraphrase, “those who are settled,” disregards the על of the MT, which would have to mean literally “those settled above the town” or “the hill people” or “those settled about the province.” Were the text ישבי מדינה , rather than על מדין , the meaning could be “townspeople.”

O’Connor (1980: 222) proposed the emendation of מדין to מדון , and translated 5:10bc, “You who rule over the Madon realm. You who travel the Madon realm.” He found here a reference to the Madon mentioned in Josh 11:1 and 12:19. But the MT of the Joshua texts is problematic, for the LXX B-text of 11:1 has βασιλέα Μαρρων (against the A-text βασιλέα Μαδων), and both the A-text and B-text omit מדון in 12:19, although they have βασιλέα Συμοων [A-text Σαμρων] βασιλέα Μαρρων in 12:20 for the MT $\text{מֶלֶךְ שִׁמְרוֹן מְרֹאֵן}$.¹⁵⁹

Moreover, a diversionary attack by Naphtali in the direction of Merom is mentioned in Ju 5:18 (see below); but it seems unlikely that the rulers of Madon (or Merom) would be addressed here in 5:10, which deals with the mustering of the Israelite militia. The Canaanite kings (5:3) were addressed in Deborah’s exhortation, as well as the Israelites (5:9). But 5:10 is not part of the exhortation, and any direct-address outside the exhortation

¹⁵⁸ See J. Gray 1965: 232–235, for a discussion of the *mariannu*.

¹⁵⁹ See Soggin 1972: 133–134, 143–144, and references cited there.

and the dialogue in Sisera's court (5:28–30) is not apparent. This verse depicts the Israelite mobilization in response to Deborah's call. A summons to a Canaanite ruler in such a context is very unlikely, even though the emendation of מדין to מרון is not.

Similar to O'Connor's reading a place name is Schloen's reading (1993: 26) the MT מדין שב' as "yošēbê midyān 'you who sit over [rule] Midian'," noting that "the reading *midyān* is supported by the lack of plausible alternatives." But a summons to Midianite rulers fits this context of the Israelite mobilization no better than a summons to Canaanite rulers. The better solution comes by recognizing that Akkadian *wāšib kudani* "mule rider" (CAD: 8:491) finds its counterpart in the מדין על שב' מ, once the מ (ג) is emended to a כ (ג). A pre-LXX confusion of כ and מ, which were differentiated in some scripts only by the small vertical stroke on the upper left side of the מ, would account for the textual problems.¹⁶⁰ According to Fensham (1963: 185–186), Akkadian *sirrimu* "wild ass" and *wadû* or *adû* "donkey" became loanwords in Aramaic (שרם and עד'י). Akkadian *kudan* "mule" could just as readily have been a loanword in Hebrew. The poet may well have avoided using the common word פרד "mule" since this stem in Hebrew, like its Syriac cognate חג, means "to flee away" (Klein 987: 523), a most inappropriate connotation in an account describing Israel's mobilization for battle.

This emendation has the support of the A-text λαμπηων, the Sahidic (translated as *carrucas*), and the Latin *in lecticis* "in a carriage," which (contra Burney 1918: 123) was more than a translator's guess. These variants reflect a *Vorlage* with מדין, a cognate of Arabic كدن "a camel saddle, a litter for a woman" (Hava 1915: 647) and كودن "carriage" (Dozy 1927, 2: 450). The root كدن (used also for coupling oxen to a plow or for mixing breeds of horses or animals) reflects the meaning found in the A-text and the versions, supporting the emendation of MT מדין to מדין. This cognate and the A-text, supported Michaelis's translation "die auf den Wagen fahren" (cited by Kalkar, 1833: 25), while the "breed mixing" supports my reading "mules."

¹⁶⁰ See Birnbaum 1971: I, 143, plates 85–87, 162; and Naveh 1976: 47 and fig. 9, no. 4–5. See also Delitzsch 1920: 114, §115.

By reading כַּדִּיָן for מַדִּיָן, the synonymous parallelism “mule riders” and “donkey riders” becomes transparent. Ordinarily in Hebrew שָׁב does not mean “to ride, to mount,” although it was so used in Syriac (e.g., ܣܒܐ ܥܠ ܥܘܠܐ). Its use here may reflect Akkadian influence, and the singular כַּדִּיָן could reflect the Akkadian plural *kudani/e*. But it is much more likely that כַּדִּיָן is a collective noun like the Syriac ܥܘܠܐ “asses” and the Hebrew רֶכֶב “horsemen” (Isa 21:7; 22:6). The “donkey riders” may have been the (donkey) caravaneers alluded to in 5:6, while the “mule riders” could have been the leaders summoned by Deborah.¹⁶¹

5:10c. Those walking along the road והלכי על דרך

The “footmen” (הלכי על דרך) may be the same as the “caravaneers” (הלכי נתיבות) mentioned in 5:6. A clear distinction was made between pedestrians and riders. One Akkadian text, for example, noted that “the mighty go [i.e., are carried] on chairs, the assistants on . . . , the rank and file on mules, [but] I [go] on foot” (*CAD*: 16: 182b). The Hebrew הלכי על דרך probably represent the rank-and-file responding to Deborah’s summons in contrast to the wealthier mule riders. The footmen are mentioned again in 5:15b, “dispatched with his footmen along the tributaries was Reuben” (with a hint of Reuben’s lower social status, noted in Gen 49:4 and Deut 33:6). The conjunction *καὶ* of והלכי is lacking in the LXX MSS MNdptvyb₂, suggesting that it is secondary. Perhaps the ך should be placed as a vowel letter after the ה since הולכי instead of והלכי would improve the syllable balance of this section of the poem, changing it slightly from 22:20:21:14:14:21 to 21:20:21:14:14:21 (see above, page 95).

5:10e–11a. Hastening on mountain roads שיחו מקל>ים

Burney’s (1918: 125–129) historical review of the interpretation of this line could lead one to despair that all viable options

¹⁶¹ Note Mowinckel 1962: 283. On the use of the mule and ass, see Hoffner 1968: 36; Gadd, 1973: 220; Littauer and Crouwel 1979: 45–47, 65–67, 84, 139; and Ikeda 1982: 226, 230.

for a satisfactory interpretation have been exhausted. Richter (1963: 76) noted, “V 11 ‘von der Stimme der Wasserverteiler zwischen den Trankrinnen’ hat viel Kopfzerbrechen gemacht.” Lindars (1995: 289–290) highlighted the improbability of ever relating the Vulgate (*ubi collisi sunt currus, et hostium suffocatus est exercitus ibi*, “where the chariots were dashed together and the army of the enemies was choked there”) to the MT. But the *collisi* = רעץ for MT חצץ; the *currus* = חצץ (Ezek 23:24, KJV) also for חצץ; *suffocatus* = חנק for חצץ; with *hostium* reflecting the חבים in MT מושבים; and *exercitus* = עמ = MT שם, with the doublet *ibi* = שם. Similar confusion of ע and צ, of ו and ש, and of ר and פ have been cited by Delitzsch (1920: 110, 116, 119).

Thus, the text is not hopelessly corrupt. Instead of reading שׁח I “to muse, to sing out” (Müller 1969: 361), the vocable שׁח III “to hasten, to run”—the cognate of the Arabic شح and the related شحش “light, agile, swift (used of an ass)” or the by-form شحو “to go quickly” (Lane 1872: 1511, 1514)—can be recognized. Related also are the Egyptian *shsh*, *shs*, and *shsh*, all meaning “to hasten or to run” (Erman and Grapow 1897: 3: 472–474; Faulkner 1962: 243). Hebrew חׁש and Akkadian *hāšu* “to hurry, make haste” may be metathetic variants of شحش and *shsh*; but they may be simply similar onomatopoeic verbs. Sellin and Richter’s (1963: 76) emendation to שׁח is therefore unnecessary. Seale’s translation (1978: 49, 55), “Talk about it [‘the mighty deeds of Yahweh’] louder than the splashing at the well-head where the buckets are lowered and raised,” based on the Arabic root خضخض “to stir, to dash water,” is a very lengthy and misleading paraphrastic gloss.

The Himyaritic text *CIH* 418: 1 (*CIS* 4: 1: 100) provides the real clue. It reads in part, כל מנקלתן וכל מסבא סבא “all the mountain roads and every mountain pass [which] he has made” (Jamme 1962: 33–34). The collocation of the nouns מנקל and מסבא closely approximates the occurrence of מקולם (taking the ׀ from the following word) and משאבין in 5:11. With very little change to the MT, מקולם (> מנקולם) can be restored and read as the adverbial accusative, cognate with Arabic منقل “a mountain road” (from نقل “to transport, to convey,” which suggests a “caravan route”) and South Arabic *mnql* (= מקלים).

(Syriac ܐܠܦ), cognate of Ugaritic *ʾlpy* “to say, to repeat,” Arabic *ثني* “to praise,” and Hebrew *שנה* “to repeat.” But *הגו* is better read as a rare *qal* passive (יִתְּנוּ) of נתן (GKC 53^u; BDB 681b). The plural bound noun, *צדקות יהוה* “the victories of Yahweh,” is its subject (GKC 87^{m-p}).

5:11c. the victories of his צדק־גֹּת פרונו בישראל
two warriors in Israel

The meaning of פרונו “warrior” (*not* “peasantry”) has been discussed above (pages 117–119). Here attention need only be given to the form of פרונו. It could be *scriptio defectiva* for פרונוי, a plural noun referring to Deborah, Barak, and Yael, or to the עם יהוה and the combatants in general. But in this context, where Deborah and Barak were singled out as the leaders (or Deborah and Yael as the heroines in terms of the poem as a whole), the noun could well be a dual to be vocalized פְּרוֹנוֹ. The same form occurs with the ירחו (= יָרְחוּ) “two months” of the Gezer Calendar (Cross and Freedman 1952: 46–47).

The Arabic *ذو مصدق* “one who is courageous [in a charge or assault]” or a “brave fighter” (Lane 1872: 1669a; Hava 1915: 393) is helpful for understanding צדק in a military context or in a war ballad.¹⁶² In battle צדק was the term for courage and arms, whereas in peace it was used for compassion and alms. The frequent synonymous parallelism of צדק and ישע, as in Isa 45:8, 51:5, and 62:1, is also noteworthy.

¹⁶² For צדקות “victories,” note Boling 1975: 110 and the NEB. Compare the comments of McKenzie (1968: 27–28) on צדק in Isa 41:2, used in reference to Cyrus. Seale (1962: 345), on the basis of Arabic *صدق* “the quality of a blade or lance when it is straight, unbent, and perfect in every way . . .,” suggested that “the rightness of vs. 11 is the practice of open-handed hospitality.” But hospitality is not a theme of this song, save for Yael’s giving Sisera his last drink. Seale’s proposal (1978: 55) to read פורות “generosity” (from the root פור = בור “to scatter, distribute”) for MT פרונו would be attractive, in light of Dn 11:24 (ביר), were this poetic line a part of the post-battle scene rather than of the pre-battle mobilization.

5:11d. The very storms ירדו לשערי מעם יהוה
from Yahweh

This line has traditionally been translated, “Then down to the gates went the people of Yahweh,” which led Lindars (1995: 248) to conclude, “In my view it [5:11] not only intrudes badly into the sequence of the thought, but also relates to the problems of v. 13, which suggests that it is a misplaced gloss.” But the verse need not be rejected as a gloss—or rejected as a “marginal variation” of 5:13a, as proposed earlier by Burney (1918: 130), nor transposed to 5:12c, as proposed by G. A. Smith (1912: 87).

As argued below, the Israelite militia did not move to or from the *gates* of any city. The attacks made by Naphtali *toward* Merom and by Asher *against* Abu Hawam (5:17b–18), were not against city gates. The military campaign was an ambush along the wadi and was coordinated with attacks along the seacoast. Thus, the MT vocalization and traditional translation is unlikely.

The noun שער is not שער “gate” but שער “rain storm” (not to be confused with the etymologically related feminine noun סערה “wind storm”). Snaith (1975: 116–117) argued that שערִים in Deut 32:2 (“may my speech condense like the dew; like שערִים upon the grass, like רביבים on new growth”)

is not ‘small rain’ (AV, RV, JWM) nor ‘gentle rain’ (RSV), nor ‘fine rain’ (NEB), nor even ‘showers’ (JB, JPS). It means ‘the storm rain’, ‘the heavy soaking rain’, and the root is שער II = סער . . . (and) this explanation is as old as Rashi.

In support of Rashi and Snaith’s identification, Isa 28:2, “like a downpour of hail, a destructive *rain storm* (שער קטב), like a torrent of water in overwhelming floods” can be cited as another example. Behind MT שערִי in Ju 5:11 is this same שער, requiring the shift of ש to ש. It alludes to the storms implicit in 5:20.

In view of the poet’s use elsewhere of an intervening preposition or an enclitic ם in a construct chain (מִיִּם הַרִיִּם in 5:4–5 and יִשְׁבִּי עַל כַּדִּין and הִלְכִי עַל דֶּרֶךְ in 5:10), the MT לשערים עם is similarly the plural construct שערִי followed by the compound preposition מֵעַם (BDB 768). The prefixed ל is an emphatic ל, which appears again in 5:25, בסף לאדירים, “in a truly magnificent goblet” (discussed below, page 211).

finite verb (or with an ellipsis of the finite verb), as in 5:2 (בפרע) and possibly in 5:8 (לחם). Moran (1965: 67–68) argued that אסר׳ in Gen 49:11 and נאדר׳ in Ex 15:6 are infinitives ending in *î*, like those in the Jerusalem and Byblos Amarna letters.¹⁶³ The עור׳ here can be added to his short list of this archaic form.

The second and fifth words, ער (= עור׳) “the troops of” (see pages 22–23) is based on the doublet *μυριδας* and *μετα λαου*, which reflect a Hebrew עור, a cognate of the Arabic غار “a numerous army or body of men” (Lane 1887: 2307). It refers to the combatants from the ten tribes (or possibly twelve, see below on 5:13a). This word appears in Num 31:10, כל עריהם במושבתם, “all their hosts in their encampments.”

Hence, the *μυριδας* and *μετα λαου* doublet does not require a different *Vorlage* like the העירי רבבות עם suggested by Meyer (in BHS) or עורי רבבה suggested by Tov (1978: 231). Like Burney’s reconstructed text (see page 23), Lindars’ (1995: 290) “consensus text of A AI AII OL Ver” is inaccurate and his conclusion that “It seems likely that בעם (בעמך) and בעז (בעוך) are substitutes for שׁיר in the damaged Hebrew [*Vorlage*] . . .,” is way off target. The feminine דברה “governor, leader” stands in parallelism with the masculine דבר “pursuer” (discussed next).

5:12b. to rout the troops of the pursuer עורנין עורי דבר

Deborah’s summons-to-battle mobilized a sizeable militia, and the poet chose what is now a rare word, producing a heightened effect through assonance and alliteration, to express that fact. By deleting the ׳ of the third עורי of the MT, עור (the fourth word in the line) can be read as the *pi^cel* infinitive עִיר “to overwhelm, to raid,” a cognate of Arabic غور “he routed, he made a sudden attack” and of غارة “a hostile incursion” (Lane 1887: 2306–2308, forms [2] and [6]) and South Arabic ʿyr “to rout, to destroy” (Conti Rossini 1931: 215a; Jamme 1962: 72a, 147a). This verb was noted by S. R. Driver (1913b: 217) in 1 Sam 28:16, ויהי ערך, “he became your *enemy*,” but he opted to emend

¹⁶³ Compare Cohen 1975: 14–16, and references cited there.

it to צרך or רעך (see BDB 786a). The stem is attested in Jer 15:8, “I have made *destruction* and terror (עיר ובהלות) fall upon them suddenly” (RSV “anguish and terror”) and Hos 11:9, “I will not come to *destroy* (ולא אבוא בעיר).”

The MT דברי שיר has been interpreted in light of Deut 31:30, וידבר משה . . . דברי השירה, “then Moses spoke the words of this song,” or 2 Sam 22:1, with David as the singer. But the doublet in the A-text of 5:12, (a) ἐνίσχυσον ἐξανίστασο (= שיר קום of 5:12) and (b) καὶ ἐνίσχυσσον, Δεββωρα, τὸν Βαρακ (= the ותשר דבורה ברק of 5:1), reflects a early dissociation of דברי שיר from דבר “word” and שיר “to sing.”¹⁶⁴

For reasons already stated (see above on 5:1), שיר “to sing” is suspect in this part of the poem which describes the mobilization of the militia. The imperative is also suspect since five of the six words here are pointed as imperatives. Therefore, MT דברי שיר has been redivided to דְּבַר יִשִׁיר, with דְּבַר, the sixth word of 5:12, meaning “the pursuer” (i.e., the counterattacking Sisera). The reconstructed יִשִׁיר becomes the *yqtl* preterit of שיר/שור “to go forth, to march forth.”

The root דבר “to pursue” is a cognate of Syriac ܕܒܪ “to drive, to subdue” and of Akkadian *duppuru/dubburu* (Klein 1987: 113). Dahood (1970: 225) also noted the use of this stem in Lam 5:9 (חֶרֶב הַמְּדַבֵּר = “the sword of the pursuer” [for the NRSV “the sword in the wilderness”]) and in Pss 2:5; 18:48; 38:13; 47:4; 109:2; and 119:161. This reading of 5:12b restores the wordplay of עוֹרֵי דְבוּרָה and עוֹרֵי דְבַר. (Globe [1975b: 172] saw here only a pun on *D^eborâ* and *dabb^eri* “songstress”). This use of עור with its several different meanings is another example

¹⁶⁴ This doublet seemingly reflects the שיר קום ברק and דברי שיר ברק (as if דברי = דבורה as שרי = שרה). But as noted in the discussion on 5:1, καὶ ἐνίσχυσσον, Δεββωρα, τὸν Βαρακ is a remote doublet for ותשר דבורה ברק of 5:1. Compare Tov (1978: 231–232) who was uncertain whether καὶ ἐνίσχυσσον, Δεββωρα, τὸν Βαρακ was a gloss or a doublet which “may reflect a variant reading, as many commentators believe, or an exegetical rendering of קום . . .” In my opinion, it is unmistakably a *remote* doublet.

of alliteration in the poem, like the threefold עבר in 2 Sam 19:18, . . . עֲבָרָה הָעֲבָרָה לְעֵבִיר. . . .”

5:12c. Barak made preparations to attack יָשִׁיר קוֹם בָּרַק
(See above, pages 23–24.)

The A-text doublet (discussed above under 5:1 and 5:12b) dissociated שִׁיר from the verb “to sing.” Whereas the A-text doublets read it as שָׂרָה or שָׂרָר “to strengthen, to prevail,” it is more likely the stem שִׁיר/שׂוֹר “to move out, to attack,” which, in light of the Arabic السَّيْرُ الْكَبِيرُ “military expeditions” (Lane 1872: 1484b), can have a military nuance. In the context of mobilization, קוֹם can mean “to attack,” an ellipsis for לְמַלְחָמָה “to arise for battle” (as in Obadiah 1 “Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle”).¹⁶⁵ On the collocation of שׂוֹר “to attack” and קוֹם “to attack,” Ps 92:12 should be noted, “My eyes have seen the downfall of my attackers (שׂוֹרִי), my ears have heard [the downfall of] my evil assailants (בְּקָמִים עֲלֵי מְרַעִים).”

However, the restored יָשִׁיר, with the initial י being a part of the stem rather than a 3ms prefix, is a *hiphʿil* perfect, the cognate of Arabic يَسِّرُ “to prepare” as in the expression تَيَسَّرَ لِلْقِتَالِ “they prepared themselves to fight” (Lane 1893: 2976c). As a participant in the Israelite mobilization against Sisera, Barak *made preparation* to attack and to capture prisoners.

J. Gray (1988: 433, note 33) proposed adding an א and switching שׁ to שׂ so that the MT שִׁיר becomes “captives” (i.e., <א>שִׁיר for אֲסִיר or אֲסִירִים): “[Deborah,] rouse thyself, lead thy train (*dabberî*) of captives (*āśîr*) [*sic*].” This is quite similar to my reading וְהַשִּׁיר in 5:1 as the equivalent of וְהַשִּׁיר. But there are problems with “lead thy train” (5:12a) since there is no “thy” and no “train,” perhaps only a feminine imperative, דַּבְּרִי “lead (a retreat)!” The Arabic cognate دَبَّرَ means “to follow behind the back, to turn the back”; and in form [4] it means “to retreat, to retire,” with the noun دَبْرَةٌ meaning “a defeat” (Lane 1867: 844, 846).

¹⁶⁵ See Cross 1973: 95, note 19, and references cited there.

5:12c. Ben Abinoam (prepared) וּשְׁבַח שְׁבִים בֶּן אַבְיָנָם
to take prisoners

By reading וּשְׁבַח as the second sequential infinitive (GKC 75ⁿ) following שִׁיר “he prepared,” a synonymous parallel to קָו is restored. Instead of the a–b / a’–c–b’ schema of the traditional interpretation, 5:12 can now be scanned a–b–c / b’–d–c’. Since the verbs in 5:12 are not imperatives, the suffix of MT שְׁבִיךְ “thy prisoners” is troublesome. The emendation of a כ (ג) to a ך (ג) is required here as in 5:10 where כַּדִּיךְ “mule” must be read for MT גַּדִּיךְ (see pages 149–151). Unlike Ju 4:16 and the Deuteronomic accounts of war in Joshua, the Song of Deborah makes no reference to the total destruction (חָרַם) of the enemy.

5:13a. the caravan leader went out יָרַד שְׂרִיד לְאֲדִירִים
against the nobles

The difficulty over יָרַד שְׂרִיד לְאֲדִירִים (which Rashi understood to mean “then ruled a remnant among the mighty of the nations”) led Kittel in BH³ and Meyer in BHS to emend the MT to יָרַד יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֲדִירִים “Israel descended with the nobles.” They provided the problematic notation “(sic G^{BC})” even though the B-text has κατέβη κατάλειμμα τοῖς ἰσχυροῖς “went down a remnant for the mighty ones.” By way of contrast, Stuart (1976: 125, 134), following Cross, deleted יָרַד and read שְׂרִיד as a *shaph^eel*, translating “then bring them down, O mighty ones.” On the basis of Arabic سَرَد “to weave a coat of mail,” Seale (1962: 346; 1978: 56–57) saw a reference here to a mail-clad Sisera (like Saul in 1 Sam 17:38) and the אֲדִירִים “skin-clad ones” (like Esau in Gen 25:25, כְּאֲדָרֶת שֵׁעַר “like a hairy mantle”).

The proposal of Chaney (1976: 14), cited by O’Connor (1980: 224), to view שְׂרִיד as the border-town in Zebulun mentioned in Josh 19:10 and 12, which was centrally located for Israel’s mobilization, is attractive. However, though the *personal* name Sered is known from Ugaritic *bn . srd* (UT 452: 1794) and is found in Gen 46:14 and Num 26:20, there are reservations about a *place* name Sarid since the LXX (Lagardiana), the Syriac, and the Old Latin translators read שְׂדוּד (= Shadud) in Josh 19, which has been identified with Tell Shadud. Contra Na’aman (1990:

425), I concur with Boling (1982: 442) that שָׁרִיד, not שָׁרִיד, was in the original text of Josh 19.

Stager's (1988: 226) observation that יָרַד "has an adversative force in this poem" was on target, but his translation, "Then the fugitives went down against the [enemy] nobles," is off course. His interpretation requires the singular שָׁרִיד to be read as a collective or plural, and then "the villagers" (who formed the "militia of Yahweh" and were addressed in 5:31a as the "lovers" of Yahweh) become the "fugitives"—even though the defeated Sisera is the only fugitive otherwise mentioned.

J. C. de Moor (1993: 486–490), using a methodology similar to the one employed in this study, discovered the names of Judah and Levi hidden in this verse. He divided שָׁרִיד into two words and, with the addition of four vowel letters and one consonant, read the verse as

אִז יָרְדוּ שָׁרֵי יוֹדָה לְאֲדִירִים
עִם יְהוָה יָרַד לְוֵי בְּגִבּוֹרִים

“then the princes of Yôdah descended to the dignitaries,
with YHWH descended Levi with heroes.”

The יָרַד of שָׁרִיד becomes the name יְהוֹדָה, which in this one instance would have the *plene* spelling יוֹדָה, compared to the other 800 occurrences of יְהוֹדָה. Given this ratio of יָרַד/יוֹדָה to יְהוֹדָה, de Moor's comment is not surprising, "the unusual spelling of the name of Judah confused the copyist," who compressed the confusing יָרַד שָׁרֵי into the more enigmatic שָׁרִיד/שָׁרִיד.

However, since normative *plene* spelling for the *entire* poem requires the addition of only fifteen vowel letters, the addition of five letters in this one verse is a bit suspicious. Two of the restored vowel letters could be eliminated by reading the singular "the prince (of) Yôdāh descended," in parallelism with the restored singular לְוֵי יָרַד "Levi descended." But this would suggest an elevated status for Judah or its prince, and make Judah's disappearance from the tradition all the more surprising.

Even though de Moor conjectured, "A spelling like *yôdāh* might be expected to have existed in ancient Israel," *yôdāh* would have been spelled simply as יָרַד in the original pre-Davidic orthography. The ambiguous יָרַד could also be the contracted *hoph'al* jussive *yûd* "may he be praised," a variant of the uncontracted

yěhûd. It could then be argued that יד should be read as “Jude,” which by coincidence would make the archaic spelling of Judah similar to the יהודה/יודא of Graeco-Roman times. Given the ambiguity of consonantal יד (= *yûd*, *yad*, *yiddô*, etc.), it is easy to see why the uncontracted form יהוד (*yěhûd*) would have become normative. If the MT שריד is to be divided to read יד שר, the יד should probably be vocalized as *yûd* or *yûdâ*. (On reading the MT ל' as לו or ליו or לוי, see below, under 5:13b.) The interpretation of de Moor merits attention, but it must be considered in light of the following alternatives.¹⁶⁶

In the earlier version of this study, I concurred with Cross and Stuart in reading a *shaph^cel* here and proposed the stem רוד (= רוד) “to assist” in light of Arabic and South Arabic cognates. This had the support of Symmachus’s rendering of יהודים ירדו in Jer 5:31 as οἱ ἱερεῖς συνεπισχυσαν αυτοῖς, “the priests joined in giving strength to them.”¹⁶⁷ While the translation, “the truly noble ones went down to assist,” still remains possible, Soggin’s proposal (1981c: 88) that שריד “could be an unknown military technical term, as the parallelism [עם “militia”] suggests,” seems more likely, even more so than finding the names of Judah and Levi hidden in this verse. In this section, which deals with the mustering of the troops (5:10–13), the names of the tribal participants do not appear. Tribal names are restricted to 5:14–18.

Although not strictly a military term like the *Xεζραθ* and *Xάρακα* in the Septuagint of 1 Kgs 15:20 and 1 Kings 21:12, cited by Finet (1963: 191) as Akkadian words for “places-fortes” and “machine de siège,” the MT שריד can be equated with the Akkadian *sārid* “Eseltreiber, Packmeister, caravan leader, ânier”

¹⁶⁶ Note Albright’s (1927: 175) statement, “*Y^ehûd* was evidently the form employed commonly by pre-exilic Jews in everyday language, and was still used by Aramaic-speaking Jews after the exile, as we know from the Aramaic portions of Daniel and Ezra . . .” On the meaning of the name of Judah, see Millard 1974: 216–218.

¹⁶⁷ See Ziegler 1957: 176. The stem רוד/רוד “to assist, to support” occurs in Hos 12:1, “but Judah still puts (his) trust (רוד) in God,” and Ju 7:24, “Give help (רוד) in confronting the Midianites.” For the cognates see GKC 77^a; Lane 1872: 1063c; Dozy 1927: 2: 521a; and Jamme 1962: 70a.

(Larsen 1967: 79–80).¹⁶⁸ This would permit a quasi-military role for Barak, since the caravan leader was responsible for caravan security.¹⁶⁹ This removes Barak from the domain of the military establishment and helps to explain his reticence to command a militia. Caravan security was one thing, but warfare was another matter. Barak's forte was trade and travel, not combat and battle.

The poet's casting Barak in the role of "Packmeister" (perhaps part of the strategy of deception for a successful mobilization) fits in well with the other caravan motifs in 5:7 (warriors [caravan guards?] disappeared), 5:10 (she-asses and mules), 5:19 (spoils of silver = caravan currency), 5:30 (dyed and embroidered cloth = caravan merchandise), plus the mention in 4:11 of the אֵלֶּן בְּצַעֲנִים "oak of the caravaneers" (Soggin 1981c: 66). As a caravan leader, Barak need not have been a well-known or powerful international traveler since, as Larsen (1967: 80) noted,

. . . the *sāridum* is always connected with regular hire To my knowledge there is only one case of a *sāridum* receiving a working-capital . . . the *sāridū* are anonymous. Finally there is reason to believe that the *sāridum* in many cases followed the caravan only on part of the journey, or that he was hired en route, perhaps to be of help to the caravan on certain stretches.

Stuart (1976: 134) read the ל of לְאֲדִירִים as a vocative ל, but this is unnecessary once שְׂרִיד is taken to be the subject of יָרַד. The ל here has the force of עַל "against" (as in Ju 9:25, 16:2, etc.). The אֲדִירִים "nobles" are the same people addressed in the exhortation as מַלְכִים and רִוְנִים, i.e., the enemy nobility (as in Jer 25:34; 2 Chron 23:30; and Neh 10:30). The use of שְׂרִיד and יָרַד is another example of the poet's fondness for aural coherence, noted elsewhere with אָתָּה and אַתָּה, אֲרַחֲוֹת and אֲרַחֲוֹת, בְּצַעֲדָךְ and בְּצַעֲדָךְ, אֵל and אֵלֶּיךָ, עֲנֵנִי and עֲנֵנִי, and דְּבֹרָה and דְּבֹרָה.

¹⁶⁸ Another Akkadian technical term has been noted by Pope (1965: 177), namely, "The word 'Tarshish' is derived from an Akkadian word meaning 'refinery' or 'smelter' and was applied by the Phoenicians to their mining colonies in Spain and North Africa and on the island of Sardinia."

¹⁶⁹ See Albright 1968b: 62–63 for a discussion on the Egyptian ^omy-^c "caravan leader" and the quasi-military role of the ^cmy-^c.

5:13b. They were accompanied by (heavenly) warriors
 לִי >וּ < בַּנְּבוֹרִים

Following the B-text and the notes in BH³ and BHS, MT לִי is commonly changed to לוֹ. By contrast, Stuart (1976: 134) deleted the ׀ and the following preposition בַּ and read the לִי as another vocative (“O Warriors”). However, one need not delete anything; rather, an addition is required. As noted (on page 162), de Moor (1993: 486), supported by the MT and the B-text, read the לִי or לוֹ as the name לְיִי, thereby bringing the number of tribal participants against Sisera up to twelve; namely, Asher, Benjamin, Dan, Ephraim, Gilead, Issachar, *Levi*, Machir, Naphtali, Reuben, *Yôdah*, and Zebulun. (As indicated, de Moor’s proposal cannot be dismissed lightly; but presently I remain doubtful.)

However, using the same basic methodology, I propose the following alternative reading. MT לִי (B-text לוֹ) is not a name but a verb lacking the 3mpl suffix, like לָבִי in 5:9 and לָחַם in 5:8. When read as לִי, the verb can be parsed as a *qal* passive of לָוָה, a cognate of Ugaritic *ly* (*lwy*) “to escort” (Driver 1956: 159), Syriac ܠܘܐ “to accompany, to follow” (J. Payne Smith 1903: 236), and Akkadian *lawû* “to escort” (*AHW* 1: 540–541). The גְּבוֹרִים are most likely the same as the גְּבוֹרֵי שָׁמַיִם in 1QH iii: 35–36. The כּוֹכְבִים¹⁷⁰ “the star (warriors)” which appear in 5:20 (“From the heavens fought the stars, from their stations they fought against Sisera”) have been mobilized along with the Israelite militia.

V. Strategy of the forces (Part I): Ju 5:14–15a

5:14a. Hastening through Amalek שָׂרָשׁוּ >י < ם בַּעֲמֹלֶק

MT שָׂרָשׁוּ and בַּעֲמֹלֶק have been very problematic. A variety of emendations have been suggested over the years, including:

¹⁷⁰ The heavenly warriors appear in Enoch and the Talmud, as well as in the Qumran scrolls. See P. D. Miller 1973: 245, note 219, for references.

- שָׂרְשׁוּ בַעֲמָק “they tore (?) to the valley”
 (G. A. Smith 1912: 87);
 מִשְׁכּוֹ בַעֲמָק “they spread out in the vale”
 (Burney 1918: 133);
 שָׂרַ שָׂרַ בַּעֲמָק “storm, storm into the valley”
 (Albright, 1922: 77);
 שָׂרוּ שָׂרִים בַּעֲמָק “princes went forth into the valley”
 (Richter 1963: 401);
 שָׂרַד בַּעֲמָק “bring them down into the valley”
 (Stuart 1976: 135);
 שָׂרוּ שָׂרִים בַּעֲמָק “princes were in the valley”
 (JB and NAB);
 מַלְכֵם שָׂרוּ שִׁבְעִים [ם] מַלְכֵם “brechen siebzig *melakim* auf”
 (Rose 1976: 447);
 שָׂרוּ שָׂרִים בַּעֲמָק “the captains arrived at the valley”
 (Soggin 1981c: 82).

Without emending the consonantal MT, O’Connor (1980: 224) revocalized the phrase to read, “they root them out of Amaleq.” This would be an attractive solution but for the fact that, as evidenced in 5:17–21, the fighting took place in Jezreel, along the sea coast, and in the vicinity of Merom—not in the region of Amaleq. G. R. Driver (1962–1963: 10) appealed to the Arabic شرس “he was ill-natured” and أشرس “he was bold or daring in battle” (Lane 1872: 1532), and translated “men of Ephraim were showing a bold face in the plain” (cf. NEB). Driver sensed the poet’s intent as evidenced in the *triple* he offered for לִאֲחֲרַיִךְ: “(hurrying) to thy rear (to join thee).” But the idea of hurrying comes from the text, not the context. It is found in the correct interpretation of שָׂרְשָׁם.

Without emending the text, Craigie (1970: 83–86; 1972: 352) appealed to the Egyptian root *srs* “to have command (of a corps)” and the Hebrew שָׂרִים “officer” and translated, “officers (go down) into the valley.” This has been adopted by Lindars (1995: 210, 253). But the reading here of שָׂרַשׁ for the widely attested שָׂרַשׁ (i.e., the Hittite *šalliš* = *ša rabāti*) and pulling the verb from 5:13 are difficult options, though not impossible.

Craigie’s appeal to an Egyptian loanword was certainly a move in the right direction. However, the loanword was not *srs*

but *šrš* “schnell sein, herbeieilen (zur Hilfe)”¹⁷¹ (Erman and Grapow 1897: 4: 529). The poet probably intended a wordplay on the name אֶפְרַיִם, associating it with פָּרָא “to be quick” or אָפַר (= Arabic أفر) “to be quick, to be active.” The recruits from אֶפְרַיִם (= אֶפְרַיִם “the fast ones”) would be the שְׂרֵשִׁים “speedy ones.”¹⁷² Moffat’s translation (1922: 276), “wheeling from Ephraim into the glen,” which was similar to that of G. A. Smith (1912: 87), was on target for the participle שְׂרֵשִׁים (= שְׂרֵשִׁים).

Few contemporary scholars, aside from Schloen (1993: 27), have argued for the integrity of MT בְּעַמְלֵק. Globe (1975b: 171) who supposedly offered a “literal” translation read עַמְלֵק “valley” for עַמְלֵק: “From Ephraim [officers (?) came into the valley],” and Amalek was recognized only in a footnote. But Cazelles (1974: 235–238) had correctly argued for the integrity of the MT Amalek, noting along with *lectio difficilior* that Ju 12:15 associates Ephraim with the Amalekite hill country. As Payne (1983: 163–172) argued for a Midianite presence in Ephraim, Edelman (1986: 71–84) offered a good case for an Amalekite presence in the hills of western Samaria down to the time of Saul.

The poet’s use of Amalek may help date the composition of the poem. Amalekites exercised control over the hill country (as opposed to there being an Amalekite “enclave” there) only after the death of Ramesses III (1166 B.C.E.) until their defeat at the hands of Gideon (detailed in Judges 6–7), perhaps around 1125. If the Song of Deborah was composed during the period of 1160–1125, it would be quite natural for the area known later as the “hill country of Ephraim” to be referred to as “the land of the Amalekites,” similar to the use of “Canaan” in Josh 22:10–11.¹⁷³

¹⁷¹ See Gardiner 1911: 20, note 9 (Anastasi I, 18: 5). On the subject of Egyptian–Hebrew parallels, see Yahuda 1933; 1947: 83–90; Gilula 1967: 114; W. G. Simpson 1969: 128–131; and Williams 1975: 231–253.

¹⁷² Compare Bowman’s argument (1972–1973: 89) that “Ju 5:14 according to the MT . . . may reflect a late smear tactic against Ephraim.” To the contrary, the verse contains a complimentary wordplay, praising Ephraim.

¹⁷³ 1125 B.C.E. is the probable date for Gideon’s campaign, based on a date at the end of the twelfth century for the destruction of the temple of El Berith at Shechem, which was the work of Gideon’s son, Abimelek (Ju 9:42–49). See

The emendation of עמלק to עמק removes the one bit of internal evidence which could help date the composition of the poem.¹⁷⁴

5:14b. (They) would strike at the rear אחר יכּ <ג>

Craigie's identification (1969a: 257) of the MT אחרִיךְ בנימִין as a war cry cannot be supported by Hos 5:8, considered by Lindars (1995: 253) and others to be a stylized battle cry. Hos 5:8 has its own textual problems, and the אחרִיךְ there is better read as אחרכו (an *aph^eel* of the stem חרך "to rouse, to set in motion") or אחרידו "terrify!" (a *hiph^eil* imperative of חרד).¹⁷⁵ Wolff (1974: 104) followed the LXX and translated Hos 5:8 "Sound the alarm in Beth-Aven, <terrify> Benjamin," assuming a *Vorlage* with חרד, not אחרִיךְ.

Consequently, Hos 5:8 and Ju 5:14b have only apparent similarities. Rabin's (1961: 387, 400) translation of Ju 5:14b, "May we be thy ransom, O Benjamin" (made on the basis of the Mishnaic אחריוּת "obligation to provide a substitute, make good a loss"), would be attractive in another context. But it is not suitable for a battle ballad in general or Ju 5:14–15a in particular.

MT אחרִיךְ is composed of the adverbial אחר and the defectively spelled *yqtl* 3mpl of נכה "to smite, to attack." Thus, אחרִיךְ "at the rear they will strike" removes the problematic direct address in the MT and uncovers a key element of the Israelite strategy.¹⁷⁶ From the vantage point of the Canaanites, whose

Bright 1981: 180, note 85). Kraft (1962a: 394) dated Gideon to the second half of the eleventh century, as did Landes (1962: 102). Compare Ahlström (1977: 287–288; 1993: 379–381), who argued that the poem was composed long after the event it celebrates—at a time when Judah was not part of Israel.

¹⁷⁴ In contrast to the conclusions in this study, compare Kallai's unacceptable conclusion (1978: 258–261), ". . . the background of the Song of Deborah with the general territorial picture it conveys is incompatible with its being an early epic, and supports the contention that it is a later composition."

¹⁷⁵ On the *aph^eel* in Hebrew, see Dahood 1965: 24; and 1968: 31.

¹⁷⁶ Compare Kuhnigk 1974: 73, where he vocalizes אַחֲרֵי כִי, having an emphatic כִּי in parallel with the suffixed ך of אַחֲרֵי. He takes אחר to mean "Nachkommenschaft, Sprößling."

chariots faced the plain, an attack from the southern mountains would be from the rear. The fear of such an attack is found in Papyrus Anastasi I 24:5 (*ANET* 478a; Gardiner 1911: 27), “Then thou thinkest that the foe is behind thee. Trembling seizes thee.”

5:14c. Benjamin from concealment בנימין בעמם יכ>ה<
would attack

None of the varied translations give hint that this phrase deals with strategy. Direct address required by MT goes unchallenged by most, including the NAB, “Behind you was Benjamin, among your troops”; the NEB, “crying, ‘With you, Benjamin! Your clansmen are here’”; O’Connor (1980: 224), “Benjamin delays you among the people”; and NRSV, “following you, Benjamin, with your kin.” However, similar to אחר־יך, discussed above, MT בַּעַמִּיךְ is a compound of three elements: the preposition ב, the noun עַמִּים, and the *yqtl* 3ms of נָכַח.

The vocable is עַמִּים II, “to darken, to dim” (BDB 770; Klein 1987: 475), a cognate of Aramaic עַמִּים “to conceal, to suppress” and Arabic غَم “he concealed.” It was probably used instead of אָרַב or חָבַא for alliteration with the name בנימין, matching the alliteration which occurs also with the names Machir (מַכִּיר) and Issachar (יִשַׁשׁכָר and שַׁרִי).¹⁷⁷

Lindars (1995: 210, 291), appealing to עַמִּיּוֹת “peoples” in Neh 9: 22, 24 translated the colon “After you, Benjamin, in your companies” and lamented, “It seems impossible to relate Pesh *behubak*” (perhaps meaning ‘in your willingness’ to take part) to the Hebrew.” But חָבַא, minus its preposition and suffix, is the cognate of Hebrew חָבַה/חָבַא “to hide, to withdraw” (BDB 285), which is a synonym of עַמִּים II, “to darken, to conceal.”¹⁷⁸ The Peshitta’s חָבַא (= חָבַא) supports my translation.

¹⁷⁷ Note other examples cited by Globe 1975b: 172–173.

¹⁷⁸ Ordinarily this word is spelled with a א rather than a ח. See Payne Smith 1903: 133 and 153 for חָבַא “to cover, to hide” and חָבַא “covering, hiding.” Note that the חָבַא “thick darkness” with a ח rather than א.

5:14d. From Zebulon (those) ומזבולן משכים בשבט ספר
brandishing the marshal's mace

The suggestion of Kittel in BH³ to delete *בשבט ספר*, and even the proposals of Burney and Richter to delete just *ספר* for metrical reasons, are unnecessary. But Meyer's (in BHS) and de Moor's (1993: 492) proposal to read *ספר* "copper/bronze" (cognate of Akkadian *siparru*, first suggested by Friedländer), and Tsevat's (1952–53: 107) reading *ספר* as a cognate of Akkadian *šaparu* "to rule" and *šapirum* "governor" remain good options.¹⁷⁹

Since the function of the scribe could be a military one (2 Kgs 25:19; Jer 52:25; 2 Chron 26:11; and 1 Macc 5:42) and in light of the Egyptian borrowing of the term *סִפֵּר יֵדֵעַ* (which was apparently the equivalent of their own army official, the *sš dn* "scribe of distribution" [Gardiner 1947: 33]) there is good reason to retain *ספר* "scribe, muster-master" (with Lindars, 1995: 291). As the following excerpts from Papyrus Anastasi I (Gardiner 1911: *passim*; ANET 475–479) indicate, the position of the scribe was one of authority, like that of the *מַחְקָקִים* and the *שָׂרִים*:¹⁸⁰

A scribe of the king, one who enrolls the soldiers (1: 12: 1)
... I am the scribe, the commander of soldiers (1: 13: 6)
... vigilant scribe, who art at the head of the army (1: 15: 1)
... thou honoured scribe, Maher cunning of hand,
at the head of the troops, in front of the army. (1: 27: 1)

In this context, *שבט* is not a synonym of *רמח* "spear," as in 1QM and 2 Sam 18:14, but the scepter of authority, as in Gen 49:10 and Isa 14:5. A wordplay on Zebulon appears to have been intended here as with Ephraim: *זבל* and *משך* are synonyms like Arabic *زبل* "he held" and *مشك* "he carried." The *carrier* (*זבולן*) *carried* (*משך*) the marshal's mace.

¹⁷⁹ See Perles 1916: col. 84 (who cited Friedländer [JQR 1903: 102]). Boling (1975: 112) followed Tsevat (1952–1953: 107).

¹⁸⁰ For a survey of the problems with *מחקקים* in the LXX, see Walters 1973: 206–208.

5:15a. And officers from Issachar ושרי ביששכר

The NEB translation, “Issachar joined with Deborah in the uprising,” follows G. R. Driver’s proposal (1962–63: 11) to transfer the ב of ביששכר to the preceding ושרי. With the elision of the ו, Driver read שרב (= סרב), a cognate of Syriac כ ܫܪܒ “to rebel” But שרב and כ ܫܪܒ do not suggest military action, but garrulous, contentious, or mendacious speech.¹⁸¹ It is more a synonym of מאן and מרה “to reject” than of מרד “to revolt.”

Therefore, the MT remains preferable, requiring only a change in the vocalization of ושרי. The ו may be emphatic, though not necessarily, since the bicolon begins with an emphatic ו affixed to מזבולן. It is retained here for better syllable balance. The use of the intervening preposition or particle in the construct chain is characteristic of this poet’s style, noted already in 5:4–5 (מיים והלכי על דרך) and in 5:10–11 (הרים “waters of the mountains”) and in 5:10–11 (הרים “those walking the road”). The use of ב “from” here and in 5:6 and 5:19 is a minor unifying element (see note 42).

The *principales tui* of the Old Latin reflects a *Vorlage* with ושריך ביששכר, where the ב of ביששכר was read as a כ and affixed to ושרי. The *et ex Issachar* rendering of the Ethiopic reflects a confusion of ב and מ, or an understanding that ב could mean “from.” The A-text and the Lucianic text seemingly have nothing in 5:15 to reflect the MT ושרי, but the extra ἐπισχύστος ἡγήσας doublet in these texts in 5:14 is the remote doublet for ושרי.

Strategy of the Forces (Part II): 5:15b–16

These verses have been considered corrupt by many critics, including Moore (1900b: 172), who left part of the text untranslated, and Albright (1922: 77). Soggin (1981c: 89) provides a very good summary of current opinion. Generally, 5:15–22 is labeled a taunt song or a denunciation of those tribes which did

¹⁸¹ R. Payne Smith 1897–1901: 2: 2725; J. Payne Smith 1903: 389. Note, for example, Ezek 2:6, אַל-תִּתְחַת כִּי בַּיִת מְרִי הֵמָּה, “be not afraid for they are a rebellious house.”

not participate in the battle. Several scholars, including Crown (1967: 240–242), Craigie (1969a: 261), and Globe (1974b: 504), suggested that these lines contained old idiomatic expressions for sarcastic censure, especially against Reuben.¹⁸² Globe believed the poet used a *double entendre* to make the sarcasm all the more biting. The expression *לִב חִקְקֵי* was used to demean Reuben as a “commander of the mind,” a kind of “armchair warrior” who had only a “division (*פִּלְגוּת*) of his mind” instead of a command over a real military division (*פִּלְגוּת*) in the field.

But far from being a taunt against those who did not participate in the battle against Sisera, these lines are a continuation of the strategy statement of 5:14. Hay (1964: 403) noted that the strategy was not new or unique:

The similarity between the principal factors in this story and the Reed Sea episode is striking: Israel is delivered when the vastly superior enemy chariot force is swept away by water. . . . Thus it appears likely that Israel again employed the same tactics which she had used successfully against the Egyptians.

5:15b. That he might inflict defeat וַיִּשְׁכַּר

Albright (1922: 77), followed by Meyer (BHS), deleted this colon in his reconstruction in light of the LXX A-text which has no hint of it. Burney (1918: 137), followed by other critics (e.g., J. Gray, see above, page 148), replaced *וַיִּשְׁכַּר* with *וַנִּפְתַּלֵּי*. But given the poet’s liking for paronomasia and for aural coherence, it is more likely that the second *וַיִּשְׁכַּר* in verse 15 is a *shaph^cel* (*yqt*) of the root *שָׁכַר*, like Ugaritic *tttkrn* (UT 502: 2679), a cognate of South Arabic *škr* “to defeat” (Jamme 1962: 71a, 448). This word occurs in the enigmatic proverb *רַב מַחֲוֹלֵל כָּל וְשָׁכַר* in Prov 26:10, which R. B. Y. Scott (1965: 157) unnecessarily emended to read, “to hire a fool or drunkard is to wound all passers-by with a sword.” However, the aphorism becomes quite obvious by simply reading *שָׁכַר* “to defeat”

¹⁸² The reference in Gen 49:4 to Reuben’s being “unruly like water” is not a denunciation for his being “fainthearted,” since *פָּחַז כַּמִּים*, like Aramaic *פָּחַז* and Arabic *فجر* “uncontrollable, reckless, boastful,” speaks of the reckless courage of the zealot.

in lieu of MT שכר “to hire”: “Strife (רִיב) wounds everyone, defeating (שָׁכַר) the fool and defeating (שָׁכַר) the learned.”¹⁸³

5:15c. Barak was concealed in the plain כֵּן בָּרַק בַּעֲמֻק

Lindars (1995: 256–257) followed Burney in reading כֵּן as an adjective and added the preposition לְ to Barak’s name, translating “true to Barak.” But Schnurrer, cited by G. R. Driver (1962–1963: 11), and Soggin (1981c: 89) more correctly related the כֵּן to Arabic كُن “to conceal, a place of concealment or retreat” (Lane 1893: 3003; Hava 1915: 666). I concur with this identification, even though Soggin’s translation, “Issachar was a support for Barak,” does not reflect this meaning. The MT כֵּן (= כִּי־נִי) is simply a *qal* passive meaning “was concealed.” This verb also occurs in Ju 12:6, וְלֹא יָכִין לְדַבֵּר כֵּן, “he could not conceal speaking thus,” and in Josh 8:4, “you shall lie in ambush (אֲרֻבִים) . . . all of you shall remain hidden (וְהָיִיתֶם כְּלֻכְמֵי נִכְנִיִם)” (contra the RSV “hold yourselves in all readiness”).¹⁸⁴

5:15d. Gad had joined them גַּד לָיִם

It has long been assumed that Gad was not mentioned in Judges 5, and this assumption led Mayes (1974: 31) to conclude that “at the time of the event commemorated in the Song of Deborah there existed no tribe of Gad.” But Gad was there all

¹⁸³ MT עֲבָרִים “the learned,” as the antithesis of כְּסִיל, must be a cognate of عَرَفَ “the learned one well-acquainted with affairs, a manager, supervisor.” The Arabic عَرَفَهُ “he knew it” is synonymous with عَلِمَهُ “he knew it,” with the distinction that عَرَفَ indicates perceiving a thing by reflection (Lane 1872: 2013–2015). Given the interchange of כּ and פּ (see Blommerde 1969: 5–6) and the metathesis which occurs in vocables having an ע and a ר, MT עֲבָרִים need not be emended to עֲרָף or עֲרַב. See page 142 for a discussion on the analogous שְׁעָרִים in Ju 5:8.

¹⁸⁴ Job 12:5, 15:23, 18:12, and Ps 38:18 need to be reexamined in light of כִּי־נִי “to conceal.”

along. The גְּדֹלִים in 5:15d is not the plural noun גְּדֹלִים “great ones” but a two-word phrase with a subject and a verb. The subject is גָּד and the verb is the *qal* 3ms of לוּהַ “to join, to accompany” (BDB 530–531; Kopf 1976: 153), with the 3mpl datival suffix, meaning “Gad had joined them.”

This interpretation removes the alleged sarcastic censure of Reuben and closely associates Reuben with Gad, an association which is reflected in their intermingled settlement (Josh 13 and Num 32), which predated the time when they were fighting against Sisera as comrades-in-arms. (Isserles [1510–1572], similarly dividing the name, suggested that Reuben in this verse was to be read as בֵּין רְאוּי [see note 189]).

5:15d–16a. Those of genuine courage חֲקִקֵי לֵב לְמַה
circled about

The translation “genuine courage” combines insights from Akkadian and Arabic. In Akkadian, *libbu* without a modifier may indicate courage, e.g., *ša lib-bi išû u emûqu la išû anaku* “I am one who has courage but no strength” (CAD: 9:170b). The Hebrew לֵב has the same meaning, although it generally has a modifier, as in Amos 2:16 (אֲמִיץ לֵב) and Ps 76:5 (אֲבִירֵי לֵב), both meaning “courageous.” Hebrew חֲקִקֵי is a cognate of Arabic حَقَّ “authentic, genuine, true,” as in the expression حَقَّ السَّجَاع “perfect in courage” (Lane 1865: 605c, 609c). Consequently, the MT חֲקִקֵי לֵב means the “true-hearted,” those of “genuine courage,” and the masculine bound nouns חֲקִקֵי לֵב are the subject of the verb לְמַה “to encircle, to surround, to circle about.”

The doublets in 5:16 of Symmachus and the A-text, ὅτι μοι κάθησαι [Symmachus καθίσαι] “why to me to sit down?” (as opposed to the B-text εἰς τί ἐκάθισαν “to what [purpose] did they seat?”), reflect לְמַי שְׁבַת instead of לְמַי יִשְׁבַת . The ὅτι and εἰς τί reflect the MT לְמַה ; the μοι doublet preserves the variant לְמַי (the poetic $\text{לְמַי} + 1\text{cs suffix} = \text{לְמַי}$). The B-text has ἐκάθισαν “they seated” (= יִשְׁבּוּ for יִשְׁבַת) which appears to be a contextual translation which avoided the second person since there is no direct address in the immediate context, and since a sequential infinitive after an interrogative לְמַה makes poor sense.

But לָמַח is not the interrogative לָמַח but the infinitive absolute לָמַח, like פָּרַע and עוֹרִי, discussed above.¹⁸⁵ It functions as a finite verb (or with the elision of the finite verb) and is a cognate of Akkadian *lamû* “to hem in (an enemy), to circumambulate” (*CAD*: 9:69–77). In light of the doublets in the Greek text, it is quite possible that the word was originally לָמַח, *scriptio defectiva* for a 3mpl verb. In either case, the original לָמַח was incorrectly vocalized לָמַח (εἰς τί) and לָמַח (= μὴ) instead of לָמַח or לָמַח or לָמַח. Lindars (1995: 291) correctly noted, “All the LXX renderings presuppose that the meaning [of חֲקִקִי] is to be deduced from חֲקִרִי, but all presuppose a different word, which suggests that the text did not differ from the MT.” It is a case where translators and tradition, like contemporary lexicographers, failed to recognize that חֲקִקִי לֵב meant “true-hearted” or “courageous.”

P. de Boer (1951: 181), followed by Cazelles (1952: 378), recognized the *shaph^eel* of לָמַח in Isa 38:12 and 13, “by day as well as by night thou makest me hemmed in (תַּשְׁלִימוֹנִי),” compared to the NRSV “from day to night you bring me to an end.” The infinitive absolute is here followed by three sequential infinitives (discussed next): שָׁבַת “to wait for,” שָׂרַקְתָּ “to look for,” and רָאָו “to triumph over.”

5:16a. to wait between the ravines יִשְׁבֹּת בֵּין הַמְּשַׁפְתִּים

Although the MT interrogative לָמַח initially points the exegete in the wrong direction, the crux in 5:16 is really מְשַׁפְתִּים, variously translated “fireplaces, ash heaps” (BDB 1946a), “Packesel, Sattelkörbe” (KB³ 616a), or “sheepfolds” (Kimhi, KJV, RSV, NRSV). The translations have Reuben acting very strangely: “Why did you squat between hearths harkening to pastoral pipings?” (Boling 1975: 103); “But why did you remain sitting under the pack-saddles, listening to the shepherds’ pipes?” (Soggin 1981c: 82); “Why do you sit among hearths listening to herds hissing?” (O’Connor 1980: 225); “Why did you stay among the sheepfolds to listen to the whistlings for the flocks?” (Lindars

¹⁸⁵ Note Jer 31:2, יִשְׁקָאֵל הָלֹךְ לְהַרְגִיעוֹ, “Israel journeyed to find rest,” which has the infinitive absolute followed by the sequential infinitive construct.

1995: 210)—none of which really improved on Smith’s (1912: 88), “Why satest thou still the wattles between?”

The B-text διγομίας “a double-load, a twin-pack” reflects a dual מְשַׁפְּתִים for the MT הַמְשַׁפְּתִים, but provides no better sense: “Why did they sit among the twin-packs to hear the hissing of angels?” The LXX *Vorlage* apparently had עוֹרִים “watchers, angels” for the MT עֲדָרִים “flocks (?)” although ἀγγέλων could easily be a misreading of ἀγελῶν “herds” (see below, page 181).

Craigie (1977b: 33–49) and Soggin (1981c: 90) have summarized the issues, which center basically around the two following interpretations:

- (a) Albright (1950–1951: 22 and 1968b: 237), followed by Boling (1975: 112) argued for a Hebrew cognate of Ugaritic *mtpdm* “hearth, fireplace” = מְשַׁפְּתִים;
- (b) Eissfeldt (1949: 9–10 and 1954: 54–56), followed by Yadin (1955: 8), Tournay (1959: 361), J. Gray (1967: 287; 1988: 444), and Craigie (1977b: 48), associated the MT הַמְשַׁפְּתִים with the “kite” structures scattered in the area east-northeast of Amman and graphically depicted in a Safaitic drawing scratched in stone.¹⁸⁶

But the meaning of Ugaritic *mtpdm* is in dispute, some thinking that it means “stages” or “layers” or a unit of distance—none of which fits the context of 5:16. P. de Moor (1993: 491) asserted, “It is certain *mšptym* corresponds to Ugaritic *mtpdm* and primarily means ‘donkey-pack.’” This would make מְשַׁפְּתִים similar to the “two burdens” in Gen 49:14, as translated in the KJV and NKJ. Craigie linked מְשַׁפְּתִים to the Egyptian *sbty* “surrounding walls, ramparts,” but acknowledged that there were also linguistic problems with this identification, though no greater than with Ugaritic *mtpdm*.

An easier solution than the geographically remote “kites” or “converging fold-walls/sheepfolds” (J. Gray 1977: 223) and the linguistically remote *mtpdm* and *sbty* has long been available.

¹⁸⁶ The converging enclosing walls, which may be up to ten miles in length and from the air look like a large (toy) kite, were used for the entrapment of animals. The double wall is reckoned to account for the dual form of מְשַׁפְּתִים.

The Targum's בין תחומין “between the boundaries,” the Old Latin *labiorum*, and the LXX A-text triplet in 5:15 provide the clues for reading “ravines.”

The A-text has the transliterated *μοσφαιθαμ* or the like, similar to the Syriac ܡܫܦܐܝܬܐܡ. Moreover, the A-text of 5:15 has a remote doublet (or triplet) for the MT שלח ברגליו. In addition to ἐξαπέστειλεν πεζοὺς αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν κοιλάδα “he sent off his foot soldiers out to the hollow” and ἐξέτεινε ἐν τοῖς ποσὶν αὐτοῦ “he stretched out on his feet,” it also has ἵνα τί σὺ κατοικεῖς ἐν μέσῳ χειλέω “to what end do you dwell in (the) midst of banks/shores (of the wadi),” obviously a translation of 5:16a in which המשפתים was derived from שפה “lip, boundary, brink.” The Syriac text has ܟܘܠܠܐ (= Hebrew שבלל “flowing stream”), which suggests the same understanding.

Hebrew שפה/שפה may be related to two Arabic cognates, either شفا/شفه “brink, lip” or سيف “the side of a valley or the shore of the sea or river” (Lane 1872: 1574, 1485c). The latter definition fits שפה when used with a wadi, river, or seaside.¹⁸⁷ When no distinction was made between the ש and ש, the two stems easily became confused in Hebrew.

Meek’s translation (1927: 385), “Why did you lounge among the ravines,” was on target for משפתים, though he missed the point on למה and ישבת as they pertained to the strategy of the Israelites. The unusual infinitive, ישבת, “to tarry, to stay” instead of שבת, is also attested with the stem יבש in Gen 8:7, “. . . [the dove] went to and fro until the waters were dried up (יבשה).”

5:16b. לשמע שרק[ו]ת עדרים

MT שרקוּת, regularly identified with שרק “to whistle, to hiss,” is emended and read, without the ו, as the infinitive construct

¹⁸⁷ The MT משפתים can be read as the dual of a feminine noun (like משמרת “office, function”) meaning “two sides of a valley” or simply “a (mountain) ravine.” As noted on page 111, the poet made frequent use of the feminine dual, including רקמתים and רחמתים in 5:30 and פלשתים in 3:31 (as interpreted above, pages 64–69).

שִׁקְרָה, a metathetic variant of שִׁקַּר = סִקַּר “to ogle, to look at intently” and Syriac ܣܩܪ “to eye with hatred or envy.” (A similar metathesis occurs with סִקַּר “to paint red” [Jastrow 1903: 1021], but Arabic شرق “he dyed it red” [Lane 1872: 1539a]). The intensity of action rooted in שִׁקַּר/שִׁקְרָה is greater than that of רָאָה. It is more like the intensity associated with שִׁקַּד “to be watchful, to be alert” (noting that שִׁקַּד and שִׁקַּר could be easily confused).

For MT עֲדָרִים, the LXX B-text has ἀγγέλων “watchers, messengers,”¹⁸⁸ having read עֲוָרִים for the MT עֲדָרִים. However, the A-text διελθεῖν “to go through” must have read עֲבָרִים for the MT עֲדָרִים. But neither reading warrants a change in the MT.

Contrary to exegetical tradition, עֲדָרִים is not the plural of the well-attested עֲדָר “sheep, flock” or “shepherd” (Soggin 1981c: 82; NEB, and NRSV). The word is a cognate of Arabic غدر “to lag, to remain behind, to survive,” e.g., “such a one remained (غدر) after the death of his brothers” (Lane 1887: 2231). The stem is used in Modern Hebrew meaning “to be missing in battle” (Klein 1987: 465). Thus, the עֲדָרִים are those stragglers who would survive the flooding and the destruction of their chariots. As noted above (page 144), the summons-to-arms was for a mop-up operation. In words borrowed from Ju 20:45 (NEB), the militia would “pick off the straggler on the road.”

5:16b. triumph over רָאוּ בַגְדוּלִים חֲקֵרֵי לֵב
cowardly chieftains

Meyer, in BHS, like other commentators, viewed 5:16b as a duplicate of 5:15b. Stuart (1976: 135) deleted it, and the NEB relegated it to a note. But Soggin (1981c: 90) argued for its integrity and translated, “among the groups of Reuben, men were brave only at heart,” which somehow is not supposed to conflict with 5:15d, “from the groups of Reuben there were numerous brave hearts.” The חֲקֵר here is the cognate of Arabic حقر “paltry,

¹⁸⁸ Compare the ἀγγελος of Dn 4:10 and 20 [LXX 4:13 and 23] and the ἀγγέλους of Job 40:11, where עֲרִירָה or עֲרִירָה was read for MT עֲבָרָה “overflowing.” As noted on page 176, ἀγγέλων could be an error for ἀγγέλων.

contemptible, worthless.” The חקרי לב “cowardly” is a clever wordplay on the חקקי לב “courageous” in 5:15c. Unfortunately, an erroneous addition of a ן after the preposition ב transformed the two words ראו בגדולים “they triumphed over the chieftains” into the awkward phrase ראובן גדולים “Reuben chieftains.”¹⁸⁹ The verb ראה used with ב, meaning “to triumph over,” appears in the Mesha Inscription and in many other biblical texts.

VI. Israelite Attack: Ju 5:17–23

As traditionally translated, the Song of Deborah in this section reprimands Gilead, Dan, and Asher for staying out of the conflict with Sisera. Gilead was censured for remaining in Trans-Jordan, Dan was chided for “dwelling at ease” or being preoccupied with maritime interests during wartime, and Asher was reprimanded for “vacationing” at the shore while his kinfolk took to the battlefield. By contrast, two tribes, Naphtali and Zebulon, are singled out for special commendation for courage unto death.

However, with only one change of a ן to ך, the recognition of a *shaph^cel* form or two, and the redivision of two words, an entirely different picture emerges in which *all* the tribes mentioned are hailed for heroic action. These lines actually tell of a three-front attack by the Israelites against Sisera’s Canaanite coalition. The strategy presented in 5:14–18 was to challenge Sisera with

- (a) a primary attack by Dan, Asher, and Zebulon against the harbor facilities at Abu Hawam at the mouth of the Wadi Kishon, which may have served, along with Acco, as a Egyptian navy base;¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ Note Rabbi Moses Isserles’s (1510–1572) redivision and transposition of the text as . . . בפלגות ראוי בין . . . (Responso § 17, beginning with הרש"ל דן). I am indebted to Gilad Gevaryahu for this reference to ReMa. On "ראה ב" "to triumph over," see BDB 908a; *KAI* 2: 173.

¹⁹⁰ See Mazar 1951: 22. Edelman (1986: 83, note 23) called attention to the unpublished Ph.D. dissertation of D. Saltz, *Greek Geometric Pottery in the East: The Chronological Implications* (Harvard, 1978) who identified Abu Hawam as Megiddo’s port city (169, 172).

- (b) an diversionary attack by Naphtali towards Merom, although there was no intention to engage or seize the city;
- (c) a delayed assault by Ephraim from the south, via the Wadi el Arah and “along the waters of Megiddo,” once Sisera’s forces moved westward toward Abu Hawam.

According to this threefold Israelite strategy, Sisera would be forced to respond. He would, no doubt, hasten westward along the Wadi Kishon, which would have been dry during the late summer months. Even if winter rains or storms were imminent, Sisera would have had to gamble on using the wadi for a quick counterattack to Abu Hawam. This reconstruction fits extremely well with the *second half* of Malamat’s observation (1979: 47) that, “The adoption of an indirect military approach finds expression in two principal tactics employed by the Israelites: covert infiltration—neutralizing the city defenses; and enticement—drawing the defenders out into the open.” The destruction of the Canaanites, as interpreted here, involved (in words borrowed from Malamat) “tactics based on deception—feints, decoys, ambushes, and diversionary maneuvers—any guile to attain surprise in overcoming the enemy.”¹⁹¹

5:17a. Gilead in Trans-Jordan גלעד בעבר הירדן שכן
was on alert

Since Gad is mentioned in 5:15b (reading גַּד לִיִּם “Gad joined them” for MT גַּד לִיִּם, as proposed above), Gilead here refers to Machir.¹⁹² This identification is supported by Num 32:39–40, “Machir invaded Gilead . . . Moses then assigned Gilead to

¹⁹¹ Malamat 1979: 45. Surprisingly, he did not include the Deborah–Barak–Yael traditions of Judges 4–5 in his examples of Israelite strategy and tactics.

¹⁹² The $\gamma\alpha\alpha\delta$ and $\gamma\alpha\delta$ in MSS wgn¹ and the Armenian, like the $\gamma\alpha\theta$ of MS n*, are either variants of $\Gamma\alpha\lambda\alpha\alpha\delta$ or displaced variants for Gad in 5:15b. Gad was associated with Moab, as noted in the Mesha Inscription, “Now the men of Gad had always lived in the land of Ataroth” (*KAI*: 2: 169, l. 10), and in Num 32: 34–36, “And the sons of Gad built Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, Atroth-shophan.” Note the study of Mauchline (1956: 19–33).

Machir.” Evidently only a contingent of leaders from Machir participated in the fighting west of the Jordan (5:15, “officers went down from Machir”). But the escape routes in the east were closed to the Canaanites since Gilead/Machir stood on alert. When the Philistines, more than a century later, mustered their forces against Saul at Micmash, the Israelites themselves are reported to have made use of the escape routes into Gilead and Gad: “when the men of Israel saw that they were hard pressed, that the troops [of the Philistines] had drawn near . . . they forded the Jordan to the territory of Gad and Gilead” (1 Sam 13:7).

The MT שכן is either (a) the Hebrew cognate of the much discussed Ugaritic cognate *škn* “to prepare, to make ready, to take a stand,”¹⁹³ or (b) the *shaph^cel* of כון “to establish” with the meaning of the *hiph^cil* attested in Ezek 7:14, וואין הלך, למלחמה, “all was ready, but no one goes out to war” (NEB), and Nah 2:4, הרכב ביום הכינו, “the chariotry on the day of its preparation.” The defective spelling of שכין created a homograph of שכן “to dwell” and שכן “to take a stand.”

5:17b. Then Dan boldly attacked ships ודן למה יגור אניות
(See above, pages 86–87.)

The Song of Deborah makes explicit reference to the heroic actions of Dan, Asher, and Zebulun in an assault on the Canaanite coastal facilities, a significant feature not previously recognized because, in the words of Barr (1968: 268), there was “a strong tendency towards leveling the vocabulary and the interpretation of that which is rare as if it was that which was more normal.” First, the pointing of למה as the interrogative “why” contributed to the misunderstanding of this verse. The proposal of Cross (1973: 235, note 74) to read MT למה as an emphatic ל extended by מה- (well known from Ugaritic)¹⁹⁴ is essential for

¹⁹³ Note the studies of Dietrich, Loretz, and Sanmartin (1974: 47–53) and Soggin (1975: 196).

¹⁹⁴ Stuart (1976: 135) links the emphatic למה to a composite of *lu* and *himma* > *limma*. This proposal has the support of the double emphatics in Gen 26:9 (אך הנד) and Jer 5:5 (כי הזד), LXX = ודהנה, although in these cases the ה

correctly understanding this verse. Emphatic לַמָּה occurs also in 2 Chron 25:16, “Stop! You will surely (לַמָּה) be struck down!”; in Ps 2:1, “Indeed (לַמָּה), the nations rage!” and Ps 22:2 “My God, my God, you have surely (לַמָּה) forsaken me!”

The second key for understanding 5:17a is in recognizing גִּוֹר as a *yqtl* preterit of גִּוֹר II “angriefen, to attack,” rather than גִּוֹר I “to sojourn, to reside as an alien,”¹⁹⁵ or, as Albright (1968a: 212) proposed, a denominative of Egyptian *kur(a)* “ship.” Hebrew גִּוֹר II is a cognate of Akkadian *gurrû* (D-stem) “to attack, to open hostilities” (*CAD* 5: 61) and Ugaritic *gr* (G-stem) “to attack.” The word occurs elsewhere in biblical poetry. Powis Smith (1927: 935, 938) translated גִּוֹרוּ in Ps 56:7 as “they attacked” and גִּוֹרוּ עָלַי עוֹיִם in Ps 59:4 as “mighty men attacked me.” The NEB of Isa 54:15 reflects the same usage. Hillers (1972: 41) followed my translation (1968: 43) of Lam 2:22, מִגִּוֹרֵי כָּסָבָה, “my attackers from all over.”¹⁹⁶

J. Gray (1967: 287–288; 1988: 439), Craigie (1977b: 38–41), and Soggin (1981c: 82, 90) did not read MT אֲנִיֹּת as “ships,” but in light of Ugaritic *ʿan* and Arabic *اون* “to be at ease,” translated “Dan abode at ease,” or the like. However, אֲנִיֹּת is not an adverbial accusative but the direct object of גִּוֹר. The action depicted here appears in Akkadian texts: “the enemy will take away the

was not elided. Compare Halpern (1983: 384), “Still more appealing is the alternative of taking the lexeme as negative + enclitic . . . so one might render with Cross ‘you do sit still,’ or alternately, ‘you do not sit still’” See also Cross 1988: 48, note 7.

¹⁹⁵ Note Stager’s translation (1988: 229–232, following Albright [1922: 284]), “And Dan, why did he serve as a client on ships?” On the basis of Punic/Phoenician גַּר “client” and Ju 18:1, Stager argued that “Dan could be described as a client-tribe (clan) . . .” and speculated that “at least enough of the Danites had been hired or pressed into duty by the shipowners or shipping companies on the coast in the Jaffa region to inspire this saying about them.”

¹⁹⁶ See above pages 49–50 and 86–87. Kellerman (1975: 439–449 provides a convenient summary discussion on גִּוֹר “to sojourn” and lists Ju 5:17 among the eighty-one occurrences in the entire MT. He does not discuss the many occurrences of גִּוֹר “to attack” except to note helpfully, “If in antiquity, ‘to be foreign’ and ‘to be hostile’ can be simply two different observations about the same person, one must admit the possibility that Akk. *gerû*, ‘to be hostile’ . . . can be regarded as the etymon of Heb. *gwr*.”

boats from the mooring places,” and “my soldiers reached the mooring place (and) the harbor to attack them” (*CAD* 8: 232b).

Attempts to make sense of the MT by reading למה as a *post-positive* particle coupled with the common verb גור “to sojourn” or “to be a client” (as though it were the normal verb used with חבל “mariner” or מלח “sailor” or ספן “seaman”) are examples of translators overlooking the poet’s use of now rare forms.

The tribe of Dan has been much maligned because of such errors. Rashi, for example, alleged cowardice: “and Dan why does he gather into ships? Dan gathered his wealth into ships to be prepared to escape” (cited by Rosenberg 1983: 42), suggesting that “Asher and Dan were unwilling to jeopardize their lucrative employment in Phoenician ships by fighting against their overlords’ allies.” Even Lemche’s (1991: 96) mild “lingered by the sea-shore” and “did tarry by the ships” maligns Dan and Asher by insisting that גור = “to sojourn” and ישב = “to dwell.”

5:17c. Asher assailed along the water’s edge אשר ישב לחוף ימים

Although ישב (B-text ἐκάθισεν and A-text παρώκαθεν) has uniformly been read as the verb “to dwell,” the proposal here is to reposit it either as (a) ישב, the *yqtl* preterit of an original *ישב*, cognate of Arabic وثب “to leap, to assault, to assail” (Lane 1893: 2920), or (b) ישב or ישב, the *yqtl* preterit of שבב “to splinter, to shatter.” Either vocable fits the context of an attack along the seacoast, splintering boats and shattering piers.¹⁹⁷

The latter word occurs in Hos 8:6, כִּי שִׁבְבִים יִהְיֶה עֵגֶל שִׁמְרוֹן, “Surely the calf of Samaria shall be broken into pieces” (NAS). Wolff (1974: 142) correctly observed, “The hapax legomenon שִׁבְבִים is related to the Middle Hebrew word שבב (‘to hew’) and to Arabic سبأ ‘to cut,’ or سيبب ‘chips, splinters,’ and probably means ‘wooden chips’ or ‘splinters.’” Dahood (1959b: 1003), following T. H. Gaster (1950: 10), posited a Ugaritic root *tbb*

¹⁹⁷ Blommerde (1969: 133) found an infixed ט in Job 38:11, reading the MT בִּשְׂתֵּי ב as שִׁתֵּב, used for the smashing of the waves at the shore.

“to smash, to splinter” and argued for reading שִׁבַּב in Gen 49:24; Lam 1:7; and in Ps 89:45.¹⁹⁸

5:17d. And struck against its harbors וְעַל מַפְרָצָיו יִשְׁכִּין

The MT מַפְרָץ is not just a “creek” (NEB) or an “inlet” (Stuart 1976: 131), much less “gates” (Soggin 1981c: 83). But as the Arabic *فراض* indicates, it is “the place where ships unload, where they are stationed near the bank of a river” (Lane 1887: 2374c). The verb שִׁבַּב “to assault” (שִׁבַּב or שִׁבַּב*, discussed above) is in synonymous parallelism with יִשְׁכִּין (MT יִשְׁכִּין), the *shaph^eel* of נָכַח “to strike, to attack,” which occurs in the *hiph^eil* in 5:14a. The *shaph^eel* here in 17b balances the *shaph^eel* of כָּוַן (שָׁכַן) in 5:17a (as noted). The interchange of *shaph^eel* and *hiph^eil* forms may be reflected in the conflated שָׁדַחָה found in Pss 135:8 and 135:10.¹⁹⁹ The widely discussed energetic נ, ²⁰⁰ attested also in the Deir ‘Alla texts, accounts for the נ of יִשְׁכִּין. The נ of MT יִשְׁכִּין has been emended to ם since cognates indicate that נָכַח was a ל״י rather than a ל״ו verb, and the *e* vowel was indicated by a ם.

The name of the anchorage which was attacked by Asher is not given unless, as L. H. Vincent (1935: 436) noted, there is a link between חַיְפָה or חַיְפָא “Haifa” and חוֹף הַיָּם. However, the destruction of Abu Hawam about the time of Israel’s initiative against Sisera makes the Abu Hawam harbor facility the most likely site. Although the twelfth-century destruction of Abu Hawam Stratum V-C is commonly attributed to the Philistine incursions, it is important to note that there is no evidence to support this conclusion. Maisler (1951: 23) noted, “attention must especially be called to the fact that *there is not even one ‘Philistine’ sherd found in Stratum IV, nor in Tell Abu Hawam in*

¹⁹⁸ See McDaniel 1968b: 53, note 1, for bibliography and summary.

¹⁹⁹ On the survival of conflated readings in the MT, see Gordis 1958: 456, reprint 1976: 41.

²⁰⁰ See McDaniel 1968b: 205; Blommerde 1969: 15; Robertson 1972: 112–118; and Hoftijzer and van der Kooij 1976: 297.

general” [italics mine], a fact which was noted also by Balensi (1985: 66).²⁰¹

5:18. Zebulon swam (underwater) זבלון עם
risking his life חרף נפשו למות

The poet not only praised Zebulon for risking his life, but also described the heroic feat which warranted this special renown. The MT עם here is only a homograph of עם “people, militia” and עם “with.” It is actually the 3ms of עם “to swim,” a cognate of the Arabic عوم “to swim immersed in an irrational and dangerous action”—in contrast to swimming on the surface, which is سبح (Lane 1872, 1874: 1289a, 2202a). In the Qur’an (21: 34) عوم means “to glide [through the sky].”²⁰²

This understanding recovers the tradition that Zebulon risked his life in a “frogman” attack against enemy boats moored offshore. Similar underwater attacks are depicted on the alabaster reliefs in the palace of Ashurnasirpal II (883–859 B.C.E.) and are known from the story of Scyllas and Hydna who attacked the Persian fleet by diving into the sea to cut anchor ropes.²⁰³

Hints of this heroic feat of Zebulon probably survive in the Blessing of Moses (Deut 33:19), where there is the collocation of

- (a) עם מִהַר “skillful swimmer,” (for MT עַמֵּי הַר “peoples mountain”);
- (b) טָבַן “to bury, to submerge, to lay a snare”;

²⁰¹ Fritz (1973: 123) argued that Hazor actually fell to the Sea Peoples rather than to the Israelites. But Yadin (1979: 66) has rightly rejected this notion as a “desperate theory” and “unwarranted by any source.”

²⁰² עם occurs in the *pa^cel* in Aramaic, meaning “to move on, to travel far” (Levy 1924: 4: 639). The Akkadian *hamu* or *amu* “raft” (*CAD* 1: 85; 6: 73) and Arabic عامة “raft” and مستعم عامة “a ship upon the sea” (Lane 1872: 2202–2203) are from the same stem.

²⁰³ See Plates IV and V. Strommenger and Hirmer (1962: Pl. 204b), and (*PW* 17: col. 44). I am indebted to my colleague, Dr. Grant Ward, for these references.

- (c) שפּעַ מַיִם “the overflowing (water) of the seas,” or שפּעַי מַיִם “floods of water” (like the שפּעַת מַיִם “flood of waters” in Job 22:11 and 38:34); and
- (d) שפּוּנִי = ספּינָה “vessel, ship.”

A free translation of Deut 33:19, without emendation, reads,

“Skillful swimmers” they are called.
Indeed, they made the ultimate sacrifice.
They gulped the overflowing seawater,
and they submerged ships in the sand.²⁰⁴

The vocable עוֹם occurs in Isa 11:15, וְהִנִּיף יָדוֹ עַל הַנְּהַר בַּעִים, רִוְחוֹ “he will wave his hand over the river (Euphrates) with his *gliding* wind.” The hapax legomenon בַּעִים has generally been translated “vehement” or “scorching,” following Saadia’s *سخن* and the LXX *περυσματι βασιω* (as if עַיִם were a by-form of חַיִם or חַמֵּם “hot”).²⁰⁵ The derivation proposed here, “to swim, to travel far, to glide” provides a synonym for the initial verb, נוֹף “to wave, to move to and fro.”

The חַרַף of MT לְמוֹת לְנַפְשׁוֹ חַרַף is stem IV (= Arabic *حرف* “to turn a thing from its proper way or manner,” as in the Qurʾan

²⁰⁴ Compare the NRSV,

They call peoples to the mountain;
there they offer the right sacrifices;
for they suck the affluence of the seas
and the hidden treasures of the sand.

Note Cross (1975: 233–234), who left these lines untranslated. The זבחי צדק could be either (a) a reference to Zebulon’s casualties—a kind of self-sacrifice (Jastrow 1903: 378b) which would go well with the poem’s acknowledgment that “they risked their life to death,” or (b) a reference to enemy casualties (e.g., Isa 34:6; Jer 46:10; Zeph 1:7–8). If Deut 33:18–19 alludes to Zebulon’s actions in Ju 5:18a, the Blessing of Moses must postdate the Song of Deborah, and Freedman’s suggestion (1979: 85–96) that Deut 33 predated Ju 5 will need to be reversed.

²⁰⁵ Compare Hummel (1957: 94–95). He suggested that בַּעִים should be read “to boil,” an infinitive absolute of בַּעַה with the enclitic ם. Note my proposal (page 149 above) to read צַחַר as a by-form of צַעִיר “young.”

8:16, מתחפא לقتال “maneuvering for battle”)—not חרף stem II (the cognate of خرف “to be sharp, to taunt”). Far from “vacationing” at the seashore, Zebulun faced death in a risky marine maneuver.

5:18b. Naphtali attacked Merom ונפתלי על מרום ישד

Critics have long recognized that על מרומי שדה, “upon the heights of the field,” makes little sense since the fighting, according to what follows in the poem, was in the plain and along the wadi. It is only in the prose story of Judges 4 that the battle was fought at Mount Tabor, perhaps based on על מרומי שדה of 5:18. Boling (1975: 113), followed by Soggin (1981c: 90), asserted that על מרומי שדה “refers to the fact that the Esdraelon plain is characterized by undulations and hillocks which provide positions of relative advantage for the opposing forces,” thus dissociating על מרומי שדה from Mount Tabor. Cross (1950: 28, 34) translated, “he mounted the heights of the (battle)-field.” This was followed by O’Connor (1980: 225) who read the preposition על as עלה, “Naphtali surmounts the highest hills.”

A contextually more suitable meaning, supported in part by the Vulgate’s *in regione Merome*, comes by redividing על מרומי שדה to על מרום ישד ה. Then ישד can be read as the *yql* preterit (ישד or ישד) of שדד II, “to devastate” (Klein 1987: 641), cognate with Arabic شد “he attacked (in war), he charged, he assaulted” (Lane 1872: 1517) and Egyptian š(š)d(š) “to pillage, to attack (in secret)” (Gardiner 1911: 22). The ה of MT שדה when joined to the next word becomes the *Hiph’il* prefix of באו in the next colon (הבאו = “they [the Canaanites] were forced to fight” or “they [the Israelites] made (the Canaanites) fight” (see 5:19a).

Merom, whether it is Meirun, four miles west of Safad or Marun er-Ras, about nine miles further north, was situated in Naphtali.²⁰⁶ Naphtali may have been well established in that area before the destruction of Hazor.²⁰⁷ Because the earlier campaign

²⁰⁶ See Aharoni (1957: 2: 142); Soggin (1972: 135, 143–144).

²⁰⁷ Note J. Gray 1966: 49–50.

The *super aquas Machedon* and *ad aquas habitauerunt* found in some versions are corruptions of MT *על מי מגדו*. The former reflects the *Vorlage* *על מי מגדן*; the latter reflects a *Vorlage* with *על מי גרו*. For the *ג* becoming *ch* or *c* instead of the anticipated *g* and γ (*מגדו* = *Machedon*), one need only note that in 2 Sam 21:19 *גִּלְיָת הַגִּתִּית* “Goliath the Gittite” appears as *Γολιαθ τον Γεθθαίον* and in B^(*) as *Γοδολιαν τον Χετταιον*. The same variation of *Γεθθαίον* for *Χετταιον* appears in 1 Chron 13:13. The *n* of *Machedon* reflects a misreading of η for the original η . On the *aquas habitauerunt* (= *מי גרו* instead of MT *מגדו*), one may note the *inhabitasti* in 5:17 for *גור*.²⁰⁹

5:19b. Silver spoils they did not take *בצע כסף לא לקחו*

Akkadian texts indicate that silver functioned as a means of exchange for most caravaneers. Veenhof (1972: 351) noted, “The expression *luqūtam ana kaspim ta’urum*, ‘to turn merchandise again (back) to silver,’ shows that *kaspum* (כסף) was for the Assyrians the starting point and the ultimate goal of the trade.” Assuming, for lack of evidence to the contrary, an analogous situation in the caravan trade during the days of Shamgar and Deborah, silver would have been common cargo and currency for the Israelite caravaneers. Sisera must have used his chariotry often enough to raid caravans so that the direct trade routes became increasingly abandoned as he gained his reputation for being a despoiler of silver.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Two variants, Kennicott (1780: 1: 489) MS 257 *בשענך* and Lucianic MS η *σθαίνας* (Brooke and McLean 1917: 806a), suggest that Beth-shan (*Βαιθσαν* or *Βηθσαν*) once stood in the tradition. Such limited evidence permits no conclusions, but given the interchange of *ע* and *ס*, the *בשענך* of the variant *בשענך* may be a variant of *בת שאן* (or *בית שן* or *בישן*). The *σθαίνας* appears to be a corrupted conflation of *בת שן* and *בשענך*. An association of Sisera with the pre-Philistine military personnel at Beth-shan (Josh 17:16) would be most attractive. Foreign influence at Bethshan could have given it the reputation of being *חרשת הגוים*, “the (defensive) enclave of foreigners.” See note 37 above.

²¹⁰ The recurring reference to aspects of caravan trade in the poem indicates that those Israelites who defeated Sisera were oppressed caravaneers, rather than participants in a peasant’s rebellion or an influx of nomads. See especially

The Armenian 1cs (= *ego*) and the singular $\epsilon\lambda\alpha\beta\epsilon\nu$ in MSS $hq\alpha_2$ reflect, no doubt, a *Vorlage* having a dittography of the \aleph (לֶאֱלֹהִים for MT לֶאֱלֹהִים לֶאֱלֹהִים) and the absence of the final 3mpl suffix \imath (see the discussion below on $\langle\imath\rangle$ in 5:21c).

VIII. Defeat of the Canaanites: Ju 5:20–23a

5:20. The stars from their stations הַכּוֹכָבִים מִמַּסְלוֹתָם

The proposal of Winckler to change the σ of $\mu\mu\sigma\lambda\omicron\tau\eta\mu$ to a \imath and read “from their stations” (= Akkadian *manzaltu* “mansion, station”) has been adopted by many, including Cross (1950: 34), P. D. Miller (1973), and Stuart (1976: 130). However, the NEB, the NAB, Boling (1975: 103), Soggin (1981: 83), and the NRSV retained “from their courses.” But the interchange of σ and \imath (e.g., $\epsilon\lambda\lambda\omicron$ and $\epsilon\lambda\imath\omicron$ “to rejoice,” Syriac $\kappa\omega\eta$ = $\beta\omega\eta$ “despise,” Arabic $\text{أذى} = \text{أسى}$ “injury”) mitigates against emending the text, even if one wants to read “stations.”

Craigie (1977b: 33–38) challenged the views of Blenkinsopp, Boling, J. Gray, and Globe that in light of evidence from the Ugaritic texts the stars were considered the source of rain.²¹¹ He argued that (a) the stars, as the heavenly host of Yahweh, were intended to develop the cosmic scope of the battle, (b) Deborah’s “star helpers” reflect the reworking of the myth of Anat and her starry helpers, and (c) the poet had reworked the mythological imagery about $\check{S}p\check{s}$ (= שֶׁשׁ “Sun”) and her army of stars.²¹² But

Hauser (1978: 2–19), Thompson (1978: 20–27), and Schloen (1993: 24–30) for a critique of Mendenhall (1973: *passim*) and Gottwald (1974: 223–255; 1975: 89–100; 1979: 504–509). See note 262.

²¹¹ E.g., *nt* II: 40–41, *tskh* [*rbb.*] *nskh . kbkbm*, which Craigie rendered, “rain (which) the stars poured forth.” G. R. Driver (1956: 85) translated, “[the showers] [that] she poured (were as many as) the stars.”

²¹² Note Weinfeld’s observations (1983: 124–125):

It has not been noticed up to now that the three motifs combined here—1) the heavenly factors who wage battle on the enemy, 2) the torrent which sweeps away the enemy, and 3) the destruction of the enemy’s chariotry—

Craigie's interpretation need not preclude the idea that the stars were considered the immediate source of the downpour.²¹³

In contrast to Craigie's explanation, Sawyer (1981: 87–89) offered an astronomical interpretation. The poet, he thinks, may have referred here to the solar eclipse of September 30, 1131 B.C.E. (which lasted over four minutes in the area of Taanach), although the battle per se and the eclipse were unrelated. Aside from the fact that the tradition speaks of stars, not the sun, if the battle was around 1190, as argued above, and if the composition of the poem was by an eyewitness, the eclipse came a bit too late.

The A-text, using *ηλ* as the abbreviation for *ישראל*, reads *μετα ηλ* instead of *μετὰ Σισαρα* with the B-text and the MT *עם סיסרא*.²¹⁴ Since *לע* occurs twenty-six times with the preposition *ע* meaning “against (the enemy),” there is no reason why the A-text needed to read *ע* with the meaning “along with,” making Israel the object of the preposition. The problem must have been textual, not contextual. The variant may reflect a *Vorlage* with the consonant cluster *עם סיסרא*, wherein the *ס* was read as a dittography and subsequently changed to *עם סרא*,

appear in Exod. 14:19ff., in connection with the defeat of the Egyptians in the sea: 1) the pillar of fire and cloud which causes panic in the Egyptian camp (vs. 24), 2) the hurling of the Egyptians into the midst of the sea, and 3) the dismantlement of the chariotry (vs. 25). The ‘sea’ in the Exodus stories, and the ‘torrent’ in the story of the defeat of Sisera . . . derive from the mythological war of God against ‘sea’ and ‘river,’ and their development is particular to Israel’s epic.

²¹³ Note the very fanciful interpretation of Josephus (*Antiquities* 5: 5: 4; Thackeray 1934: 5: 92–93; Naber 1888: 1: 305):

. . . there came up a great tempest with torrents of rain and hail; and the wind blew and drove the rain in the faces of the Canaanites, obscuring their vision (*ταῖς ὄψεσιν αὐτῶν ἐπισκοτῶν*), so that their arrows and their slings were of no service to them, and their infantry by reason of the cold could make no use of their swords. But the Israelites were less hampered by the storm, which was at their back . . .

The basis of Josephus’s *ταῖς ὄψεσιν αὐτῶν ἐπισκοτῶν* may well be found in the tradition behind the *αβλεψια* (= *עלע*) in MS k of 5:22 (see above, page 25) which he took literally rather than metaphorically. Note *עלע* in 1 Sam 12:3.

²¹⁴ Rahlfs (1935: 426) has *Σισαρα* in his text, but *ισραηλ* in his notes.

which in turn must have been read as a corruption of עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל for עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל. The confusion of ס and ם is evident in the transliteration of ם קְדוֹם as καθῆσειμ, discussed next. (On the *super aquas Machedon* and *ad aquas habitauerunt*, see the discussion above on “the waters of Megiddo” in 5:19b).

5:21b. The wadi surged seaward

נחל קדום ים

The MT קְדוּמִים was translated in the LXX B-text as ἀρχαίω “ancient,” but the A-text has transliterations: καθῆσειμ, καθῆμειμ, and καθῆμειν, indicating the uncertainty of meaning. The confusion of ם and ס, noted above with עַם סִיכָרָא, is evidenced again in the καθῆσειμ and καθῆμειμ. However, the καυσωων “scorching wind” of MS k is a translation of קָדִים “sirocco,” as it occurs in Gen 41:6, 23, 27. The συεψημενων of MSS gln is not from συνέψω “to smelt, to boil together,” but σύν “completely” plus ψάω “to vanish, to crumble away, to disappear” (Liddell and Scott⁹ 1940: 1691, 2019). Lindars (1995: 270) translated συεψημενων “(the river) of those swept away” and rightly noted, “This was clearly unsatisfactory [as a translation of קְדוּמִים].” I would identify συεψημενων as a misplaced doublet of גַּרְפָּם “sweep them away” in 5:21a where MSS gln also read ἐξεβαλεν.

Many commentators have followed Meyer (BH³) and emended the text to קָדְמָם “it overwhelmed them, it attacked them.” But a number of other translations have been offered: “the river barring the way” (Meek 1927: 386); “the sacred wadi” (JB); “the onrushing Kishon River” (TEV); “the river of forward-moving attackers” (Seale 1962: 347); “the onrushing torrent (NRSV); “ancient wadi” (NAB and O’Connor [1980: 226], following the B-text χειμάρρους ἀρχαίω); “[the wadi] headed off” (J. Gray 1988: 427); and “it forestalled them, the torrent Kishon” (Lindars 1995: 211).

However, קְדוּמִים is composed of two words: the adverbial accusative ם “seaward” and the infinitive absolute ם קְדוֹם, used in lieu of, or with the ellipsis of, the finite verb. The ך locale could be added to ם, but it is not necessary since the *â* vowel was not always indicated in the spelling. Here ם קְדוֹם means “to advance, to surge forward” attested in the Sabeian ם קְדוֹם (Jamme 1962: 447) and in Ps 18:6, מוֹקְשֵׁי מוֹת קְדוּמוֹנִי “the snares of death surged over me.” This understanding of 5:21c is found in the Talmud

(*Pesahim* 118b): “Straightway, the brook Kishon swept them out (גרפם) and cast them into the sea (והשליכן לים), as it is said, נחל קישון גרפם נחל קדומים . . . the fish in the sea opened [their mouths]. . . .” (H. Freedman 1938: 610). In contrast to the Talmud, the Targum understood קדומים to mean “antiquity.”

5:21c. The Wadi Kishon overtook (them) נחל קישון תדרך

The MT תדרכי נפשי עו (NRSV), where the jussive is read as an imperative, is as impossible a phrase for a battle narrative as was Symmachus’ αἰγῶν φάραγξ, “a wadi (φάραγξ) of goats” (= נחל עזים) or “a throat (φάρυγξ) of goats” (= נפש עזים, for the MT עו נפש . . .). Reflecting the difficulty here, the NAB omitted the phrase, having simply, “a wadi . . . , the Kishon” [ellipsis in the NAB].

Cross (1950: 35) proposed תדרכו פ>ר<ש עו “his mighty chargers pounded (the ground).” However, deleting nine of the eighteen letters (the ך of תדרכי and the second “conflated” נחל (קישון) has not been a convincing solution. Craigie (1969a: 257) and O’Connor (1980: 226) retained נפש “soul” and translated respectively, “Dominate powerfully, O my soul,” and “O my soul, tread down the mighty.” Boling (1975: 113) and Soggin (1981c: 83) retained the 2ms, but read נפש “throat,” and translated respectively, “you shall trample the throat of the mighty” and “may you press down the necks of the powerful!”

Lindars (1995: 270–271) concluded, “In my view the colon jars so badly with the form and character of the stanza that it cannot be regarded as original, however it is explained.” But to the contrary, a contextually acceptable reading is easily available through a redivision of the MT. The second נחל קישון is the subject of תדרכי “she (?) overtook,” the ך of which goes with the next word. The restored 3fs *yqtl* תדרך could be emended to תדרך, the 3ms *hiph^{el}* perfect of דרך (see below).

However, a hasty emendation seems unwise. Speiser (1955: 118–121) recognized the presence of the durative-iterative *tan-* form in Hebrew which resulted in a “secondary *hithpa^{el}*” form. The prosthetic ה of the *tan-* form may not appear in all instances. MT תדרך could be such a *tan-* form: **tandaraka* > *taddarak*. Moreover, Sama (1963: 317–318), van Dijk (1969: 440–447),

and Schoors (1988: 193–200) argued for the existence of a 3ms *taqtul* in Hebrew.²¹⁵ This תִּדְרֹךְ can be added to their list of more than twelve possible *taqtul* verbs which need further study in light of Speiser’s suggestions.

Here דָּרַךְ means “to overtake,” a synonym of נָפַשׁ (see below) and a cognate of Aramaic דָּרַךְ “to overtake” (Jastrow 1903: 323), of South Arabic *drk* “to reach” (Jamme 1962: 432), and of Arabic دَرَك [4] “it overtook, reached, caught up to (him),” used with injurious harmful action (Lane 1867: 873). The iterative-durative *tan*- form would have been a fitting way to show that the water relentlessly overwhelmed the chariots.

Hebrew דָּרַךְ “to reach, to overtake” is also found in Ju 20:43, where Moore’s translation (1900b: 443) remains preferable: “they pursued him (הִרְדִּיפוּהוּ) and overtook him (הִדְרִיכוּהוּ) opposite Gibeah”—contrary to Boling’s (1975: 287) “completely subjugated them,” or Soggin’s (1981c: 295, following G. R. Driver [1964]) “reassembling,” or NRSV and NAS “trod them down.”

5:21d. It overflowed, they sought refuge יִנְפֹשׁ יְעוֹ <ו>

In the MT עוֹ נִפְשִׁי (“my soul strength”) survives the vocable נָפַשׁ “to inundate, to overflow,” which is a synonym of שָׁמַח and a cognate of Arabic نفس [5] “it became extended, it expanded,” as in phrase تَنَفَّسَتْ دَجْلَةَ “the water of the Tigris increased” (Lane 1893: 2827a) and South Arabic *nps* “(rain water) covered (the pasture)” (Jamme 1962: 213). A trace of this meaning may be found in the remote variant in 5:25 of MS 209 which reads ὑπερεκχυσοντω “pouring out over” instead of ὑπερεχοντω “being superior” (= אֲדִירִים).

The final ׀ of MT נִפְשִׁי goes with the following יְעוֹ, as the ׀ of תִּדְרֹכִי was prefixed to נָפַשׁ. The resulting *yqtl* preterit יִנְפֹשׁ can be added to the list of פִּ”ן verbs which retain the ׀ in the imperfect (GKC 66^f). The MT יְעוֹ (contra the LXX δυνατή, δυνατοι,

²¹⁵ A 3ms *taqtul* variant, תִּגְוֹר, could also account for the problematic 2nd sg. παροικεις, παροικης, and κατοικεις variants for יְגוֹר in 5:17. תִּדְרֹךְ could be the tD stem (Moscati 1964: 127); but a reflexive does not fit the context as well.

and $\epsilon\nu\ \sigma\chi\upsilon\epsilon\iota$) is not from עזו “strong,” but from עוּו “to seek refuge,” as in Isa 30:2 פִּרְעוֹן בְּמַעוֹן פִּרְעוֹן, “to seek protection under Pharaoh’s shelter.” As with other 3mpl verbs in the poem, the final ו of עוּו must be added (see above, page 15).

The poet could have used a more common word than נִפְשׁ meaning “to overflow,” such as עָבַר in Isa 23:10, or צוּף in Duet 11:4, or שָׁמַף in Jer 47:2. The fact that we have what is now a rare cognate or loanword from Arabic and South Arabic provides the critic with a clear clue that the poet made use of dialectal options which do not currently appear in standard lexica of the classical Jerusalem dialect.

5:22a. Up the slopes scattered far and wide הִלְמוּ עִקְבוֹ
(See above, pages 25–26.)

The clue to MT הִלְמוּ עִקְבוֹ is in the proto-Lucianic MS k, $\epsilon\pi\iota\ \psi\upsilon\epsilon\iota\ \epsilon\upsilon\theta\upsilon\sigma\upsilon\omicron\nu\omicron\tau\alpha\ \tau\alpha\varsigma\ \pi\tau\epsilon\rho\nu\alpha\varsigma\ \epsilon\kappa\sigma\tau\alpha\sigma\epsilon\omega\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$ (a senseless cluster of words meaning, “upon high ground a helmsman the hoofs of his standing outside”) and the variants in the Lucianic MSS $dgl\eta\pi\tau\nu w$, including $\sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\nu\alpha$, but not $\epsilon\pi\iota\ \upsilon\beta\rho\epsilon\iota$.²¹⁶ Although cited among the variants in 22b ($\alpha\mu\alpha\delta\alpha\rho\omega\theta$ for מוֹדֵדֵרֹת), these words are in fact a remote doublet *and* triplet for הִלְמוּ עִקְבוֹ in 5:22a. They should be read with the notations for MS k preceding the $\iota\pi\pi\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ [= כּוֹסִים] when using the Brooke and McLean text.²¹⁷

²¹⁶ The confusion of $\pi\tau\acute{\epsilon}\rho\nu\alpha$ and $\sigma\tau\acute{\epsilon}\rho\nu\alpha$ occurs also in Sir 26:18, “Like golden pillars on silver bases, so are shapely legs upon firm breasts ($\epsilon\pi\iota\ \sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\nu\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \epsilon\upsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\theta\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ [*sic*]),” which appears in Sinaiticus as, “. . . shapely legs upon firm heels ($\pi\tau\epsilon\rho\nu\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \epsilon\upsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\theta\mu\omicron\iota\varsigma$).”

²¹⁷ The $\epsilon\pi\iota\ \psi\upsilon\epsilon\iota$ of MS k and the $\epsilon\pi\iota\ \upsilon\beta\rho\epsilon\iota$ of MSS $dgl\eta\pi\tau\nu w$ in 5:22 could be misplaced variants of MT עַל מְרוֹמֵי of 5:18. Noteworthy is Isa 2: 17, וּשְׁפַלּוּ רֹם אַנְשֵׁיָם “and the pride of everyone shall be brought low,” which shows the same differences in the LXX translations of רֹם, for the A-text of this verse has ὕψος while the corresponding B-text reads ὕβρις. In light of ὕβριζω used in a metaphor of a river that swept away and drowned a horse, or earth carried away by river floods, and ὕβρις used about a loss by sea (Liddell and Scott⁹ 1940: 1841), the $\epsilon\pi\iota\ \upsilon\beta\rho\epsilon\iota$ of MS k and the $\tau\alpha\varsigma\ \upsilon\beta\rho\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ of MSS $M\text{Namyb}_2$ must render גִּרְפָּה “it swept them away” of 5:21. The Syro-hexaplaric *a rigitu* “from roaring” matches ὕβριζω “to neigh, to bray and prance”; but the $\upsilon\beta\rho\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\varsigma$ “running-riot, unruly” (used of horses) of MSS $g\eta\pi\tau\nu w$ is a remote doublet for הִלְמוּ of 5:22.

The misplaced readings of MS k, the Old Latin, and the versions include the ο πους μου, *pes meus*, and *pes mei* in 5:21—all of which translate the עקבי of 5:22 as ποδας (as in Gen 49:19). The *doublet* is τας περνας “the hooves” (= עקב I “heel”) and επι υψει “upon high ground” (= עקב II “steep ground, hill”) as in Isa 40:41. The *triplet* is (1) ευθυγοντα “one steering something straight” (= הלום), (2) εκστασεως “standing outside” (= הלם), and (3) αυτου (= the ל of הלמו or a למו, from a *Vorlage* having למו אזה [for the MT הלמו אזה], with אזה being a variant of אה, like the אה in Ps 124:3–5).²¹⁸

Whether to read הלמו or הלם is a tossup. Given the numerous transliterations reflecting הלמו, the vocable here could be הלם II, not הלם I “to hammer.” Either way—with the metathesis of the ל and מ or not—the verb is cognate with Arabic همل “it (water) poured forth, overflowed” (Lane 1893: 3045). It was also used of a camel left without rein [4]; and, as Castell noted (1669: 856), form [7] means “asportavit” and “abstulit.” Dozy (1927: 764) cited همل “chameau qui erre çà et là sans gardien, et par conséquent farouche; (puis) tout ce qui difficile à manier” and the verb همل “errer çà et là.” When one shifts from camels to horses, הלם/הלם becomes an appropriate term for the rout of chariots.

The verbs הלם and همل are by-forms of הלס “to move far off,” which accounts for the Targum’s אשתלפס “were drawn off.” Similar by-forms are attested; e.g., נהם and נהה “to lament” and שלם and שלה “to be at peace.” The Arabic cognate هلا “pour faire avancer les chevaux, pour les arrêter, pour les faire aller dans une autre direction” (Dozy 1927: 760) provides the clue for determining the origin of ευθυγοντα “helmsman” = הלם, which was a by-form of הלס.

²¹⁸ Lambert (1952: 188) suggested deleting MT סוסיים as a gloss to אביריו since it is not represented in MS k. But MS k has υπων. Lambert’s relating ευθυγοντα possibly to בלמד (?), υπρει and υψει possibly to אה, and εκστασεως αυτου to חרדתו (for MT דהרות) is less than persuasive. Except for ευπρεπεια “comely, goodly, majestic,” which reflects a reading of אדיריו for MT אביריו, the LXX variants cited by Lambert on verse 22 can all be related to either עקב I (MT עקבי was misread by MSS MNadkmoptyb₂ as עקרר = ενευροκοπηθησαν “they were hamstrung”) or עקב II, in addition to הלם I and הלם II or their variants, הלם and הלמו.

Hebrew **הלם** is attested in Mic 4:7, “those who were removed far off (**הַנִּקְלָאָה**), I will make a strong nation.” The verb **הלם** may occur in 1 Sam 10:22 where it is tempting to read **החבא** instead of MT, **הבא** **עוד הלם איש** “Is he still hiding (or) has the man gone away?” instead of MT, **הבא עוד הלם איש** “is there yet a man to come hither?” (ASV). It may also appear in 1 Sam 14:16, **ההמון נמוג והלם וילך והלם** to **הלמו**, which can be translated (shifting the **ו** of MT **והלם** to **הלמו**), “the multitude melted away, they went off and retreated far away.”²¹⁹ All three verbs (**הלם**, **הלם**, and **המל**) are appropriate when describing the rout of chariots, with driverless horses running to and fro (see OIP 6: 22, cited by Speiser [1955: 119]).

The MT **עקבי סוס** requires two simple corrections. The initial **מ** of **מדהרות** must be affixed to the MT **סוס** and the **י** of **עקבי** must be changed to a **ו**. The resulting **סוסם** (= *scriptio plena*)²²⁰ is discussed below. The restored **עקבו** is the dual of **עקב** II “hill, high ground,” with the 3ms suffix having **קישון** as its antecedent. The doublet **ψψει**, as noted above (page 197), reflects this meaning of **עקב**, and the **פרונו** in 5:11 may offer another example of a noun in the dual with a 3ms suffix. The subject of **הלמו** follows the adverbial **עקבו** and is discussed next.

5:22b. their horses (and) chariots **סוס<י>מ<ו> דהרות**

The **סוסים** “their horses,” restored with *plena* spelling (see the above paragraph), balances the 3mpl object suffix of **גרפם** in 5:21. Both suffixes have **מלכי כנען . . . מלכים** of 5:19 as their

²¹⁹ On these verses compare McCarter (1980: 189, 233, 237), “Has the man come here?” (emending the MT to **הבא עד הלם איש**) and “the camp was surging back and forth.” He also noted S. R. Driver (1913b: 84), “Is there still (i.e., besides ourselves) any one come hither?”

²²⁰ O’Connor (1980: 226–227), following G. R. Driver (1962–1963: 11), proposed the same redivision, but with a different analysis. He read **דהרות** as an infinitive with the force of a finite verb and translated, “The horses’ heels thundered. His [Sisera’s] stallions thundered.” But, there is no evidence that the infinitive construct, like the infinitive absolute, was used as a finite form, or that **עקב** “heel” (= **πέτρα**) is a synonym for **פרסה** or **טלף** “hoof” (= **ὄπλη**).

antecedents. The suffix of סוסימו functions as a double-duty suffix, permitting the translation, “their chariots” (unless the *Vorlage* had simply ודהרות סוסיים “horses and chariots”).

The דהרות דהרות אביריו of 5:22b, which the LXX A-text simply transliterated (αμμαδαρωθ, and the like), presented great difficulty. Albright (1934: 52, 64; 1936: 30) equated דהרות with the Egyptian *dhr* “to race chariots” and he translated, “ran/raced chariot races his/their stallions.” This has been followed by Cross (1950: 30), Boling (1975: 113), and Stuart (1976: 130), who make it sound more like a sporting event than the panic of a military rout. Soggin (1981c: 83) offered, “the charges of the charging steeds,” but this rendering missed the point that the charioteers were fleeing in defeat rather than charging into battle.

The translation I propose uses Albright’s equation of דהר and Egyptian *t/dhr*; but “chariot, chariot-warrior,” rather than “race, chariot-racer,” is the more likely meaning in a battle ballad. However, if, as J. A. Wilson (1955: 239) suggested, *teher* is a Hittite loanword, דהר need not have entered Hebrew through Egyptian channels. It may have come directly from the Hittite (see pages 74–76). The feminine דהרת “chariot” corresponds to the feminine synonym, מרכבת, “chariot,” and the feminine עגלה “cart” (which occurs as a Semitic loanword in Egyptian).

5:22c. his chariot (and) his stallions דהרתו אביריו

The repeated דהרות could be (a) an original plural, (b) an incorrect *plena* spelling for a singular דהרת, or (c) with a metathesis of ות to ו, a suffixed singular noun. In view of the singular suffix on אביריו “his stallions,” option (c), “his (Sisera’s) chariot” is the preferred reading. The δυνατω αυτου in MSS Adglnptvw, the Ethiopic (= *et ualidi*) and Syro-hexaplaric (= *ualidorum eius*) “his strong ones” render MT אביריו, like the B-text ισχυροι αυτου. However, the δυναστω αυτου “his lords” (in MSS bcx) and the remote doublet δυναστω αυτου (in MS k) in 5:23 reflect a *Vorlage* with אדיריו for MT אביריו. Were אדיריו original, the reference would be to the רזנים and מלכים mentioned in 5:3 and 5:19. (Synonymous parallelism of סוס and אביר occurs also in Jer 8:16.)

5:23a. Doomed to die, they panicked אַן־רַו מְרוֹזָא <א־>ם

Those who view מְרוֹזָא as a place name (Mazorhot or Manzor or Meroz), elsewhere unattested, generally follow the argument of Burney (1918: 152) that the city is unknown because “It is highly probable that the curse took practical effect, and the city with its inhabitants was destroyed by the Israelites, and never subsequently rebuilt.” Lindars (1995: 272), in agreement with Burney, negated Meroz all the more stating, “. . . the purpose [of this verse] is not likely to be related to any particular interest in Meroz.” He correctly noted that down to the present “no certainty attaches to any of the proposed identifications, emendations, or symbolic renderings [of this *place* name].”

But not everyone has been convinced that מְרוֹזָא is the name of a town. The doublet in the Old Latin, *videant dolores* “let them see pains/grievs” (= רַאֵן מְרוֹזָא for MT אֹרֶרֶ מְרוֹזָא), the remote doublet *iniuriam* in 5:22, and the εδοιεν οδυνας “may they see pains” (= רַאֵן מְרוֹזָא) in pre-Lucianic MS k and Lucianic MSS glnptvw, reflect traditions which did not view מְרוֹזָא as a place name.²²¹ One tradition (*Mo'ed Katan* 16) recalls that, “Some say Meroz was (the name of) a great personage; others say that it was (the name of) a star.” Chaney (1976b: 18–19), cited by O'Connor (1980: 227), argued against מְרוֹזָא as a place name. He emended the text to read מְמוֹרָא and translated it as “estranger.” The interpretation offered here follows a similar course, but with different results.

²²¹ MS k is quite contaminated with variants for אֹרֶרֶ מְרוֹזָא and with remote doublets after κατοικῶν αὐτήν (for the MT שְׁבִיחָא), including:

ειδοισαν	רַאֵן	for	אֹרֶרֶ	in 5:23a
οδυνας	מְמוֹרָא	for	מְרוֹזָא	in 5:23a
ειδοισαν	רַאֵן	for	אֹרֶרֶ	in 5:23b
αρας	אֹרֶרֶ	for	אֹרֶרֶ	in 5:23b
απολεσατε	הַמֹּו	for	הַלְמוֹ	in 5:22
καταρασει	אֹרֶרֶ	for	אֹרֶרֶ	in 5:23a
καταρασθε	אֹרֶרֶ	for	אֹרֶרֶ	in 5:23a
υπερφανους	אֹרֶרֶ	for	אֹרֶרֶ	in 5:22
υβριστας	הַלְמוֹ	for	הַלְמוֹ	in 5:22
αρατε	אֹרֶרֶ	for	אֹרֶרֶ	in 5:23
απολεσατε	הַמֹּו	for	הַלְמוֹ	in 5:22

The LXX $\mu\eta\rho\omega\zeta$ and its variants ($\mu\alpha\rho\omega\zeta$, $\mu\alpha\rho\omega\rho$, $\mu\alpha\rho\omega\zeta\omicron\nu$, $\mu\alpha\eta\rho\zeta\omega\rho$, $\mu\alpha\zeta\omega\nu$, $\mu\alpha\zeta\omicron\upsilon\rho\omega\theta$, and $\nu\alpha\rho\omega\theta$) are not proper names, but transliterations of an unknown word, like $\alpha\mu\mu\alpha\delta\alpha\rho\omega\theta$ for מִדְּהֶרֶוֹת in Ju 5:21. The fact that this unrecognized word was preceded seemingly by an imperative $\text{רִא$ “see” (MSS gl η ptvw have a doublet $\epsilon\delta\omicron\iota\epsilon\nu$ and MS k has $\epsilon\iota\delta\omicron\iota\sigma\alpha\nu$) or אָרַר “curse” (the LXX having various forms of $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\rho\lambda\theta\sigma\theta\epsilon$, $\alpha\rho\alpha\zeta$, and $\alpha\pi\omicron\lambda\epsilon\sigma\alpha\tau\epsilon$) certainly contributed to its being understood as a name in direct address, rather than as a transliteration of an unknown word.

Ju 5:23a is particularly corrupt with reference to word division. The consonant cluster must have been $\text{אָר מְרוֹאֵם מְלֹאךְ יְהוָה}$, which should have been read as $\text{אָר מְרוֹאֵם רִים לֹאךְ יְהוָה}$, with *scriptio plena*, instead of the MT $\text{אָר מְרוֹאֵם מְלֹאךְ יְהוָה}$. This proposed redivision produces three words attested elsewhere in Biblical Hebrew (though not very widely), namely, מְרוֹאֵם “to be afflicted-unto-death,” אָרַר II “to panic,” and רִים “a downpour of water” (Klein 1987: 612, 57, and 616, respectively).

T. H. Gaster (1969: 419) noted that מְרוֹנ is related to the stems רִוַּח and רִוַּח , which occur in Isa 24:16 לִי רִוַּח , “woe is me!” and Zeph 2:11 $\text{כִּי רִוַּח אֵת כָּל אֱלֹהֵי הָאָרֶץ}$, “he afflicted-unto-death/doomed-to-death all the gods of the earth.”²²² The cognate behind the reconstructed מְרוֹאֵם in 5:23a is the Arabic nominal form مَرزأ , the plural of which signifies “persons of whom the best have died or persons of whom death befalls the best” (Lane 1867: 1075a). The restored מְרוֹאֵם could be the passive participle مَرزأ . As the gods in Zeph 2:11 and the heroes in Deut 32: 42 (see pages 122–126) were doomed to death, so too Sisera’s superior forces were doomed to die suddenly.

The word picture is that of panic-stricken charioteers vainly seeking to escape flash-flooding in a wadi which, only seconds before, had been serving as their safe highway. Consequently, אָר (MT אָרַר) must certainly be אָרַר II “to panic, to become panic-stricken,” a cognate of Akkadian *araru* [B] which occurs

²²² Note especially Ps 82:6–7, “gods you are . . . but you will die like a mortal” where מָוֶת was used instead of רִוַּח or רִוַּח . In modern Hebrew רִוַּח , a cognate of رذی , means “to be lean, to be thin or scarce” (Klein 1987: 612).

in the relevant line, “as to war, the troops will become frightened (*i-ru-ur-ma*) and throw away their weapons” (*CAD* 1: 1: 236).

The four infinitives in the LXX (*καταρασθαι* of MSS Bb' fqr sz [and MSS jcf for the second וַרְרָא of the MT], *καταρασαιαι* of MS A, *καταρασασθαι* of MSS MNCjoa₂b₂ [and MSS AMnb₂oa₂ for the second וַרְרָא of the MT], and *καταρασεσθαι* of MS w [for both occurrences of וַרְרָא]) point to a *Vorlage* of וַרְרָא or וַרְרָא. These provide more examples of the defective spelling in the *Vorlage* of 3mpl verbs, although the 3rd plural optative *ἰδοιεν* (of MSS glnp₂tvw) supports reading וַרְרָא for the MT וַרְרָא. The *απολεσατε* in the Lucianic MSS glnp₂vw and in MS k can mean “to cause panic.” Hatch and Redpath [1954: 1: 136] list thirty-nine Hebrew words for ἀπολλύειν, including וַרְרָא, which appears to have been read for the MT וַרְרָא (see pages 25–26).

5:23b. Yahweh sent a cloudburst רַגְמַי לְאֶךְ יְהוָה

Although not yet recognized in the exegetical studies of this verse, a reference to “heavy rain” is included in the battle scene. Schreiner (1957: 98) noted that the doublets *ὕβριστας* “violent ones” and *υπερηφάνους* “arrogant ones” in the Lucianic MSS glnp₂tvw were translations of a *Vorlage* having וַרְרָא. If the early translators had read וַרְרָא (= βρέχειν “to wet, to rain”) instead of וַרְרָא (*ὕβριστάς*), they would have been correct. The Hebrew text must have had וַרְרָא, but it was not the *scriptio defectiva* of וַרְרָא “high, haughty,” but rather the plural of וַרְרָא “cloudburst,” hidden by the misdivision of words. The ו from וַרְרָא and the ר of MT וַרְרָא, when joined, restore the plural noun וַרְרָא (= וַרְרָא *scriptio plena*), a cognate of Arabic *روي* “a cloud of which the rain drops are large and vehement in their fall” (Lane 1867: 1195c) and Syriac *ܪܘܝܐ* “to water, to satiate,” as in the expression “the Nile supplies its fields with abundant water” (Payne Smith, 1957: 532).

The noun וַרְרָא occurs in the Deir ʿAlla text I: 8, [y/t]htp ry skry šmyn, “let not the abundant rain (?) [br]eak the bolts of heaven” (Hoftijzer and van der Kooij 1976: 173, 179, 194). In addition, it appears in Job 37:11, בְּרִי יִטְרִיחַ עֲבָב “with abundant water he

ladens the cloud,”²²³ and in Hab 3:10, נתן תהום קול ורים, “the deep gives forth noise and abundant waters.”²²⁴ This רם (= רים) in the text may have been the basis for Josephus’s account of the battle (*Antiquities* 5: 5: 4) which has wind, hail, and rain working to the advantage of the Israelites (see note 213).

By removing the מ of מלאך יהוה in 5:23, the “angel of Yahweh” disappears. But the angel cannot simply be expunged, as Stuart (1976: 136) and others have proposed. As noted above, the מלאך יהוה originated from a misdivision of מרואמרמלאך.

Gaster’s proposal (1969: 419) to treat מלאך as an “augur or counselor” is supported only by the B-text of Ju 4:8 which reads, “for I do not know the day when the Lord would prosper the angel with me (. . . εὐδοῖ τὸν ἄγγελον κύριος μετ’ ἐμοῦ).” Suggestions to read the feminine מלאכה to accommodate Deborah’s being the messenger of Yahweh are equally unnecessary.

5:23c. Their riders (completely) ארור ארו ישביה <ג>
panicked

The plural suffix “their” is attested in the Sahidic and in MS N (αυτοις). But this variant in itself is insufficient reason for the emendation. The 3fs suffix of MT ישביה was due to harmonization after מרוז was read as a place name and after the original ישביהן was thought to be a reference to the “inhabitants” of Meroz, requiring the shift from the 3fpl suffix הן to the 3fs ה. Originally, the ישביהן were the “riders/drivers” of the דהרות “chariots,” which requires the 3fpl הן, as restored. The adverb “completely” is added to reflect the Hebrew infinitive absolute. (See page 155 for the use of ישב “to ride” as a synonym of רכב.)

There is no compelling reason to follow the Greek which has (except for MSS fsz) the extra word πᾶς, suggesting a *Vorlage*

²²³ Compare Pope (1965: 243), who unnecessarily emended ברי to ברק.

²²⁴ Reading קול רום for MT קול ורים and scanning 3 + 2 + 2. Compare Albright (1950: 11, 16) who proposed קולי תהום “The Deep gave forth its voice” and רום ידידו נשא שמש “the exalted one, Sun, raised his arms.”

having כל ישביהן “their riders all.” The $\pi\alpha\zeta$ stems from the ל and כ of the following כי לא , which in the early orthography could have been כ לא , giving rise to a doublet כל or כלא . The ארו (MT אורו) in this line is the same as in the previous one, a cognate of Akkadian *araru* [B] “to panic.”

5:23d. Indeed, they were victorious כי לא

MT כי here is the emphatic particle, studies of which have been reviewed by Schoors (1981: 243–253). Behind the negative particle לא in the MT survives the verb לאה II “to be victorious,” a cognate of Ugaritic and Phoenician *lʿy* “to prevail” (*UT* 426: 134; Harris 1936: 114) and Akkadian *leʿu* “to overpower someone” (*CAD* 9: 156)—not to be confused with the homograph לאה or להה I “to be weary, to be faint.” Dahood (1966: 46, 144; 1970: 288) cited twelve texts²²⁵ where this stem occurs, and this verse can be added to that list. As with לי (= ליי) in 5:13, the final י of the $\text{ל}''$ stem was not written, although it was written with לבי (= לביי) in 5:8. The verb לאה II is also found in 5:30a (see pages 226–227).

5:23e. Those going forth באו לעזרת יהוה
for the Warrior Yahweh

Since MT ישביה (restored to ישביהן) does not refer to the “inhabitants of Meroz,” but to “the riders of the chariots,” it cannot be the subject of באו “they came.” The phrase באו לעזרת contains the subject of לאו (for MT לא), requiring the change of באו to באי , a construct plural participle, referring to Barak and the militia. As noted in the discussion of על דרך in 5:10, the poet had a liking for intervening prepositions with bound nouns.

As well demonstrated by P. D. Miller (1970: 159–175), Baisas (1973: 41–51), and Sasson (1982: 201–208), עזר is a homograph of two vocables: עזר I “to save” (a cognate of Ugaritic *ʿdr*) and

²²⁵ The list consists of 1 Sam 2:3; Hab 1:12; Mal 2:15; Pss 7:13, 27:13, 68:10, 75:7 (twice), 85:7, 100:2; and Job 13:15 and 36:5. See also note 254.

עור II “warrior, hero” (a cognate of Ugaritic *gʒr*). Here it is sufficient to note Ugaritic *bʿlm ʿdr* “Lord-of-Help,” *yʿdrd* “Hadd-Saves” and *ydd il gʒr* “II’s beloved, the Warrior/Hero” (*UT* 454 no. 1831, and 463 no. 1956). Since Yahweh, the divine *warrior* (= מלחמה “the man of war,” Ex 15:3), was also the *savior*, the poet probably intended a *double entendre*. Amit’s conclusion (1987: 102) about Judges 4 is equally valid for the poem of Judges 5: “the purpose of the story is to stress that God, and God alone, is the savior of Israel, a savior who makes use of characters as instruments in a game he has established the rules of.”

The masculine עורת “savior/warrior” used for Yahweh employs the rare titulary ת suffix which appears in the Phoenician/Punic name עורתבעל and in the title פרעת “hero” in Deut 32:42, discussed above (page 126). Other examples of this suffix include: קהלת in Ecc 1:1; ספרת in Ezra 2:55; פכרת in Ezra 2:57; the title זמרות ישראל, “(David,) the beloved (of Yahweh), the Savior of Israel,” in 2 Sam 23:1; and זמרת יה (or זמרתֵי יה) in Ex 15: 1–2 (*with* the NRS and the NRSV: “I will sing [אֲשִׁירֶהָ] to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength and *my might* [זִמְרַת־יְהוָה]”; *contra* the KJV, ASV, RSV, and others which read, “. . . the Lord is my strength and *my song* [italics mine].”²²⁶ Cazelles (1956: 136) noted,

Certains égyptologues de renom m’ont fait remarquer que l’égyptien admettait une série de noms de ce genre [-ty]: *wḫwtj*, le messenger; *šḫty*, le paysan. En hébreu aussi, peut-être y avait-il un y final de relation à la fonction au féminin: celui qui a rapport à l’armée, la victoire, la fonction de scribe . . . La finale [y] serait tombée, et dans l’écriture et dans la parole.”²²⁷

²²⁶ Some Masoretic manuscripts, the Samaritan text, and the Vulgate attest זמרתֵי יה for the זמרת יה in Ex 15:2 (see BHS).

²²⁷ On ענתי see above, page 59. Nougayrol, cited by Cazelles (1956: 131–136), recognized the form in Akkadian. The MT עורת יהוה in 5:23 could conceal an original doubled ך of עורתֵי יהוה, as could the זמרות ישראל in 2 Sam 23:1. On the omission of doubled consonants, see Blommerde 1969: 4; Dahood and Penar 1970: 371. Note the smaller ם and ק in the חומש of Gen 27:46 and Lev 1:1, אל יצחק קצתי and the ויקרא אל, respectively.

IX. Assassination of Sisera in Ju 5:24–27

5:24. Yael, the wife of Heber the Kenite יַעַל אִשְׁתּוֹ חֵבֶר הַקֵּינִי

The noun יַעַל means “wild goat” (*Capra sinaitica*), in contrast to יַעֲלֵה “gazelle” (*Capra ibex nubiana*). Popular etymology has attached the definition “wild goat” to Yael/Jael, making her the Bedouin “goat lady.” But, as with דְּבוּרָה = “bee,” this appears also to be an early “popular” etymology. According to Harvey (1962: 787), Yael treacherously “used true nomadic guile, bringing out milk—a sign of hospitality—to the fugitive Sisera . . . ,” which simply stereotypes nomads without being very insightful.

But there is more to the name יַעַל than first meets the eye.²²⁸ Taylor (see above, page 52) argued a strong case for the poet’s using the image of Athtart in detailing the person and actions of Yael, as Craigie compared the role of Deborah with that of Anat. Both women were given mythic qualities greatly exceeding those suggested by the simple names “Bee” and “Goat.”

The basic meanings of יַעַל stem I (*וַעַל) “to benefit, to avail” and יַעַל stem II (also *וַעַל) “to be pre-eminent, to excel, to ascend,” with their connotations of power and prominence, provide a more appropriate meaning of Yael’s name than does “goat.”

The stem יַעַל I appears in Isa 48:17 in collocation with גָּאֵל “to redeem, to act as kinsman, to be the avenger”: “thus says Yahweh your avenger (גָּאֵלְךָ), the Holy One of Israel; I am Yahweh your God who teaches you to prevail (לְהוֹעִיל) (RSV “profit”).” There is probably an etiological element in Ju 5:24–31 explaining why יַעַל אִשְׁתּוֹ חֵבֶר הַקֵּינִי had the name יַעַל “Availer.” This pre-eminent

²²⁸ MS A has ιηλ for Yael, though this abbreviation was commonly used for יִשְׂרָאֵל. Variations in the spelling of Heber (Λαβερ and Χαλεβ) are secondary corruptions. MS k and the Lucianic texts provide some very interesting, though not significant, doublets, namely,

MSS klptw	εκ δευτερου	מִשְׁנִים	for מְנִשִּׁים
MSS klptwgn	εν επαυω	בְּהִלֵּל	for בְּאֵהֵל
MS k	ευλογημενη	חֵבֶרֶךְ	
MS k	εκ γυναικων	מְנִשִּׁים	
MS k	εν σκηνας	אֵהֵל	

woman became in a very real sense the **גֹּאֲלָהּ** “the Avenger” (see Num 35: 16–21) for her distant kin and fellow Yahwists.

The Arabic cognate of **עַל** stem II means “noble person.” Lane (1863: 298b, 3056c) cited lines which speak of the great reversal: “. . . the low or ignoble persons [shall prevail], and the noble persons (الوعول) [shall perish]” and “. . . that the weak of mankind shall have ascendancy over the strong (الوعول).” If the semantic range of **עַל** approximated that of **وَعَلَ** “noble person,” the name Yael matches the meaning of Deborah’s name, “lady governor,” as well as Deborah’s *title* in 5:2a, **פִּרְעוֹת** “heroine.” All three words convey the notion of pre-eminence, power, and prestige.

Moreover, Hava (1915: 881) and Klein (1988: 261) noted that **وَعَلَ** in form [10] means “to seek refuge, to look for shelter, to climb a mountain.” Since Arabic **وَعَلَ** [= **יַעַל**] and **بَرِعَ** [= **פִּרַע** / **בִּרַע**] are synonyms meaning “to climb, to ascend [a mountain],” there is a hint—assuming a similar semantic range—that the defeated Sisera may have thought of Yael not so much in terms of the “goat lady,” but rather in terms of **וَعَلَ** “taking to the hills to seek refuge/shelter” and **יַעַל** “to benefit, to avail” (BDB 418).

The MT **אִשְׁתֵּי חֵבֶר הַקֵּינִי** is frequently deleted as a gloss taken from Ju 4:17. But the poet demonstrated in using ben-Anat, ben-Abinoam, and “Mother in Israel” a liking for a name coupled with a noun of familial relationship. The “wife of Heber the Kenite” apparently fits this pattern, which is another unifying element in the poem.²²⁹ The gentilic **הַקֵּינִי** reflects ethnic identity,

²²⁹ Bal (1988b: 211) stated,

Yael-4 [= in Judges 4] is, like Deborah-4 [= in Judges 4], endowed with a suspect husband. The indication in verse 4:11, commonly translated as “Heber the Kenite,” is, as many have argued ([J.] Gray 1986, 258), dubious as a proper noun and is more likely to refer to a clan.

But it was Soggin (1981c: 66) who argued for the clan name. Gray differed with Soggin, stating, “But his rendering of *ʿešet heber haqqēni* (4:17) as ‘a woman of the Kenite group’ (*Judges*, 1981, *ad loc.*) does violence to the Hebrew The name Heber may be genuine; but certainly secondary is the detail that Heber had separated from the Kenites” Contra Bal (page 212), this quotation does not sound like Gray’s reservation on Yael’s marital status. Bal earlier (1988a: 127) followed Boling’s (1975: 114) reading, “woman of Heber the Kenite.” (Note GKC 127^d for normal gentilic patterns.)

but it also has vocational overtones (קין “to smith, to work in iron or silver”), as evidenced in “the smiths’ hammers,” mentioned in 5:26 (following the Targum’s **לְאִרְזֹפְתָא דְנַפְחִין**).²³⁰ Malamat (1962: 143–150), followed by Soggin (1981c: 74, 91) and Bos (1988: 55), concluded that **חֶבֶר הַקִּינִי** was a personification of a clan subdivision, “the Kenite group.” This may well be the case, especially if the personification reflects the clear occupational overtones of קין.

However, **אִשְׁתַּ חֶבֶר הַקִּינִי** may mean more than just “the wife of Heber the Kenite.” The Arabic, Ethiopic, and Syriac cognates of קין also mean “a song, a singer, to sing” (BDB 883; Dozy 1927: 2: 434, form [4] **أَقِين**). R. Payne Smith (1897: 1136) noted that **أَقِين** is a synonym of **أَمْر**, **شَيْخ**, and **رَتَل**, which in form [3] (**تَرْتِيل**) means “he put together and arranged well the component parts of speech” (Lane 1867: 1028a). Therefore, as **אִשְׁתַּ לְפִידוֹת** can mean “woman of torches” (= “woman of learning, teacher”), **אִשְׁתַּ קִּין** can mean “woman of song,” equivalent to **قَيِّنَة** “songstress” or “poetess.” (The “wailing women” [**בְּמִקְוֵנוֹת**] in Jer 9:16 were a subgroup of the “women of song” who specialized in laments and who sang at funerals.)

Were it not for the references to **חֶבֶר** as a person in Ju 4:11 and 17, one might readily change **יְעֵל אִשְׁתַּ חֶבֶר הַקִּינִי** to **יְעֵל אִשְׁתַּ חֶבֶר קִינֵי** “Yael, the woman of the guild of singers” or **יְעֵל אִשְׁתַּ חֶבֶר קִין** “Yael, the woman with the knowledge of poetry,” recognizing here the title **חֶבֶר**, a cognate of **خَبِر** and a synonym of **عِلْم** “knowledge, learning” (Lane 1865: 695; BDB: 288). Yael could have qualified for the title **אִשְׁתַּ חֶבֶר** “scholar” (Jastrow 1903: 421–22; Brown 1992: 87). Whether the gentilic **קִינִי** was original, or whether the **חֶבֶר** of **חֶבֶר הַקִּינִי** should be affixed to **חֶבֶר** (for an **אִשְׁתַּ חֶבֶר = אִשְׁתַּ חֶבֶר**) must remain open questions. The references to Heber in 4:11 and 17 could have come from an early misunderstanding of “the woman skilled in poetry” in 5:24.

Such an interpretation would make Yael a “sage” in her own right, like the **חֶבֶר** “the wise (singing) women” in Jer 9:16. She could well have been the poet who, as a “Qenite/Kenite,” crafted

²³⁰ Note J. Gray 1977: 211–212, 227; 1986: 280.

or sang (שָׁרָה) the poem long known as the “Song of Deborah.” This possibility is all the more reason why the *אִשְׁתֵּי חֶבֶר הַקִּינִי* should not be deleted. It may prove to be a hidden signature or an embedded colophon.

On the one hand, Mazar (1965: 302) suggested that Sisera fled to Yael “to seed the peace” between Jabin and Heber. Yael’s residence, Elon-bezaananim, was perhaps a recognized sanctuary. If so, Mazar conjectured, the assassination of Sisera at a sanctified refuge, in violation of the rules of hospitality, “may be explained only as the fulfillment of a divine command by a charismatic woman.” On the other hand, Fensham (1964: 53) recognized here a close friendship between Israel and the Kenites, as though they were treaty-bound. He argued,

The act of Jael is in accord with Near Eastern legal principles. As a result of a treaty between her people, the Kenites, and the Israelites, she felt obliged to kill the enemy of the other party of the treaty Typical of vassal treaties is the following: “To the enemy of my lord I am hostile (and) with the friend of my lord (I am) friendly.” This kind of clause forms probably the background of the act of Jael.

But against this interpretation is the statement in Ju 4:17 that peace existed between Jabin and Heber the Kenite, and thus one would expect Heber and Yael in treaty obligation to have come to the aid of Jabin’s successor, assuming that *קִינִי* equals Kenite and *חֶבֶר* equals Heber. It can just as readily be assumed that Sisera had utilized the smithing services of Heber-the-Smith (*חֶבֶר הַקִּינִי*) in the maintenance of his weapons, iron chariots, or chariot wheels (see Drews 1989: 20–21). J. Gray (1967: 212) similarly observed, “Actually, the relation between Jabin of Hazor and a Kenite family is quite feasible, especially if, as is probable, the Kenites were itinerant smiths who had special immunities (Gen 4.15).” Sisera, following the demise of Jabin, could well have carried on a working relationship with the Smiths.

In defeat, Sisera could have felt confident that the Smiths (or smiths) at their repair shop would protect him since he had been a “good customer” over the years. Thus, “Ms” or “Mrs. Smith” was caught in a conflict of interests: protecting a distressed client or affirming ethnic and religious loyalties. Whereas in peace (Ju 4:17) she had to accommodate a fearsome Sisera at the expense of her kinfolk, in his defeat she was free to assist her kin (as *עֲזָרָה* and *גִּיאֵלָה*) at his expense.

Yael seems to have set up the assassination so that it would appear as though Sisera himself had violated the laws of hospitality by sexually assaulting her. Assassination preceded by sexual allurement including the quenching of thirst appears in the Hittite myth of Illuyankas:

Inaras put on her finery and lured the Dragon Illuyankas up from his lair: “See! I am holding a celebration. Come thou to eat and to drink.” The Dragon Illuyankas came up with [his children] and they ate and drank. They drank every amphora dry and quenched their thirst . . . The Storm-god came and killed the Dragon Illuyankas and the gods were with him (*ANET*, 125–126).

This myth could have provided the poet, if not Yael herself, with the inspiration and the *modus operandi*.²³¹

5:25b. A truly magnificent goblet

בסף לאדירים

Sisera’s last meal was served in style, but the exact nature of the vessel used by Jael has been in doubt. MT ספל אדירים “a dish of lords” was paraphrased by Soggin (1981c: 83), “in a cup from a noble banquet.” O’Connor (1980: 228) added a ל (which he thought was lost by haplography) and changed the plural ים suffix into an enclitic ם in order to read ספל לאדירים הקריבה “in a bowl she brings the mighty one.” This is an attractive solution since Sisera was certainly one of the אדירים “chieftains, nobles” mentioned in 5:13a.

However, there may be no need to add a ל. The Lucianic MSS gln read *εσχατοις* and MS k has *εσχατω*, suggesting a *Vorlage* with סף “goblet” (a homograph of סוף/סף “end,” like the ספות כסף in 2 Kgs 12:14) instead of a ספל “bowl.” The ל of ספל, when suffixed to the MT אדירים, could be the preposition (with

²³¹ Zakovitch (1981: 364–374) pointed out that food, wine, sex, and fatigue are recurring themes in other biblical assassination accounts. Yael’s seduction of Sisera stands midway between the seduction of Inaras and the seduction of Judith who, arrayed in finery on a bed of soft fleece, drinks with Holofernes until he becomes weary, after which she severed his head (Judith 12:10–13:10). Note Bal’s references to Judith and her discussion of the reverse rape (1988a: 63, 105–107, 131; 1988b: 65, 215).

O'Connor) or, as interpreted here, an emphatic ל used with the plural of excellence (GKC 124^e).

The poet may have intended this wordplay: with a “truly magnificent goblet” (סוף לאדירים), Yael brought about “the end to a nobleman” (סוף לאדירים), reading a majestic plural in reference to Sisera, similar to the use of אֲדֹנָיו “his lords” for Potiphar (Gen 38, *passim*). Burney (1918: 93) and Zakovitch (1981: 369), along with others, noted that the beverage served must have had an intoxicating effect on Sisera. If so, the beverage was like *مرضة* which Lane (1867: 1095c) cited as “very sour milk that causes a man who has drunk it to arise in the morning languid, or loose in the joints.” Power (1928: 47) argued, unconvincingly, that the beverage made Sisera thirsty and required him to seek water elsewhere, exposing him to the Israelites.

5:27a. Between her legs בין רגליה
(The line is transposed here to follow 5:25.)

In the language of the Talmud (*Sotah* 38a, dealing with Ex 20: 24), מקרא זה מסורס, “this verse must be transposed.” Although Ju 5:27a was not the verse in question,²³² this quotation reflects an old tradition which recognized the need sometimes for transpositions in the biblical text. The reasons for the transposition of 5:27a to this line are given below in the initial paragraph on 5:27b.

Noting the omission of the first five words of 5:27 in numerous manuscripts, Kittel (BH³), Meyer (BHS), Richter (1963: 402), and others, have proposed to delete the first four or five words. (Omissions are also conspicuous in Greek MSS Ahn and in the Old Latin.) More moderately, Cross (1950: 38) and Stuart (1976: 136) deleted only נפל as a vertical dittography or a conflation of שכב. But in preference to the elimination of one or more words, the colon can be transposed to the end of 5:25, where it fits the context of a weary Sisera having his last meal and final affair.

²³² See Goldschmidt 1933: 5: 300. The verse under discussion was Ex 20:24, בכל המקום אשר אזכיר את שמי אבוא אליך וברכתך, which was transposed to read בכל מקום אשר אבוא אליך וברכתך שם אזכיר את שמי.

According to 5:30a, as traditionally read, Sisera and his men were thought to be sexually assaulting the women. But only Sisera, in defeat, finds his way between the legs of a woman. The discreet translation of *בין רגליה* by “at her feet” hides the sexual nuance. (In Deut 28:57, *מבין רגליה* was used with reference to expelling the placenta.) Niditch (1989: 48) noted, “The phrase ‘between her legs’ can be erotic enough even without specific reference to private parts as in Ezek 16:25, one of the classic passages in which the unfaithful Israel is described as a harlot: ‘and you parted your legs wide’ [MT *את רגליך את*].”

Ginzberg (1928: 6: 199) cited *Yebamoth* 103a in which Yael is said to have offered the milk of her breast to Sisera and to have had intercourse with him seven times. The *Chronicles of Jerahmeel* depict Yael as having embraced Sisera; and Pseudo-Philo tells how Yael decked herself in ornaments when she extended her invitation “to come, eat, and sleep” on a bed scattered with roses.²³³ An early tradition alleging that Yael had sex with Sisera survives also in MS h which reads *εκολληθη* “he was glued fast together” for the MT *שכב* “to sleep.” Hebrew *שכב* can clearly mean “to have sex with someone,” as in the *Qere* of Isa 13:16, *וְנִשְׂיָהֶם [תִּשְׁגַּלְנָה] תִּשְׁכַּבְנָה* “and their wives will be ravished” and Zech 14:2, *וְהַנְּשִׂים [תִּשְׁגַּלְנָה] תִּשְׁכַּבְנָה* “and the women were ravished.” (*Κολλάω* appears also in Deut 29:19 for *רָבַץ*.)

These traditions overstate the evidence in the text and reflect the sexual fantasies of the interpreters.²³⁴ It seems clear that Yael provided herself with a good alibi, if for no other reason than that which Matthews (1991: 17) proposed: “Sisera’s death can be seen as the result of Yael’s need to protect her honor . . . against a stranger who had repeatedly violated the code of hospitality.”

²³³ See M. Gaster 1899: 174; M. R. James 1917: 172; and Brown 1992: 52–56. Brown (53) noted that Pseudo-Philo quoted Sisera as saying, “If I am saved, I will go to my mother, and Jael will be my wife.”

²³⁴ Note Lindars (1995: 281) unusual interpretation of 5:28,

The transition to Sisera’s mother is at first doubtful because of the delay in specifying the change of subject, which just for a moment might still be Jael (Alter). With the sexual theme of the preceding stanza still in mind, the audience might now think of Jael as a prostitute looking out for another customer.

5:27a. He drank, he fell to sleep כרע נפל שכב
(The phrase is transposed here as 5:25c.)

Globe (1975a: 362–367) argued that here כרע “to kneel” indicates Sisera’s ridiculous and unwitting obeisance to the simple nomadic Yael; and Boling (1975: 115) similarly found in בין רגליה a reference to Sisera’s obeying Yael. But Bal (1988b: 229) saw a deeper meaning in כרע.²³⁵

When Sisera, as a result of Yael’s solemnly executed act of penetration, slowly falls, as a dying *gibbor* and as a stillborn baby, the verb that expresses the first stage of his undoing is *kara*^c, to kneel, which can imply spasmodic movement. The spasm of sex and the kneeling down in submission are expressed in one and the same word. It is only in the original language that the ambiguity of this passage can be fully appreciated.

However, despite all the alleged ambiguity of כרע “to kneel” when used in various contexts, it is more likely that כרע here in 5:27a (= 5:25c when transposed) means neither “to kneel” nor “to bow” but “to drink” and “to be weary.” The ambiguity comes from the fact that כרע is a homograph for three unrelated words, rather than a single word with a broad semantic range. The three words are: כרע I “to kneel,” כרע II “to drink” (which is rarely attested), and כרע III “to be weary” (also rarely attested). Hebrew כרע appears as follows:

- (1) The frequently used כרע I means “to kneel” (BDB 502), and may be used for sexual activity, as in Job 31:10, תִּטְחַן לְאַחַר אִשְׁתִּי וְעָלְיָהּ יִכְרַעוּן אֲחֵרִין “let my wife grind for another, and let other men kneel over her.”

²³⁵ Note also Bal (1988a: 103) where she speculated:

Trying to find arguments in his [Zakovitch’s] favor, we can suppose that, according to the lyric code, the three verbs, “collapsed,” “fell,” “lay down,” form *chronological* series, representing the successive phases of orgasm: the first signifies the orgasm itself, while the moment immediately afterwards is expressed by “to fall”; the third verb, “to lie down,” would then express the post-orgasmic rest here equivalent to death It seems to me more fruitful to leave the ambiguity [of כרע] intact, to adopt it, to let coexisting meanings raise problems that it is the interpreter’s duty to cultivate—since this is his/her garden.”

- (2) The meaning of כרע II is clearly established by the Arabic cognate كرع “he put his mouth (to the vessel) and so drank” (Lane 1893: 2999b); “to sip” (Hava 1915: 651; BDB 502); “rain-water” (Lane: 1874: 1970b). In prose one might expect the phrase to be כרע בְּסֶף הַחֵלֶב (= שָׁתָה מִכֹּס הַחֵלֶב) “he drank the milk from a goblet.” But in poetry the absence of the prepositional modifier or the direct object is not surprising.²³⁶
- (3) The verb could be כרע III “to be weary,” as suggested by the βαρυθυεις “wearied” found in MSS Mnk myb₂σ.

The Akkadian cognate of כרע III, *kāru* B, occurs in the assassination scene in the *Enūma eliš* (I: 66; *ANET* 61):²³⁷

²³⁶ For a discussion of כרע, כרע and כרע, see Burney (1918: xiv–xvi). His conclusion, “If these arguments are sound, any resemblance between Hebrew *kāra*^c and Arabic *kara*^c is probably merely fortuitous,” is in my opinion very problematic; and the rest of his statement is extreme: “and the comparison with Arabic *kara*^c should be expunged from Heb. Lexicons, or at any rate marked as highly precarious.” In Arabic, כרע II takes the preposition في “in,” indicating obviously that one does not *kneel in* the vessel, but one *drinks with/from* a vessel. The כרע in Ju 7:5–6, which is the text Burney addressed, is without doubt כרע I, not כרע II. There are *no* drinking vessels mentioned in Ju 7:8, though the MT צדה is commonly emended to כר “jug” to harmonize with the וכדים רקים “empty jugs” of 7:16. But צדה, as a cognate of Arabic صدا “stone, pebble, rugged stony ground” (Lane 1872: 1753), makes good sense and need not be emended away. The three hundred selected fighters of Ju 7:8 simply “took a *stone* (possibly reading צדה “stones” for MT צדה) from their hands,” i.e., they took the “ammunition” from those whom Gideon had dismissed.

²³⁷ In commenting on Speiser’s translation (1951: 65) of *dalāpiš ku-ū-ru*, in contrast to the translation in *CAD* 3: 48b and 8: 240 (“Mummu the counselor was with sleeplessness”), Held (1961: 17) argued:

Our investigation leads to the conclusion that *karum*, *kurum* denotes a state between sleep and forced wakefulness, i. e., “to become weary, to doze off, to be in half-slumber, to be deprived of will power and energy.” This seems more appropriate than “to be in a daze, to faint.”

This semantic range of כרע II is evidenced in the Greek translations. MSS b₂ MNdkmptvy have αφυπνωω “to awake from sleep” and the B-text has κοιμαω “to lull, put to sleep.” The latter meaning fits the Yael narrative, especially as told in Pseudo-Philo (31: 7), where Yael pushed Sisera “from off the bed upon the earth, but he perceived it not for he was exceeding faint.”

. . . , as he poured sleep upon him. Sound asleep he lay. When Apsu he [Ea, the all wise,] had made prone, drenched with sleep, Mummu, the adviser, was powerless to stir (*dalāpiš ku-ú-ru*) Having fettered Apsu, he [Ea] slew him [Apsu].

The verb נפל “to fall” in 5:27a could even be a synonym of כרע III “half-conscious, weary.” It could parallel the use of נפל in Num 24:4, נפל וגלוי עינים, “who with staring eyes in a trance” (NEB), or as Albright (1944: 217, 225) translated, “in a trance, with eyes unveiled.”

By opting for כרע II “to drink” in the first use of נפל כרע שכב in 5:27a (whether it is transposed to follow 5:25 or not), the similarity of the assassination scene in Ju 4 and Ju 5 becomes obvious. In Ju 4:18–22, Sisera took milk and Yael remained at the doorway until he fell asleep.²³⁸ Ju 5:27a, as interpreted here, makes the same basic statement: upon receiving the beverage Sisera *drank* (כרע) and then *stretched out* (נפל) (note Esth 7:8), and *slept* (שכב). The verbs set up a well-designed paronomasia coming with the similar phrasing in 5:27b (כרע נפל and הכרע שדוד שם נפל) where כרע means “to be weary or powerless.”

Though lacking the rather explicit בין רגליה “between her legs” of Ju 5:27, behind the obscure MT of Ju 4:18 are several hints of sexual seduction. Wilkinson (1983: 512–513) redivided MT ותכסהו בשמיכה and translated the verse, “He turned aside toward the tent as she *overwhelmed* him with *perfume* [בבשם]; He *grew faint* [כה] from [כהה] and said to her” Tur Sinai’s proposal (cited by Zakovitch 1981: 370) to read ותכסהו “she anointed him” for MT ותכסהו is also very attractive and could indicate that Yael anointed him with perfume.²³⁹

The כרע נפל שכב of 5:27a (= 5:25c) permits compound word-plays: שכב means not only “to lie down to sleep” (Gen 19:4,

²³⁸ He slept under a “fly-net” according to Burney (1918: 92) and L. R. Klein (1988: 42); or under a “curtain” according to Bal (1988a: 122), following KB³ 1246 “Decke,” following the A-text δέρεται “a leather covering, screens of hide” (sometimes hung before fortifications to deaden enemy missiles).

²³⁹ The problematic *yqtl* preterit כה can be eliminated by emending and redividing as follows: בשמן כה > בשמנכה > בשמיכה “(she anointed him) with oil, he became faint” (with *scriptio defectiva* for כהה).

28:11) but, as noted above (page 212), can also suggest sexual activity (like לְשָׁכַב אֶצְלָהּ in Gen 39:10). As Zakovitch (1981: 369) noted, followed by Niditch (1989: 48–49), כָּרַע in Job 31:10 and נָפַל in Esth 7:8 may indicate a similar nuance for כָּרַע I and נָפַל when they appear in an erotic context. (More explicit language could have been צָעָה “to bend, to stoop” as in Jer 2:20, “you sprawled and played the whore” [NRS].)

However one translates this phrase, Amit’s observation (1987: 98) is right on target, “The blanket and milk, previously taken as tokens of surpassing hospitality, now appear as a stratagem aimed at ensuring that Sisera will sleep deeply.” In Ju 4:20, Sisera attempted to make it appear as though no one was hiding by ordering Yael (using masculine imperatives, no less, as though he were drowsy, drunk, or a just a dumb foreigner—or all three—speaking poor Hebrew): עֲמֹד פֶּתַח הָאֹהֶל: “Stand up! Open up the tent!” If Yael had to “get up” from Sisera, there is more than a hint in Ju 4:20 that she was “down” with him.²⁴⁰

5:26a. She stretched her hand to the peg ידה ליתר תשלחנה
 . . . to the workmen’s hammer להלמות עמלים . . .

There is now general agreement that the נה of תשלחנה is the energetic *nun*. (It also accounts for the נ of the MT ישכון in 5:17b, discussed above.) The variants in the A-text for MT הלמות עמלים “mallet of the workmen” reflect a different *Vorlage*. The

²⁴⁰ Bal (1988a: 121) noted, “Philologists have observed that the form of the imperative is masculine (*‘amōd*). One could just as well interpret the form as the infinitive absolute (*‘āmōd*), [*sic*] which has strong imperative force (Boling (1975: 98).” Boling, citing Freedman (private communication), noted the use in the Decalogue of אתה יום השבת. One should note *GKC* 113^{bb} and 113 footnote 2, “It thus appears that the infin. *qāḏol* in Hebrew could be used from early times as a kind of fixed, invariable word of command.” However, Bal’s comment that, “The form of the infinitive absolute, neuter, satisfies the ‘logical’ demands of the more prosaic readers” is questionable. The infinitive absolute is morphologically *masculine*, as the first example in *GKC* 113^b indicates: אכל רבש הרבות לא טוב “eating too much honey is not good” (Prov 25:27). The masculine predicate adjective טוב agrees in gender with the subject אכל, an infinitive absolute. In Ju 4:20, whether עמוד and פתח are imperatives or infinitives, masculine morphs were imposed upon the reader.

diviners, but the diviners did not recognize them as the deadly Yael and Deborah. The court fortunetellers discerned that something very precious was around Sisera's neck. But they did not perceive that the costly covering was his own blood. When *רָקְתוּ* is read as something other than a synonym for *צוֹאֵר*, this unifying element goes unnoticed.²⁴²

G. R. Driver (1962–1963: 12–13), on the basis of Akkadian *ḫalāpu* “to slip in/out/away” and the Ethiopic *ḫalafa* “(water) ebbed away,” translated *רָקְתוּ רָקְתוּ* here “his brains ran out,” which paralleled his translation of the *בְּאֵרֶץ* in 4:21²⁴³ as “and (his brains) oozed out on the ground.” But Boling (1975: 98) noted that, in light of Cant 4:3 and 6:7, *רָקְתוּ* refers to a part of the head that is visible from the outside and can be covered with a veil. Rozelaar (1988: 97–101) drew upon the suggestion of Hazan (1936) that *רָקְתוּ* means “mouth,” and offered this interpretation: “he [Sisera] was sleeping with his mouth open . . . she [Yael] holds the peg above Sisera's open mouth and strikes it with the heavy hammer, driving it through his mouth cavity (and throat) into the ground.” This interpretation has some support from the *γναθον* “jaw” in MSS Aabcx.

In the *Enūma eliš* when Tiamat opened her mouth to consume Marduk, he turned it to his advantage: “He drove in the evil wind that she close not her lips . . . her mouth was wide open, he released the arrow, it tore her belly” (*ANET* 67). With such a well-known mythological assassination scene current at the time, in which the open mouth was the “bull's-eye,” it would not be surprising for either Yael or the poet to have borrowed the tactic

²⁴² Remote doublets for *רָקְתוּ* are found in the LXX of 5:27, cited as variants for *כָּרַע* (A-text *συγκάμψας* and B-text *κατεκυλίσθη*). They are *εσκιρτησεν* or *εσκιρτησας* or *εσκιρτησε* (from *σκιρτάω* “to spring, to leap,” [cf. *σκαίρω* “to skip, dance, frisk”]), which are found in MSS dglptvw and the Ethiopic translated *calcitrauit* “they kicked [with the heels].” These reflect a *Vorlage* having *רָקְדוּ* “they leaped” instead of *רָקְתוּ*. Note Ps 114 (LXX 113): 4, 6, *רָקְדוּ כְּאַיִלִּים הַהָרִים* = *τὰ ὄρη ἐσκιρτησαν ὡσεὶ κριοὶ* “the mountains skipped like rams.” See page 223, for the confusion of *ד* and *ת*.

²⁴³ Compare Grossfeld's (1973: 348–351) translation of *רָקְתוּ* as “she [Yael] cried” and Nicholson's (1977: 259–266) “it [the peg] went down.”

which focused on the neck/mouth rather than the skull/temples. In a sense, Yael “went for the jugular,” following a well-known mythic model.

5:27b. Motionless, powerless

באש הכרע

The first phrase of 5:27, *בין . . . שכב*, is transposed in this study to the end of 5:25, but not solely because these words are missing in eighteen Hebrew manuscripts and several Greek texts (see BH³). While there is much repetition in the poem, the repetition in 5:27 is as excessive as the seven to eleven imperatives found in the MT of 5:12. This excessive repetition creates suspicion about the interpretation and position of this poetic line.

Given the semantic range and homonymity of the words involved, the phrase *כרע נפל שכב* fits well the sequential actions which followed Sisera’s receiving his refreshment (5:25b)—he *drank* and *lay down to sleep* (with Yael). Therefore, the first five words are transposed to their more logical position following 5:25. There is no hint of erotic *double entendre* with the *רדם* and *עיף* of Ju 4:21. But the erotic nuances of *כרע*, *נפל*, and *שכב* in 5:27 make better sense when the first words of 5:27a are transposed to the end of 5:25, were they serve as prelude to the death scene.

The second occurrence of *בין רגליה כרע נפל* in 27b requires the translation, “between her legs, half-conscious, he fell,” which follows the meaning of *כרע* III, discussed above (pages 214–216). This understanding of MT *כרע* is as old as the paraphrase of 5:27 found in the prose text of Ju 4:21b, *והוא נרדם ויעף וימת*, “he was lying fast asleep from weariness and he died” (NRSV). The *נרדם* “lying fast asleep” reflects the *שכב* (or the *נפל שכב*) of 5:27b, the *יעף* “he became faint” translates the *כרע* of 5:27b (i.e., *כרע* stem III), and the *וימת* “he died” renders the *שדוד* of 5:27c.²⁴⁴

²⁴⁴ Bos (1988: 52) noted the awkward word order which has Sisera sleeping *after* being hit. She concluded, “Sisera is stunned, collapses, and dies . . . in a slow-motion effect similar to the operative in Ju 5:4.”

The MT **בַּאֲשֶׁר כָּרַע שָׁם** is puzzling. Albright (1922: 80) noted: “**בַּאֲשֶׁר כָּרַע שָׁם** ‘Where he stooped there he fell,’ is anything but poetical, and the [prosaic] **אֲשֶׁר** is found nowhere else in the poem.” He “improved” the poetry by deleting four words and translating “He fell, outstretched.” Cross (1950: 38), Stuart (1976: 127), and Soggin (1981c: 83) essentially concurred with Albright by deleting two or more words. Boling (1975: 104) and O’Connor (1980: 229) retained the MT and treated the relative **אֲשֶׁר** as a demonstrative and translated, “at that place where he slumped” and “in that place he crouches.” Similarly, Lindars (1995: 280 translated, “where he collapsed, there he fell, slain.”

However, in preference to deleting any words or replacing the relative pronoun with a demonstrative pronoun, the line can be restored by redividing words and emending a **ר** to a **ה** or a **ב**. The MT **בַּאֲשֶׁר כָּרַע** can be read **בַּאֲשֶׁ הִכְרַע** or **בַּאֲשֶׁ בִּכְרַע**. The restored noun, **בַּאֲשֶׁ**, is the cognate of Arabic **بوس** “a state of trial or affliction, distress, deprived of the power of motion” (Lane 1865: 146–147). The stem **בַּאֲשֶׁ** (= **בַּשׁ** or **בִּישׁ**)²⁴⁵ appears in Ps 6:11, “All my enemies shall be immobilized (**בַּאֲשֶׁ** = **בַּשׁ**) and exceedingly troubled; they will be shattered (**יִשְׁבְּרוּ** = **יִשְׁבְּרוּ**)²⁴⁶ and in a moment they will be made powerless (**יִבְאֲשׁוּ** = **יִבְשׁוּ**).”

If the word after the restored **בַּאֲשֶׁ** was originally the *hoph^{al}* **הִכְרַע**, then the *hiph^{il}* in Ps 78:31 would be very relevant: “he made powerless (**הִכְרִיעַ**) the elite warriors of Israel” (RSV, “laid low the picked men”). Had it been the preposition **ב** and the noun **כָּרַע**, the meaning would then be “in a stupor.” This **בַּאֲשֶׁ** “immobilized, motionless” provides an alliterative balance for the **בַּשֶׁשׁ** “slow-motion, tardy” in 5:28b.

Niditch’s (1989: 50) observations are noteworthy, though more than one verse, in my opinion, is involved. She wrote:

²⁴⁵ On the elision of the **ש**, see pages 120–121; note also the variants **וְהַתְּאֲזִרְנִי** and **וְהַתְּזִרְנִי** in the parallel texts of Ps 18:40 and 2 Sam 22:40. In 11QpaleoLev (Freedman and Matthews 1985: 45–46, 80) **וַיִּרְתֵּ** appears for **וַיִּרְאֵת** in Lev 25:36, **הַמְּאֲהִיכֶם** for **הַמְּתִיכֶם** in Lev 26:18, and **הַתְּבוּ** for **הַתְּבוּ** in Lev 26:21. See also Delitzsch 1920: 21–22, §14a–c.

²⁴⁶ Reading here **שִׁבְּבוּ** “to shatter,” which was discussed on pages 183–184 in reference to Ju 5:17c.

Double meanings of violent death and sexuality emerge in every line. He is at her feet in a pose of defeat and humiliation; he kneels between her legs in sexual pose. He falls and lies, a dead warrior assassinated by a warrior better than he is; he is a suppliant and a would-be lover. This one verse holds an entire story. The final twist and nuance of the tale awaits the last line, which nevertheless retains the doubleness of meaning. He is despoiled /destroyed.

Bal (1988b: 215) noted, “The man Sisera is turned into a non-man [4:20 שׂוֹרֵץ] by means of the penetration of a hard object into his soft flesh. The murder takes the specific form and meaning of rape This reverse rape, indeed also destroys the man as man” As Rozelaar and Hazan observed, Sisera, the sole rapist, is dead thanks to oral penetration.²⁴⁷

X. Anxiety in Sisera’s court: Ju5:28–30

5:28a. She peered, נִשְׁקֶפָה וְתִיבָב
but (only) emptiness

This section of the poem is not likely to be an eyewitness account, but it reflects the poet’s realistic imagination. The reference to Sisera’s mother demonstrates the unity and integrity of the poem. Lindars commented (1983: 168), “the ‘mother in Israel’ makes an ironical inclusion with the mother of Sisera at the end of the poem” and “. . . the stanza is not merely a tail-piece, but a satisfying conclusion, which rounds off the poem as a whole” (1995: 280).

²⁴⁷ See page 218 and the discussion concerning לִרְאֵשׁ גִּבּוֹר, pages 228–229. Yee (1993: 116) commented that “The tent peg in Jael’s hands becomes synecdochically the ravaging phallus.” Compare Exum’s (psycho)analysis (1995: 72):

Deborah is the good mother Jael, on the other hand, is the death-dealing mother. Her behavior is maternal: she offers Sisera security . . . and assurance The picture of Jael covering Sisera and giving him milk to drink suggests a mother putting her son to bed. She even watches over him while he sleeps to protect him from harm But the nurturing, protective mother can suddenly, unexpectedly, turn deadly. The bad mother is cold and blood-thirsty. She may attack her son in his sleep, when he is utterly defenseless The different descriptions of Jael’s assassination of the unsuspecting Sisera in Judges 4 and 5 are different expressions of anxiety about the mother’s threatening side.

However, MT וְהִיבֵב has been somewhat of a crux. MSS Abcx have κατεμυθάνειν “(she) observed,” but the B-text has nothing for it, leading Schreiner (1957: 67) to comment ruefully, “der Übersetzer hat wohl das Hapaxleg. וְהִיבֵב ‘und sie klagte’ nicht gekannt und darum unberücksichtigt gelassen.” But as was evident in 5:22–23 with הַלְמוּ, הַמְדַהְרֹת, and מְרוּוּ (see pages 25–26, 200–201), unknown words were transliterated, *not* omitted. Guillaume (1960–1961: 17) properly cautioned against equating בֵּב with post-biblical יָבַב “to lament (over a corpse),” since at this point in the ballad Sisera’s mother had good reason to worry but no reason to lament.²⁴⁸

Hebrew בֵּב has been identified with Aramaic יָבַב “to blow the trumpet, to shout aloud,” and the Arabic أَبَّ “he cried loudly” (Guillaume 1960: 17). But the Old Latin *reuertentes in Sisarra*, the Ethiopic, the Sahidic, and the doublets in the A-text (MSS AabcgIntvw with the participles υποεπιστρεφοντας or μεταστρεφοντας or επιστρεφοντας) reflect a *Vorlage* which had הִיבֵב עִם סִיִּסְרָא “returning with Sisera.” The translators understood הִיבֵב to be the Aramaic הִיבֵב (= שׁוּב) “to return.” But וְהִיבֵב is commonly emended to וְהִבֵּט “she looked,” following MSS Abcx κατεμυθάνειν and the Targum’s מְדַקְרָא (from דָּקַק “to look with anxiety, to wait impatiently”), as noted in BHS.

But וְהִיבֵב can be revocalized to הִיבֵּב (from an original הִיבֵּב), a *taqtil* form widely used with ע"ל stems. Then בֵּב can be read as a cognate of the Arabic تَبَاب “a deserted, empty land in which there is nothing or no one” (Lane 1893: 2974b). This derivation would account for the unusual absence of a corresponding word in the B-text. Probably early in the transmission of the B-text, the translation of וְהִיבֵב as καὶ κενὸς τόπος “and empty space” resulted in a subsequent scribe’s omitting the phrase καὶ κενὸς τόπος but leaving an empty space which was removed by a still later scribe. Such a phenomenon is reflected in 1 Sam 13:1 which deals with Saul’s age at his ascension to the throne and the length

²⁴⁸ Soggin (1981c: 92) commented, “Incongruously the Hebrew text anticipates . . . ‘She lamented’.” He therefore emended the text to וְהִבֵּט “she peered,” citing the A-text δῆκύπτειν and B-text παρέκυσεν. But these are translations of the MT נִשְׁקֶפָה “to look down and out, to overhang.” It is the A-text κατεμυθάνειν “she observed closely,” which suggests וְהִבֵּט (see BHS).

of his reign. McCarter (1980: 222) conjectured, “This notice is missing in LXX^B . . . It seems likely, then, that originally the numbers were lacking in both clauses: ‘Saul was ____ years old when he began to reign, and he reigned ____ years over Israel’.” The blank spaces were subsequently omitted and the MT now reads, בן שנה שאול במלכו ושתי שנים מלך על ישראל, “Saul was a year old when he began to reign and he reigned two years over Israel.” A similar scribal corruption surely lies behind the missing word in MS B for MT תיבב.

5:28b. The mother of Sisera אם סיסרא בעתה אשנב
inquired at the lattice מדוע

The interrogative מדוע could be introduced by a verb like שאל or בעה “to ask.” The consonant cluster בעדהאשנב yields such a verb when the ד is emended to ה and the letters are divided to read בעתה אשנב, recovering a 3fs of בעה (GKC 75ⁱ) “she inquired.” The first בעד “at” serves as a double-duty preposition,²⁴⁹ “through the window . . . through the lattice”

The scene of “the woman at the window” appears also in 2 Sam 6:16; 2 Kgs 9:30; and Eccl 12:3, as noted by O’Connor (1986: 284). Bal (1988a: 64) views the lattice motif as addressing “the women imprisoned in their passivity.” But there is even more. As much as the poet contrasted the Mother in Israel with Sisera’s mother, the woman at the window was contrasted with the woman of the tent. The noble lady was not Sisera’s unnamed mother with her princesses, but the well-named woman Yael, the “Noble/Availer” (see page 207). A Rechabite ambiance elevates the itinerant lifestyle of smiths and caravaneers above the sedentary and residential lifestyle with its false security symbolized by the lady at the lattice. The open tent provided very little protection compared to secured windows; but what it lacked in security it made up for in opportunity. The ladies of a well-defended court fell victim to a woman of an undefended tent and a woman who sat openly under a date-palm (Ju 4:5).

²⁴⁹ See Dahood and Penar 1970: 435; and Coogan 1978: 145, note 12 on double-duty modifiers.

with the common noun *n^cmy* “pleasantness” (*UT* 62: §8.48).²⁵² Failure to recognize this rare feminine form forced אַמְרֵי to be read as the masculine plural construct “the words of,” similar to the idiom and form in Prov 22:21.²⁵³ This in turn required reading לה as a reflexive “to herself” rather than as the usual “to her.”

The vocable is either אַמַר I “to say” or אַמַר II “to see, to perceive,” a cognate of Ugaritic *ʿmr* (Gt stem) “to see” and Akkadian *amaru* “to see, to locate (a person), to find after searching, to observe (omens)” and *amiru* “a reader” (*CAD* 1: 2–5, 14, 65). Something like the Akkadian *tūra am-mar ašappara*, “I shall make another observation and report to you,” could well have been said to Sisera’s mother. As in Job 13:22 (וְהִשִּׁיבֵנִי) and 20:2 (יִשִּׁיבוּנִי), שׁוּב does not require a direct object. Indeed, given the Egyptian flavor of Sisera’s court (see below on 5:30a), the תִּשִּׁיב here may well be the Egyptian verb *wšb* “to answer,” a loanword or a shared root (Gordon 1965: 501; Gardiner 1966: 562). If so, it could reflect the poet’s intentional use of dialect or a loanword.

There are three subject elements in MT הִיא תִּשִּׁיב אַמְרֵיהָ לָהּ, namely, the pronoun הִיא, the prefix תִּ of the verb, and the noun אַמְרֵיהָ, translated “her (sooth)sayer” in the attempt to combine אַמַר I and אַמַר II. The antecedent of the תִּ and הָ suffixes (which cannot be reflexive) is Sisera’s mother. The MT אַמְרֵיהָ “her (sooth)sayer” (not “her words”) is the subject תִּשִּׁיב. The quotation in 5:30 comes from a woman other than Sisera’s mother.

5:30a. The victors have forded (the water) הַלְאִים צָאוּ

Brongers (1981: 177–189) discussed the use of MT הַלְאִים and translated “*Surely*, they must be finding spoil, taking shares” However, the poet may have been ridiculing the clairvoyant who could only faintly and, at best, erroneously approximate Sisera’s

²⁵² See Layton 1990: 241–249. Note van Selms’ study (1971: 426–429) where he conjectures, “It is quite possible . . . the *yōd* in the feminine ending *-ay* is nothing else than the anaphoric pronoun feminine.”

²⁵³ לְהוֹדִיעַךְ קִשְׁטֵי אַמְרֵי אֱמֶת לְהִשִּׁיב אַמְרֵי אֱמֶת “to make you know the certainty of the words of truth that you may correctly answer” (NAS).

A-text φιλιάζων φίλοις εἰς κεφαλὴν δυνατοῦ “being friendly to friends, to the head of a mighty one,” reflect essentially the same *Vorlage* as the MT, but treat רחמתיים רחם as the widely attested verb “to show mercy” and its cognate accusative. They depict Sisera compassionately disbursing spoils to his men.

However, in contrast to the sexual and erotic nuances in the language of the assassination scenes of 4:18–22 and 5:25–27, the expression רחמתיים רחם לראש גבר is quite vulgar, as Munster (1696: col. 1985) noted long ago:

Est quidem רחם *rahæm* & *raham* propriè *uterus mulieris*, & item *vulva*; hic verò capitur pro עלמה *puella*, idque בויין I. *modo contemptibili*, sicut & Germani hoc utuntur modo cùm de descortis contemptim loquuntur, די פוטערען.

Contrary to Bal’s (1988a: 134) statement, “She [the mother of Sisera] uses the crude word “womb” for /woman/. . . . The crude term “womb” suggests . . . ,” the Hebrew רחם is itself neither vulgar or crude. Its Arabic cognate is either رحم “to be compassionate” or رخم “to be soft.” The vocable is used for names of men and women, and رحم opens the Qur’an in a manner reminiscent of Ex 34:6, “Yahweh is a merciful (רחום) and gracious God.” It is the *usage* in 5:30 which is vulgar, as vulgar as the use of nice words like גבר and ראש. On the lips of Sisera’s court lady, ראש takes on a nuance comparable to the Latin *caput*, about which Adams (1982: 72) noted, “The frequency of *caput* used of the glans suggests that it was in common use This usage reflects the tendency for the organ to be personified.” To be sure, ראש does not ordinarily mean the glans, but this is not an ordinary Hebrew who is speaking, but a foreign woman—as though she were ignorant of the appropriate נקבות, נְכָרוֹת or יד (Isa 57:8; *UT* 409) used for the genitalia.

In the Moabite text (*KAI* 1: 169), רחמת, “(slave) woman” occurs once in a prisoner list along with גברת, גרן, and גרת. This pejorative use in Moab matches this *single* negative use of רחם in Biblical Hebrew. Thus, רחמתיים רחם has a foreign flavor, as well as a vulgar ring. Good Hebrew may not have been a strength in Sisera’s court. It can well be assumed that the foreign words and vulgar usage on the lips of Sisera’s women are the

poet's device for debasing the enemy and another example of the clever use of dialect.

Treating ראש גבר as though it were a synonym for כל or איש and translating "every, all, each" results in euphemistic mistranslations. Lindars (1995: 285) stated, "The meaning 'per capita' for *lěro's geber* has no precise parallel in Biblical Hebrew, but is not in doubt." He is correct only for the first half of his statement because there is no basis for making the equation ראש גבר = *per capita*. A reader may miss the point of the literal translation "for the head of" but that is insufficient reason to hide the point. MT גבר "man" is probably *scriptio defectiva* for גבור "hero." Since both nouns are singular they should be translated as Bal did (1988a: 64), "two wombs/girls for the head of the hero," rather than with G. A. Smith (1912: 90) and others, "A wench, two wenches a head for the men." Bal's interpretation of 5:30a focuses attention on the anticipated rapacious action of the troops, at large, and the sexual violence of Sisera, in particular.

5:30b. Spoils of the best cloth

צבע צבעים

Many proposals have been made to delete MT שלל צבעים or צבע.²⁵⁶ However, it seems more likely that צבע simply needs to be transposed to precede the second צבעים, a slight change which restores the superlative צבע צבעים, "the very finest cloth." The plural-singular "cloths" and "finest cloth" in 5:30b are then balanced chiastically in 5:30c by the singular-dual רקמה and רקמתים, which in turn balance the initial singular-dual רחם רחמתים of 5:30a.²⁵⁷ In Hebrew צבע is the equivalent of Akkadian *ṣubâtum*, a piece of cloth from which one or more garments could be made.²⁵⁸ The proposed transposition restores three very

²⁵⁶ Compare Moore 1900a: 38; 1900b: 170–171; Burney 1918: 156; Cross 1950: 39; Richter 1963: 402; and Stuart 1976: 127.

²⁵⁷ Compare Blenkinsopp's similar suggestion (1961: 75), following in part Budde's reconstruction (cited by Burney 1918: 156), that צבע צבעים is a singular followed by a dual.

²⁵⁸ See Veenhof 1972: 89, 464, and his index for *ṣubâtum*.

effective alliterative parallels: (1) רַחֵם רַחֲמֵיִם, (2) צָבַע צְבָעִים (or צָבַע צְבָעִים), and (3) רַקְמָה רַקְמָתִים.²⁵⁹

5:30c. An embroidered cloth or two רַקְמָה רַקְמָתִים

Oppenheim's comment (1967: 246) on *rōqem* as a trade commodity (see Ezek 27:24) is of interest:

. . . the work done by the Western craftsmen called *rōqem* . . . appealed to the staid Mesopotamians accustomed to monochrome wool and linen apparel. This new and quite characteristic western textile technique . . . seems to have been applied whenever linen thread and purple wool of various hues are given simultaneously to weavers to be made into pieces of apparel typically to be placed on the image of the deity at certain cultic occasions.

Crowfoot (1951: 9–12) called attention to linen textile woven by the *rōqem* technique discovered at 'Ain Feshkha. Sisera did not wear the crown of a king, but his court ladies seemingly envisaged him with a mantle fit for a god.

5:30d. For the neckerchiefs of the spoiler לְצוּאֵרֵי שָׁלַל
(See above, pages 217–219, on 5:26b.)

As the English word “crown” means a part of the head or an object worn on that part of the head, and as עֵנַק means “neck” or “necklace,” so צוּאֵר means “neck” or “necklace” (Cant 4:9) or a garment worn around the neck or hung from the neck (or even the shoulders). The suggestion of Guillaume (1963–1964: 5) that שָׁלַל here means “captured women” (since it is collocated with “wench” and “shawls”) is too restrictive a translation. Just because the שָׁלַל may have included women is no reason to restrict שָׁלַל itself only to women—especially since 5:19 mentions “silver spoils.” Were women the only spoils of interest to Sisera

²⁵⁹ Robert Shedinger (oral communication) has called my attention to an unrecognized dual noun in the poetic fragment of Gen 25:23, (MT גַּיִם גַּיִם) “two nations are in your womb” (like שְׁתֵּי כַרְעִים “two legs” in Amos 3:12, the שְׁתֵּי יָדַי in Lev 16:21, and the שְׁתֵּי אַזְנוֹי in 1 Sam 3:11).

and the Canaanite kings, they would have needed neither chariots nor caravan chases.

The deletion of the third שלל in verse 30 for metrical reasons (Cross 1950: 40 and Stuart 1976: 136) or the emendation of the fourth שלל to שגל “king’s wife,” noted in BH³, are unnecessary. The reading of the NEB and Freedman’s suggestion (cited by Boling [1975: 115]) to read the fourth שלל as the participle שלל has been adopted (contra the NRSV “my neck as spoil”). This vocalization actually revives the proposal of W. Green made in 1753 (cited by Burney 1918: 157).

The poet ridiculed the clairvoyant who could but faintly and erroneously approximate Sisera’s real circumstances. This passage can be added to the two prophetic texts (Isa 10:13 and 30:1–15, 31:1–3), cited by Van Leeuwen (1990: 303), in which the “false wisdom of foreign courts in planning military exploits without taking Yahweh into account” is held up for derision.

XI. Poetic epilogue 5:31a

5:31a. Thus perished

כִּן יֵאָבְדוּ

By reading יֵאָבְדוּ as a jussive (“may they perish”), many commentators (such as Weiser 1959: 94–95 and Lindars 1995: 286) interpreted 5:31a as a liturgical addition to the poem—a prayer addressed to Yahweh as indicated by the 2ms suffix on אוֹיְבֵיךָ. But in view of the many *yqtl* preterits which appear in 5:17 (יָגֹר, יֵשֶׁב, and יֵשְׁכִין), 5:18 (יֵשְׁדֶה), 5:21 (יֵנַפֵּשׁ, תִּדְרֹךְ, and יֵעֲזֹז), and 5:26 (תִּשְׁלַחְנָה), there is little reason to insist on reading יֵאָבְדוּ as a jussive. As a *yqtl* preterit, as translated here, or as an imperfect “thus perish” (implying “they will always perish this way”), the MT יֵאָבְדוּ introduces the poem’s climactic summary.

5:31a. All the enemies of Yahweh

כָּל אוֹיְבֵי־יְהוָה

The 2ms suffix of אוֹיְבֵיךָ in the MT is unexpected since it is followed by a 3ms suffix on אֶהְבִּי, and direct address occurs elsewhere only in Deborah’s exhortation (5:4–5, 8–9). Moran

(1963: 84–85), P. D. Miller (1973: 101), and Lindars (1995: 286), like many other critics harmonized the suffixes, changing אָהַבִּי to אָהַבִּיךְ (note BH³ and BHS).

Dahood (1968: 147; 1970: 151 and 204), following van Dijk (1968: 69–70), cited thirteen examples of an enclitic/emphatic כִּי suffix, including the אָהַבִּיךְ here.²⁶⁰ In my earlier study (1983: 257), I followed Boling (1975: 115) in adopting this interpretation. However, it now seems more likely that an early misreading here, as in 5:12c, of a כ for a ב is responsible for mistaking the enclitic כִּי for the 2ms suffix. The error is comparable to the misreading of ב (ג) for כ (ג) in Ju 5:10 and is comparable to the textual differences in Ezek 16:7 where the versions read שְׁדִיךְ “your breasts” for MT dual שְׁדִים “breasts.” The enclitic כִּי appears also in 5:4–5, מֵי־הַהַרִים “waters of the mountain” (discussed on page 134).

5:31a. The sun because of His power הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בְּגִבְרָתוֹ

In light of Ps 84:12, $\text{יְהוָה וּמִגֵּן יְהוָה}$, “truly Sun and Suzerain is Yahweh,” שֶׁמֶשׁ here could be read as a surrogate for Yahweh. In Ugaritic (*UT* 491: 2426) špš was so used for Pharaoh and the Hittite suzerain. But it is more likely that שֶׁמֶשׁ is here the sun which is under Yahweh’s control. The 3ms suffix on בְּגִבְרָתוֹ refers to Yahweh, not to the sun. Buber (1950: 10) used a masculine suffix and a feminine participle when quoting this verse: $\text{צִיאַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בְּגִבְרָתוֹ}$ [“the going forth of the sun in *his* valor”], a detail which was missed in Witton-Davies’ translation (1949): “as the going forth of the sun in *its* valor” [italics mine].

Hillers (1978: 175–182), in a study of the עַם ברית in Isa 42:6, noted that Hebrew, Aramaic, Ugaritic, and Akkadian metaphors and similes referring to שֶׁמֶשׁ and the gods Šapaš and Šamaš addressed themselves to the ideas of freedom and emancipation. The MT $\text{כִּי צִיאַת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ}$ in 5:31a is probably one more example of

²⁶⁰ Vogt’s suggestion (cited by van Dijk 1968: 71) of a link between the emphatic כִּי suffix and the enclitic כִּי of אָהַבִּיךְ enhances Dahood’s proposal.

this usage. As the sun moves freely through the heavens by the power of Yahweh, so the covenant people (i.e., “those who love him”)²⁶¹ were free from Sisera’s obstructive coalition. Yahweh’s power expressed in the storm permitted Israel to be as free as the orbiting sun—all the more brilliant following the storm.

XII. Prose epilogue Ju 5:31b

5:31b. And the land was at peace

וּתְשֻׁבַּת הָאָרֶץ

In Ju 4:23 the formulaic כָּנַע “to subdue” was identified as the *prose incipit*. Here the corresponding formulaic שָׁקֵט “to be at peace” provides the *prose inclusio*. As discussed above (pages 29–32), the Deborah–Barak–Yael tradition in Judges 4 and 5, as it now stands, is composed of two literary units: Ju 4:1–22 and Ju 4:23–5:31. A *prose* prologue and a *prose* conclusion encompass the poem which has its own *poetic* prologue and *poetic* conclusion—as well as the internal *incipit* and *inclusio* demarcating Deborah’s exhortation: בָּרְכוּ יְהוָה “Praise Yahweh!”

The words of Ramesses III upon his accession to the throne, have a similar collocation of *peace* and *sun* (= Re): “Then my father, Amon-Re, Re-Atum, and Ptah . . . crowned me as the Lord of the Two Lands on the throne of him who begat me . . . the land rested and rejoiced in possession of peace . . .” (Breasted 1906: 4: 200).

²⁶¹ Matthews (1991: 20) commented, “In the lyric poem, however, her [Yael’s] actions are removed from the realm of law and custom and laid out simply as the proper steps taken by a ‘friend’ of the Lord.” But, while the אֲהַבְיָי as a masculine plural noun can include Yael, it cannot be restricted to her. MT 5:31a is the epilogue to the entire poem, not simply to the assassination scene. Moran (1963: 84–85) and Boling (1975: 116) noted the covenantal overtones of the אֲהַבְיָ here, as evidenced by the use of אֲהַבְיָ or its equivalent in ancient Near Eastern treaties.