

THE SONG OF DEBORAH:  
POETRY IN DIALECT

ALTERNATE  
TRANSLATIONS

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**APPENDIX:**

**ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATIONS**

G. F. Moore  
*The Book of Judges: A New English Translation*  
1898

- 1 Then Deborah sang, with Barak ben-Abinoam, on that day:  
2 With sacrifices of firstlings in Israel,  
With freewill-offerings of the people, bless JHVH!  
3 Hear, O ye kings! give ear, O ye sovereigns!  
I to JHVH will raise my song,  
Will sing to JHVH, Israel's God.  
4 When from the land of Edom Thou marchedst,  
The earth trembled, the heavens <sway>ed,  
5 The clouds dripped water, the mountains streamed,  
At the presence of JHVH, of JHVH, Israel's God.
- 6 In the days of Shamgar ben-Anath,  
In the days of Jael, caravans ceased,  
And solitary travelers took roundabout ways.  
7 Hamlets ceased in Israel, \* \* ceased,  
Till thou didst arise, O Deborah,  
Till thou didst arise, a matron in Israel.  
.....  
8 .....  
No shield was seen, nor spear,  
Among forty thousand in Israel;  
9 My heart is with the rulers of Israel;  
Ye who offer freely among the people, bless JHVH!  
10 Ye who ride tawny asses,  
Sit upon . . and walk in the way, sing!  
11 .....  
There they rehearse the victories of JHVH,  
The victories of . . . in Israel.  
Then marched down to the gates the people of JHVH.
- 12 Awake, awake, O Deborah!  
Awake, awake, lift up the song!  
Arise, Barak! lead captive thy captives, son of Abinoam!
- 13 Then Israel marched down like nobles;  
The people of JHVH marched down for Him as heroes.  
14 . . Ephraim .....  
. . Benjamin .....  
From Machir came truncheon-bearers,  
From Zebulun those wielding the muster-master's staff.  
15 And the princes of Issachar with Deborah,  
And Naphtali . . Barak,

Into the plain was hurled at his back.  
 Great were the dissensions in the divisions of Reuben,  
 16 Why didst thou remain amid ash-heaps,  
 Listening to pipings at sheep-folds?  
 17 Gilead sat still, beyond Jordan;  
 And why does Dan go abroad in ships?  
 On the shore of the sea tarries Asher,  
 Sitting still by his places for landing.  
 18 But Zebulun and Nephtali were tribes  
 That recked not of life on the battle-field's heights.  
 19 Kings came and fought;  
 Then fought the Kings of Canaan,  
 At Taanach, by the streams of Megiddo.  
 Gain of silver they took not!  
 20 From heaven itself fought the stars,  
 From their courses they fought against Sisera.  
 21 The stream of Kishon swept them away,  
 The . . . stream, the stream of Kishon.  
  
 22 Then were battered the hoofs of his horses,  
 By the galloping of his chargers.  
 23 Curse Meroz, says the Messenger of JHVH,  
 Curse its inhabitants bitterly!  
 Because they came not to the aid of JHVH,  
 To the aid of JHVH like heroes.  
 24 Blessed above all women is Jael,  
 Above all women in tents is she blessed!  
 25 Water he asked, milk she gave;  
 Curds in a mighty bowl did she bring him.  
 26 Her hand she puts forth to the pin,  
 Her right hand to the . . . .  
 And smites, crushes his head,  
 Shatters, pierces his temple.  
 27 At her feet he sank down, he fell, he lay;  
 Where he sank he lay, of life bereft.  
 28 Through the window peered and . .  
 The mother of Sisera through the lattice:  
 "Why are his chariots so long in coming?  
 Why tarries the tramping of his horses?"  
 29 The wisest of her princesses reply,  
 Yea, she answers her words herself:  
 30 "They must be finding, dividing the spoil,  
 A wench or two for each man,  
 Booty of dyed stuffs for Sisera,  
 A piece of embroidery or two for the neck of . . ."  
 31 So perish Thine enemies all, O JHVH!  
 But be Thy friends as the sun when he rises in power.

Translation of T. K. Cheyne<sup>274</sup>

Oxford University  
1904  
*Critica Biblica*

- 1.
2. For the crushing of Zarephath in Ishmael,  
For the disaster to the Arabians in Jerahmeel,
- 3b. I, to Yahwè will I sing, I will chant to Israel's God.
4. Yahwè! when thou wentest forth from Asshur,  
When thou marchedst from the highland of Aram,  
The earth quaked, yea, the heavens  
Yea, the clouds dripped water;
5. The mountains streamed before Yahwè,  
Before Yah, the God of Israel.
6. In the days of the Geshurites and the Anakites,  
In the days of Ishmael and Cusham,  
Those who fared on the ways trembled,  
They went by crooked paths.
7. Potentates trembled in Israel  
At the sword of Jerahmeel and the Ashhurites.  
King and princes shuddered  
At the host of Jerahmeel and the Arabians.
11. Loudly praise ye the righteous acts of Yahwè,  
His righteous, gracious acts in Israel.
12. March on, march on Daberath;  
March on, march on into Asshur.  
Arise, Barak, and take captives,  
Subdue the sons of Arabia.
13. Then they came down to the Asshurites,  
Yahwè's force came down into Arabia;
14. Out of Ephraim [came down] princes,  
After him Benjamin from Maacath;  
Out of Machir came down marshals,  
And out of Zebulun wielders of the mace;
15. And Ischar was in Daberath's force,  
And the warriors of Caslah among his great ones.

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<sup>274</sup> Cheyne retained fewer than 800 of the 1,485 letters of Judges 5. Even those he kept he often reworked, e.g., MT שִׁמְרֹן became גִּשְׁרִים.

- (But) in Pelesheth of Reuben  
 The great ones searched out the heart.
16. Why didst thou tarry among the Zephathites,  
 To hear the hissing of the Arabians?
17. Gad dwelt in Arabia,  
 And Dan sojourned with Ethan.  
 Asher tarried by Rehob,  
 And dwelt by those in Zarephath.
18. Zebulun was a people that defied Ishmael,  
 And Naphtali, in the highland of Jerahmeel.
19. The kings came—they fought,  
 At Beth-anak by Migdol's waters,  
 The host of Cushan and Jerahmeel,
20. Ishmael and the folk of Asshur;  
 22. The Asshurites were panic-stricken, they perished.  
 In the stream of Cushan were their corpses.
23. Curse ye Mişsor of Jerahmeel,  
 Say a curse upon its inhabitants,  
 Because they came not to the help of Yah,  
 to the help of Yah in Arabia.
24. Blessed above women be Jael,  
 Blessed above women in the tent.
25. Milk of the goats she gave,  
 Sour milk she presented in a bowl
26. Her hand—she stretched it forth to a club,  
 her right hand to a staff of Jerahmeel.  
 She struck Asshur on his head,  
 She shattered and pierced his temples.
27. At her feet he sank down,  
 As the wicked, Asshur fell!
28. In the city of Holon she now enchantments, [sic]  
 Asshur's mother in the city of Cushan;  
 'Why fails his car?  
 (Why) linger the steps of his chariot-horses'?
29. The wise men of her sanctuary divine;  
 'Surely he shall bring back Jerahmeel.
30. Shall not Jerahmeel be strong,  
 (Yea) prevail over the host of Israel?
31. Perish all the foes of Jerahmeel!  
 Be his friends as the going forth of the sun!'

Translation of G. A. Smith  
 (1910 Schweich Lectures)  
*The Early Poetry of Israel in Its  
 Physical and Social Origins*

1. Then sang Deborah and Barak ben-Abinoam<sup>275</sup> on that day  
saying:
2. That leaders took lead in Israel,  
That the people were willing,  
Bless ye the Lord!
3. Hearken, O Kings,  
Rulers give ear,  
I to the Lord,  
I am to sing,  
I hymn the Lord,  
God of Israel.
4. Lord at thy start from Seir,  
On thy march from the mount of Edom,  
Earth did quake,  
Heaven was swaying (?)  
The clouds poured water,
5. The mountains streamed,  
Before the Lord,  
God of Israel.
6. In the days of Shamgar [ben-Anath]  
Caravans ceased;  
Who would be wayfaring  
Fared by the byways.
7. Ceased had order (?),  
Till I rose, Deborah,  
rose mother in Israel.
8. Sacrifice ceased (?)  
Barley-bread failed (?)  
Was shield seen or lance,  
In the forty thousands of Israel?
9. My heart to the leaders in Israel,  
To the willing of the people!  
Bless ye the Lord!

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<sup>275</sup> Smith's diacritical marks have been omitted.

10. Riding roan asses,  
Sitting on carpets (?),  
Walking the highway—sing (?) them!
11. Hark the huzzahing (?)  
Where the herds water.  
There they are telling the faith of the Lord,  
Faith of His rule in Israel.
12. Rouse thee, rouse thee, Deborah,  
Rouse thee, [rouse thee,] deliver the song!  
Arise, Barak,  
Capture thy captors, ben-Abinoam!
- 11c. [Then down to the gates came the Lord's folk,]
13. Then came down the rest of the great ones,  
Down to the Lord came His folk with the brave ones,
14. Out of Ephraim they tore (?) to the valley,  
After thee, Benjamin, with thy clans!  
Out of Makhir came down commanders  
And from Zebulun the drawers of batons,
15. Naphtali's (?) lords with Deborah,  
As Issakhar so was Barak,—  
Into the valley shot at his heels!
- In the septs of Reuben great the heart-searchings!
16. Why satest thou still, the wattles between!  
to list to them whistling the flocks?  
In the septs of Reuben great the heart-searchings!
17. Gilead stayed at home over Jordan  
And Dan—why a truant on ships?  
Asher sat down on the shore of the sea,  
And stayed by his creeks,
18. Zebulun—the tribe spurned life to death,  
With Naphtali on the heights of the range,
19. Kings came, they fought,  
Fought the kings of Kena'an,  
At Ta'nak on the streams of Megiddo.  
Not a silver-bit took they!
20. From heaven fought the stars,  
From their courses they fought with Sisera.
22. Then thudded the hoofs of the horses,  
Plunge upon plunge of his stallions.
21. Torrent Kishon swept them away,  
Onrushing (?) torrent, torrent Kishon.  
Forward, my soul, in strength!

23. Curse ye Meroz, saith the Lord [His angel]  
Cursing, curse ye her burghers!  
For never came they to the help of the Lord,  
To the help of the Lord with the brave ones.
24. Blessed above women Ya`el,  
Above women in tents be she blessed!
25. Water he craved, milk she gave,  
In a dish for lords she brought him curd.
26. Her hand to the peg she put,  
Her right hand to the workman's hammer,  
And Sisera she hammered, she shattered his head,  
She smashed, she hacked through his temples,
27. Between her feet he bent, he fell,  
Where he bent there he fell—undone!
28. Out of the window she leans, she whines,  
Sisera his mother thorough [*sic*] the lattice:  
'Why are his chariots shy to come?  
Wherefore tarry the beats of his car?'
29. Warily answer to her ladies,  
Yea, she returns her words to herself:
30. 'Are they not finding, dividing the spoil?  
A wench, two wenches a head for the men,  
Booty of dyes for Sisera,  
Booty of dyes with brocade,  
Dyes, double brocade, for *my* neck the spoil!'
- 31 [So perish, O Lord, all Thy foes,  
But thy lovers! like the rise of the sun in his power].

Translation of C. F. Burney  
 1918  
*The Book of Judges*

1. Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abino'am on that day,  
 saying,
2. (When long locks of hair were wom loose in Israel; when the people  
 volunteered.)

Bless ye Yahweh!

3. Attend, ye kings; give ear, ye rulers:  
 I — to Yahweh I will sing,  
 Will make melody to Yahweh, the God of Israel.
4. Yahweh, in thy progress from Se'ir,  
 In thy march from the field of Edom,  
 Earth quaked, yea, heaven rocked,  
 Yea, the clouds dropped water.
5. The mountains shook before Yahweh,  
 Before Yahweh, the God of Israel.
6. From the days of Shamgar ben-cAnath,  
 From the days of old, caravans ceased.  
 And they that went along the ways used to walk by crooked paths.
7. Villages ceased in Israel;  
 . . . . . ceased;  
 Till thou didst arise, Deborah,  
 Didst arise as a mother in Israel.
8. Armourers had they none;  
 Armed men failed the city:  
 Was there seen a shield or a lance  
 Among forty thousand in Israel?
12. Awake, awake Deborah!  
 Awake, awake, sing paeon!  
 Rise up, Barak, and lead captive  
 Thy captors, O son of Abino'am!  
 Come, ye commanders of Israel!
9. Ye that volunteered among the people, bless ye Yahweh!
10. Let the riders on tawny she-asses review it,  
 And let the wayfarers recall it to mind!
11. Hark to the maidens laughing at the wells!  
 There they recount the righteous acts of Yahweh,  
 The righteous acts of his arm in Israel.
13. Then down to the gates gat the nobles;  
 Yahweh's folk gat them down mid the heroes.

- From Ephraim they spread out on the vale;  
 'After thee, Benjamin!' mid thy clansmen  
 14. From Machir came down the commanders,  
 And from Zebulun men wielding the truncheon.  
 15. And thy princes, Issachar, were with Deborah;  
 And Naphtali was near to Barak:  
 To the vale he was loosed at his heel.

- Utterly reft into factions was Re<sup>u</sup>ben  
 Great were his searchings of heart.  
 16. Why sat'st thou still amid the folds,  
 To hear the pastoral pipings?  
 17. Gile'ad beyond the Jordan dwelt,  
 And Dan abideth by the ships.  
 Asher sat still by the shore of the seas,  
 Dwelling beside his creeks.  
 18. Zebulun is the folk that scorned its life to death,  
 and Naphtali on the heights of the field.

19. On came the kings, they fought;  
 Then fought the kings of Cana'an;  
 In Ta'anach, by the rills of Megiddo;  
 The gain of money they took not.  
 20. From heaven fought the stars;  
 From their highways they fought with Sisera.  
 21. The torrent Kishon swept them off;  
 It faced them, the torrent Kishon.  
 Bless thou, my soul, the might of Yahweh!  
 22. Then loud beat the hoofs of the horses;  
 Off galloped, off galloped his chargers.  
 23. Curse ye, curse ye Meroz!  
 Curse ye, curse ye her towns-folk!  
 For they came not to the help of Yahweh,  
 To the help of Yahweh mid the heroes.

24. Most blessed of women be Ja`el,  
Of tent-dwelling women most blessed!
25. Water he asked; milk she gave;  
In a lordly dish she proffered curds.
26. Her hand to the peg she put forth,  
And her right to the maul of the workmen;  
And she smote Sisera—destroyed his head,  
Shattered and pierced through his temples.
27. 'Twixt her feet he bowed, he fell down, he lay prone;  
'Twixt her feet he bowed, he fell down.  
Where he bowed, there he fell down undone.
28. Out through the window she leaned and exclaimed,  
The mother of Sisera out through the lattice:  
'Wherefore delayeth his car to come?  
Wherefore tarrieth the clatter of his chariots?'
29. Her wisest princesses make answer,  
Yea, she returneth her reply:
30. 'Are they not finding—dividing the spoil?  
A damsel—two damsels for every man:  
A spoil of dyed stuffs for Sisera,  
A spoil of dyed stuffs embroidered;  
Two dyed embroideries for the neck of the queen.'
31. So perish all thy foes, Yahweh:  
But be thy friends like the sun going forth in his might.
32. And the land had rest forty years.

Translation of W. F. Albright  
*JPOS* 2, 1922  
 “The Earliest Forms of Hebrew Verse”

- I    When locks were long in Israel  
 When the folk responded—praise Yah!  
       Hear, O Kings,                    Give ear, O princes,  
       For I to Yahweh,                Even I will sing,  
       I will sing to Yahweh,        Unto Israel’s God.
- II    Yahweh, when thou rosest from Seir,  
 When thou marchedst from Edom’s land,  
       The earth was quaking,        The heavens shaking,  
       The mountains rocking        Before Yahweh’s face,  
       Before the face of Yahweh,    Israel’s God.
- III   In the days of Shamgar ben Anath,  
 In his days the caravans ceased,  
       The wayfaring men                Followed crooked paths  
       The yeomanry ceased,        In Israel it ceased,  
       Till thou rosest, O Deborah,    As mother-city in Israel.
- IV    O riders on tawny asses,  
 O wayfaring men, attend!  
       To the sound of the cymbals,    Between the drums,  
       There they will recite        The triumphs of Yahweh,  
       The triumphs of his yeoman    In Israel they will tell.
- V    Awake, awake, O Deborah!  
 Awake, Awake, sing a song:  
       “Arise, take thy captives,        Abinoam’s son,  
       For then the survivor        Will rule the haughty,  
       The people of Yahweh        Will rule the mighty.”
- VI    O Ephraim, storm, storm into the valley—  
 After thee come Benjamin’s clans!  
       From Machir’s folk                Come down the captains,  
       From Zebulun those who wield    The staff of the marshal,  
       While Deborah’s folk            Sends footmen into the valley.
- VII   Why does (Gad) dwell on dung-heaps  
 Harking to pastoral pipings?  
       In the vales of Reuben            The chiefs are faint-hearted,  
       While Gilead dwells            Beyond the Jordan.  
       And why does Dan                Become attached to ships?

- VIII Asher dwells on the shore of the sea  
And settles on its harbours—  
But Zebulon is a people                    Which dared to die—  
And Naphtali, too—                            On the heights of the plain.
- IX There came the kings and fought,  
They fought, the kings of Canaan.  
They fought at Taanach,                    At Megiddo's waters;  
No silver they won                            From their campaign,  
For the stars from heaven                    Fought against Sisera.
- X Kishon's torrent swept them away,  
An impetuous torrent becoming;  
In the Kishon were trampled                His living warriors,  
For the hoofs of their horses                Struck them down,  
Rearing, plunging,                            They struck down his strong men.
- XI Curse ye Merom, saith — — —  
For they would not come                    Eternally curse ye its people,  
To the help of Yahweh,                        To the help of Yahweh,  
Sending their warriors.
- XII Blessed above women is Jael,  
Above women in tents is she blest.  
Water he asked                                She gave him milk,  
In a lordly bowl                                She brought him cream.
- XIII One hand she put to the tent-pin  
Her right to the workman's mallet;  
She struck down Sisera                        She crushed his head,  
At her feet he bowed,                         He fell, he lay,  
At her feet he bowed,                         He fell outstretched.
- XIV Out from the window she looked  
And wailed Sisera's mother:  
"Why does his chariot                         Tarry in coming?  
Why linger the hoofs                         of his chariot-steeds?"
- XV The wisest of her women replies—  
She, too, echoes her words:  
Are they not finding                            And dividing the spoil?—  
A maiden or two                                As spoil for each warrior,  
Dyed work for Sisera                            Dyed and embroidered.
- Thus may all perish                             Of Thy foes, Yahweh,  
While Thy friends be as the rise             Of the sun in his strength.

L. Pirot and A. Clamer  
*La Sainte Bible: Text Latin et traduction Française*  
 1949

- 1 Cecineruntque Debbora et Barac filius Abinoem, in illo die,  
 dicentes:
- 2                   Qui sponte obtulistis de Israel  
                     animas vestras ad periculum,  
                     benedicite Domino.
- 3                   Audite, reges; auribus percipite, principes:  
 Ego sum, ego sum quae Domino canam,  
 psallam Domino Deo Israel.
- 4                   Domine, cum exires de Seir,  
                     et transires per regiones Edom,  
                     terra mota est,  
                     caelique ac nubes distillaverunt aquis.
- 5                   Montes fluxerunt a facie Domini,  
                     et Sinai a facie Domini Dei Israel.
- 6                   In diebus Samgar, filii Anath,  
                     in diebus Jahel, quieverunt semitae;  
                     et qui ingrediebantur per eas,  
                     ambulaverunt per calles devois.
- 7                   Cessaverunt fortes in Israel, et quieverunt,  
                     donec surgeret Debbora,  
                     surgeret mater in Israel.
- 8                   Nova bella elegit Dominus,  
                     et portas hostium ipse subvertit;  
                     clypeus et hasta si apparuerint  
                     in quadraginta millibus Israel.
- 9                   Cor meum diligit principes Israel.  
 Qui propria voluntate obtulistis vos discrimini,  
                     benedicite Domino.
- 10                  Qui ascenditis super nitentes asinos,  
                     et sedetis in iudicio,  
                     et ambulatis in via, loquimini.
- 11                  Ubi collisi sunt currus,  
                     et hostium suffocatus est exercitus,  
                     ibi narrentur justitiae Domini  
                     et clementia in fortes Israel.
- Tunc descendit populus Domini ad portas,  
                     et obtinuit principatum.
- 12                  Surge, surge, Debbora;  
                     surge, surge, et loquere canticum;  
 surge, Barac, et apprehende captivos tuos,  
                     fili Abinoem.
- 13                  Salvatae sunt reliquiae populi;  
                     Dominus in fortibus dimicavit.

- 14 Ex Ephraim delevit eos in Amalec,  
et post eum ex Benjamin in populos tuos, o Amalec;  
de Machir principes descenderunt,  
et de Zabulon qui exercitum ducerent ad bellandum.
- 15 Duces Issachar fuere cum Debbora,  
et Barac vestigia sunt secuti,  
qui quasi in praeceptis ac barathrum  
se discrimini dedit.  
Diviso contra se Ruben,  
magnanimorum reperta est contentio.
- 16 Quare habitas inter duos terminos,  
ut audias sibilos gregum?  
Diviso contra se Ruben,  
magnanimorum reperta est contentio.
- 17 Galaad trans Jordanem quiescebat,  
et Dan vacabat navibus;  
Aser habitabat in littore maris,  
et in portibus morabatur.
- 18 Zabulon vero et Nephthali  
obtulerunt animas suas morti  
in regione Merome.
- 19 Venerunt reges et pugnaverunt,  
pugnaverunt reges Chanaan in Thanach  
juxta aquas Mageddo,  
et tamen nihil tulere praedantes.
- 20 De caelo dimicatum est contra eos:  
stellae manentes in ordine et cursu suo,  
adversus Sisaram pugnaverunt.
- 21 Torrens Cison traxit cadavera eorum,  
torrens Cadumim, torrens Cison.  
Conculca, anima mea, robustos!
- 22 Ungulae equorum ceciderunt, fugientibus impetus,  
et per praeceptis ruentibus fortissimis hostium.
- 23 Maledicite terrae Meroz, dixit angelus Domini;  
maledicite habitatoribus ejus,  
quia non venerunt ad auxilium Domini,  
in adjutorium fortissimorum ejus.
- 24 Benedicta inter mulieres Jahel, uxor Haber, Cinaei,  
et benedicatur in tabernaculo suo.
- 25 Aquam petenti lac dedisti,  
et in phiala principum obtulisti butyrum.
- 26 Sinistram manum misit ad clavum,  
et dexteram ad fabrorum malleos,  
percussitque Sisaram,

- quaerens in capite vulneri locum,  
et tempus valide perforans.  
27 Inter pedes ejus ruit, deficit, et mortuus est;  
volvebatur ante pedes ejus.  
et jacebat exanimis et miserabilis.  
28 Per fenestram respiciens, ululabat mater ejus,  
et de coenaculo loquebatur:  
Cur moratur regredi currus ejus?  
Quare tardaverunt pedes quadrigarum illius?
- 29 Una sapientior ceteris uxoribus ejus,  
haec socruī verba respondit:  
30 Forsitan nunc dividit spolia,  
et pulcherrima feminarum eligitur ei;  
veste diversorum colorum Sisarae traduntur in praedam,  
et supellex varia ad ornanda colla congeritur.  
31 Sic pereant omnes inimici tui, Domine;  
qui autem diligunt te,  
sicut sol in ortu suo splendet, ita rutilent.  
32 Quievitque terra per quadraginta annos.

H. W. Hertzberg  
*Die Bücher Joshua, Richter, Ruth*  
 1953

- 1 Da sang Debora — auch Barak, Abinoams Sohn — zu jener Zeit also:  
 2 Daß Führer führten in Israel,  
     das Volk sich willig erwies: Preiset Jahwe!  
 3 HÖrt es, ihr Könige,  
     horcht auf, ihr Fürsten:  
 Ich will (dem) Jahwe,  
     ich will (ihm) singen,  
 will spielen Jahwe,  
     Israel Gott!  
 4 Jahwe, da du auszogst von Seir,  
     einerschrittst von Edoms Gefild,  
 da bebte die Erde, die Himmel troffen,  
     ja die Wolken troffen von Wasser,  
 5 die Berge zerrannen vor Jahwe — das ist der Sinai —,  
     vor Jahwe, Israels Gott.  
 6 In Samgaras Tagen, des Anath-Sohns,  
     in Jaels Tagen lagen still die ‚Karawanen‘;  
 die auf Wegen zu gehen hatten,  
     mußten krumme Pfade gehen.  
 7 Still wars bei den Bauren in Israel,  
     ‚alles Leben‘ lag still —  
 bis daß du aufstandest, Debora,  
     aufstandest als Mutter in Israel.  
 8 “Stumm waren die Krieger‘ Gottes,  
     ‚zu Ende‘ Der Kampf vor Den ‚Toren‘,  
 kein Schild zu sehen noch Lanze  
     bei vierzigtausend in Israel.  
 9 Den Gebietenden Israel (schlägt) mein Herz,  
     (und) die sich willing erwiesen im Volk: preiset Jahwe!  
 10 Die ihr reitet auf weißen Eselinnen,  
     die ihr sitzt auf Teppichen  
     und geht auf der Straße: bedenkt es wohl!  
 11 Dort, wo die Hirten (?) rufen  
     zwischen den Schöpfrinnen,  
 dort besinge man Jahwes Heilstaten,  
     die Heilstaten an seinen Bauern (?) in Israel,”  
 12 Mach dich auf, mach dich auf, Debora!  
     Mach dich auf, mach dich auf (und) sage (dein) Lied!

- Erhebe dich, Barak,  
 und fang, ‚die dich fingen‘,  
 du Sohn Abinoams!
- 13 Da ‚zog‘ herab, was entronnen war, zu (den) Edlen,  
 Jahwes Bolk ‚zog‘ herab zu ‚ihm‘ unter den Helden.
- 14 Von Ephraim ‚zogen sie zu Tal‘,  
 Benjamin dir nach unter deinen Scharen,  
 von Makir zogen Gebieter herab,  
 und von Sebulon, die den Amtmannsstab tragen.
- 15 Und ‚die‘ Fürsten in Issakar (ziehen) mit Debora,  
 wie Issakar, so ‚Naphthali mit‘ Barak,  
 zu Tal gelassen, hinter ihm drein.
- An Rubens Bächen  
 sind groß die ‚Beratungen‘.
- 16 Was sitzt du da zwischen den Hirten  
 zu hören bei den Herden das Flöten?  
 ‚An‘ Rubens Bächen  
 sind groß die Beratungen!
- 17 Gilead bleibt jenseits des Jordan wohnen,  
 und warum geht Dan auf Schiffe hinaus?  
 Asser blieb sitzen am Ufer der Meere  
 und wohnt an seinen Buchten.
- 18 Sebulon ist ein Volk voller Todesverachtung,  
 und Naphthai: auf hohem Gefild!
- 19 Es kamen Könige, kämpften,  
 Damals kämpften Kanaans Könige,  
 zu Thaanak an Den Wassern Megiddos —  
 Beute an Silber holten sie nicht.
- 20 Vom Himmel her kämpften die Sterne,  
 von ihren Bahnen sie kämpften mit Sisera.
- 21 Der Bach Kischon riß sie hinweg,  
 der uralte Bach, der BachKischon —  
 tritt auf, meine Seele, mit Macht!
- 22 Da stampften die hufe ‚der Rosse‘  
 Galopp, Galopp seiner Renner!
- 23 Fluchet Meros, sprach Jahwes Engel,  
 mit Flüchen fluchet seinen Bewohnern!  
 Denn nicht sind sie Jahwe zur Hife gekommen,  
 Jahwe zu Hife unter den Helden.
- 24 Gesegnet sei Jael unter den Weibern  
 — das Weib Chebers, des Keniters -  
 vor den Weibern im Zelt sei sie gesegnet!

- 25 Um Wafser bat er, Milch aber gab sie,  
in der Schale der Edlen brachte sie Rahm.
- 26 Ihre hand, sie ‚streckt sie‘ aus nach dem Pflock,  
ihre Rechte nach dem Arbeitshammer,  
zerhämmerte — Sisera —, zerschlug sein Haupt,  
zerschmettert‘, Durchbohrt‘ ihm die Schläfe.
- 27 Ihr zu Füßen sank er, fiel (und) lag da,  
ihr zu Füßen sank er (und) fiel;  
da, wo er hinsank,  
da lag er, erschlagen.
- 28 Durch das Fenster beugt‘ sich, er spähte‘  
Siseras Mutter durchs Gitterwerk:  
"Warum zögert sein Wagen zu kommen,  
warum verzieht seiner Kampfwagen Rollen?"
- 29 Die ‚Klügste‘ ihrer Fürstinnen gibt ihr Antwort,  
und sie wiederholt sich selbst deren Worte:
- 30 "Gewiss, sie finden, sie teilen Beute,  
ein, zwei Weiber für jeden Mann,  
Beute an Tüchern für Sisera,  
Beute an Tüchern, buntgewirkt,  
ein, zwei bunte Tücher  
als Beute für ‚meinen hals‘."
- 31 Mögen so umkommen all Deine Feinde, Jahwe!  
Aber, die ihn lieben, mögen sein,  
wie die Sonne aufgeht in ihrer Krast!  
Da hatte das Land 40 Jahre Ruhe.

Translation of R. G. Boling  
1975  
*Judges* (The Anchor Bible 6A)

1 Deborah and Baraq ben Abinoam sang on that day!

(Part I)

2 When they cast off restraint in Israel  
When the troops presented themselves—bless Yahweh!

3 Hear, O kings  
Listen, O princes  
I to Yahweh  
I, I will sing  
I will chant to Yahweh  
God of Israel!

4 O Yahweh, when you came out from Seir  
When you marched here from Edom's land  
Earth quaked  
With thunder the skies rained  
With thunder the clouds rained water!

5 Mountains shook  
Before Yahweh, The One of Sinai  
Before Yahweh, God of Israel!

6 In the days of Shamgar the Anathite  
In the days of Jael, they ceased  
The caravans and the wayfaring men  
Who travelled the winding roads.

7 The warriors grew plump  
In Israel they grew plump again  
Because you arose, O Deborah  
Because you arose, a mother in Israel!

8 One chose new gods  
Then they fought in the gates.  
Neither shield or spear was to be seen  
Among the forty contingents in Israel.

9 My heart is with the commanders of Israel  
Those presenting themselves with the troops—Bless Yahweh!

(Part II)

10 O riders on tawny she-donkeys  
O you who sit on the judgment seat  
O wayfarers on the road

11 Attend to the sound of cymbals  
Between watering troughs  
There let them retell Yahweh's victories

Victories by his own prowess in Israel!  
Then Yahweh's troops went down to the gates

- 12 Awake, Awake, Deborah  
Awake, Awake. Sing a song!  
Arise, Baraq  
Take prisoners  
O ben Abinoam!
- 12 Then the survivors went down to the nobles  
Yahweh's troops went down against the knights for me!

## (Part III)

- 14 Those of Ephraim have taken root in Amaleq  
Behind you, Benjamin, with your troops.  
From Machir commanders came down  
From Zebulun, bearers of the ruler's scepter.
- 15 Issachar's captains were with Deborah  
Issachar was Baraq's support  
Dispatched to the plain, under his command.  
In Reuben's divisions are command-minded chieftains.
- 16 Why then do you squat between hearths  
Harking to pastoral pipings?  
To Reuben's divisions belong fainthearted chieftains!

## (Part IV)

- 17 Gilead bivouacked beyond Jordan  
Why did Dan take service on ships?  
Asher squatted at the seashore  
He bivouacked by his harbors!
- 18 Zebulun is a troop  
That scorned death  
Naphtali too  
On the heights of the plain!
- 19 The kings came and fought  
Then fought the kings of Canaan  
At Taanach by Megiddo's stream  
Silver booty they did not take.  
From the heavens fought the stars  
From their courses they fought against Sisera!

## (Part V)

- 21 The Wadi Qishon swept them away  
The Wadi overwhelmed them—the Wadi Qishon  
(You shall trample the throat of the mighty).
- 22 Then the horses' hoofs pounded  
His stallions racing, racing!

## (Part VI)

- 23 “Oh, curse Meroz!” says the divine adviser  
 “Utterly curse its inhabitants!”  
 For they did not come to Yahweh’s aid  
 To Yahweh’s aid, with knights.

## (Part VII)

- 24 Most blessed among women is Jael  
 The wife of Heber the Qenite  
 Among women in tents she’s most blessed!
- 25 Water he asked  
 Milk she gave  
 In a lordly bowl  
 She brought cream.
- 26 With her left hand she reached for a tent peg  
 With her right hand for the workman’s mallet  
 She pounded Sisera  
 She broke his head  
 She struck and pierced his neck!
- 27 At her feet he slumped. He fell. He sprawled.  
 At her feet he slumped. He fell.  
 At the place where he slumped, there he fell. Slain!

## (Part VIII)

- 28 From the window she looked down and wailed  
 Sisera’s mother, that is, from the lattice:  
 Why tarries  
 His chariot’s arrival?  
 Why so late  
 The sound of his chariotry?
- 29 The wisest of her captains’ ladies answers her  
 Indeed, she returns her own words to her:
- 30 Are they not looting  
 Dividing the spoil?  
 One or two girls for each man  
 Spoil of dyed cloth for Sisera  
 Spoil of dyed cloth, embroidered  
 Two pieces of dyed embroidery  
 For the neck of the spoiler.

## (Part IX)

- 31 Thus may they perish  
 All enemies of Yahweh!  
 Let his lovers be  
 Like the sunburst in full strength!  
 And the land was calm, for forty years.

Translation of D. K. Stuart  
1976  
*Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*

## Part I

1. . . . .
2. When locks were long in Israel,  
When volunteered the people, the consecrated of Yahweh.
3. Hear, O Kings,  
Give ear, O princes,  
I to Yahweh,  
Even I will sing.  
I will sing to Yahweh  
The God of Israel.
4. Yahweh, when you went forth from Seir,  
When you marched from Edom's field,  
The earth trembled,  
Even the heavens dripped;  
The clouds dripped,
5. The mountains quaked  
Before Yahweh  
Before the One of Sinai,  
Before Yahweh  
The God of Israel.
6. In the days of Shamgar,  
In the days of Jael,  
The travellers ceased,  
Those who walk the roads,  
The twisting paths.
7. The peasantry ceased in Israel,  
It ceased until you arose, Deborah,  
Until you arose, a mother in Israel.
8. They chose new chiefs  
Indeed they took for themselves champions.  
Was not spear and shield to be seen  
Among forty thousand in Israel?
9. My heart is with the commanders of Israel  
Who volunteered, the consecrated of Yahweh,

10. Riding upon tawny asses.  
 10 b, c. ....  
 11. ....  
 12. Awake, awake, Deborah  
 Awake, utter a song!  
 Arise, Barak, and capture your captors, son of Abinoam!  
 13. Then bring them down, O mighty ones,  
 Let the host of Yahweh come down, O warriors!

## Part II

14. From Ephraim bring them down into the valley;  
 After you, Benjamin, among your kinsmen.  
 From Machir descended the commanders,  
 From Zebulun those who wield the marshal's staff.  
 15. The princes of Issachar were with Deborah,  
 And Issachar, faithful to Barak,  
 In the valley rushed at his heels.  
 In the clans of Reuben  
 Great are the commanders.  
 16. Indeed you dwell among the sheepfolds  
 To hear the piping of the flocks.  
 .....  
 17. Gilead tents across the Jordan;  
 Dan indeed sojourns on ships.  
 Asher dwells at the seashore  
 And by its inlets he encamps.  
 18. Zebulun is a people who scorned its life to die;  
 Naphtali mounted the heights of the field.

## Part III

19. The kings came, they fought,  
 They fought, the kings of Canaan,  
 At Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo.  
 Spoil of silver they did not take,  
 .....  
 20. From the heavens the stars fought,  
 From their stations, with Sisera.  
 21. Wadi Kishon swept them away,  
 Wadi Kishon overwhelmed them.  
 His mighty chargers pounded

22. Yes, hammered the hoofs of the horses,  
Raced chariot-races his stallions.  
23. Bitterly curse Meroz  
Bitterly curse her inhabitant [*sic*]

For they came not to Yahweh's aid,  
To Yahweh's aid with warriors.

Part IV

24. Blessed above women be Jael,  
Above women of the tent let her be blessed.  
25. Water he asked,  
Milk she gave;  
In a majestic bowl  
She brought ghee.  
26. Her hand to a tent-pin she put,  
Her right hand to a workmen's wedge.  
She smote Sisera,  
She smashed his head;

She struck Sisera,  
She pierced his temple.

27. At her feet he sank, he lay down flat,  
At her feet he sank, he fell down.  
There he sank, he fell down slain.

Part V

28. Through a window peered Sisera's mother,  
Sisera's mother cried out through a lattice.  
Why tarries  
His chariotry in coming?  
Why delay  
The hoofs of his chariot-(horses)?  
29. The wisest of her ladies answers her,  
Yes, she returns words to her.  
30. Have they not found,  
Divided the booty?  
A maid, or two for each warrior.  
Booty of dyed cloth for Sisera,  
Booty of dyed clothes, embroidered,  
A dyed cloth, embroidered, for the neck.

Translation of M. D. Coogan  
1978  
*A Structural and Literary Analysis  
of the Song of Deborah*

I            A

In the very beginning  
in Israel  
when the people volunteered—  
bless Yahweh!  
Listen, kings,  
give ear, princes,  
I to Yahweh,  
I will sing,  
I will chant to Yahweh  
God of Israel.  
Yahweh, when you set out from Seir,  
when you marched from the steppe of Edom,  
the earth quaked,  
and the heavens shook,  
and the clouds shook water;  
the mountains shuddered  
before Yahweh, the one of Sinai  
before Yahweh, the God of Israel.

B

In the days of Shamgar, son of Anat,  
in the days of Jael—they ceased:  
the caravans and those who go on paths  
went on winding tracks.  
Warriors ceased,  
in Israel they ceased—  
until you arose, Deborah,  
'til you arose, a mother in Israel.  
New gods were chosen,  
then they fought at the gates:  
neither shield was to be seen nor spear  
among forty thousand in Israel.

## II

My heart is with the officers of Israel,  
 the volunteers among the people—  
 bless Yahweh!  
 You riders on tawny asses—  
 you who sit over Midian  
 and you who go on the road—  
 sing out!  
 At the sound of the cymbals,  
     between the water holes,  
 there they recited the victories of Yahweh,  
 the victories of his warriors in Israel.  
 Then the people of Yahweh  
     went down to the gates.  
 “Awake, awake, Deborah,  
 awake, awake, sing a song!”  
 “Arise, Barak,  
 and capture your captives,  
 son of Abinoam!”  
 Then the fugitive ruled the mighty ones,  
 the people of Yahweh ruled the warriors.

## III

From Ephraim, who took root in Amalek,  
 “after you, Benjamin, with your people,”  
 from Machir, the officers went down,  
 and from Zebulon,  
     leading with a marshal’s baton.  
 And the princes in Issachar were with Deborah,  
 Issachar too was loyal to Barak:  
 in the valley they were sent at his feet.  
 In the divisions of Reuben,  
     great were the searchings of heart.  
 “Why do you sit among the camp fires,  
 listening to the pipings for the flocks?”  
 In the divisions of Reuben,  
     great were the scrutinies of heart.  
 Gilead stayed camped across the Jordan,  
 and Dan: why did he serve on ships?  
 Asher lived on the seacoast,  
 and on its inlets he stayed camped.  
 Zebulon was a people which scorned  
     its life to the death,  
 and Naphtali, on the heights of the steppe.

## IV

The kings came, they fought;  
then fought the kings of Canaan  
at Taanach by the waters of Megiddo,  
(but) booty of silver they did not take.  
From the heavens the stars fought,  
from the their highways they fought with Sisera.

Wadi Qishon swept them away,  
that ancient wadi, Wadi Qishon;  
you shall trample the throat of the mighty.  
Then the hooves of his horses hammered:  
the galloping, the galloping of his stallions!  
“Curse Meroz”  
said the messenger of Yahweh,  
“curse, curse her inhabitants!  
For they did not come to the help of Yahweh,  
to the help of Yahweh with warriors.”

## V            A

Blessed among women be Jael,  
wife of Heber the Kenite,  
among women in the tent may she be blessed.  
He asked for water,  
she gave him milk;  
in a magnificent bowl  
she brought yogurt.  
She stretched her hand to the tent peg,  
her right hand to the workmen’s hammer,  
and she hammered Sisera,  
she smashed his head,  
and she struck and pierced his temple.  
Between her feet he collapsed, he fell, he lay;  
between her feet he collapsed, he fell;  
in the place he collapsed, there he fell in ruins.

B

Through the window  
she peered and cried out,  
the mother of Sisera  
through the shutter:  
“Why is his chariot late in coming?  
Why do the hooves of his chariotry delay?”  
The wisest of her ladies answered her,  
she responded to her words:  
“Surely they have found and are sharing the  
plunder:  
one girl, two girls for each warrior,  
plunder of dyed cloth for Sisera,  
plunder of dyed cloth embroidered,  
two dyed embroidered cloths for the neck  
of the plunderer.”

Translation of A. and S. Fishelis  
1979

*Judges: A New English Translation*

1. Now Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam sang on that day, saying.
2. “When breaches are made in Israel, when the people offer themselves willingly, bless the Lord.
3. Hear, O kings, give ear, O princes; I, to the Lord I shall sing, I shall sing to the Lord, the God of Israel.
4. Lord, when You went forth out of Seir, when You marched out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, the heavens also dripped; also the clouds dripped water.
5. The mountains melted at the presence of the Lord, this (was at) Sinai, because of the presence of the Lord, the God of Israel.
6. In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, caravans ceased, and travellers walked on crooked paths.
7. The open cities ceased, in Israel they ceased, until I Deborah arose; I arose as a mother in Israel.
8. When they chose new gods, then there was war in the cities; was there seen a shield or a spear (when the) forty thousand (went against) Israel?
9. My heart is toward the lawgivers of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people (saying,) ‘Bless the Lord.’
10. The riders of white donkeys, those that sit in judgment, and those that walk on the path, tell of it.
11. Instead of the noise of adversaries, between the places of drawing water, there they will tell the righteous acts of the Lord, the righteous acts of restoring open cities in Israel. Then the people of the Lord went down to the cities.
12. Praise! Praise! Deborah. Praise! Praise! Utter a song.  
Arise Barak, and capture your captives, son of Abinoam.
13. Then ruled a remnant among the mighty of the nations; the Lord dominated the strong for me.
14. Out of Ephraim, whose root was against Amalek; after you (will be) Benjamin with your abaters; out of Machir came down officers, and out of Zebulun they that handle the pen of the scribe.
15. And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah, as was Issachar with Barak; into the valley they rushed forth with their feet. (But) among the divisions of Reuben, (there were) great resolves of heart.

16. Why do you sit between the borders, to hear the bleatings of the flocks?  
At the divisions of Reuben, (there are) great searchings of heart.
17. Gilead abides beyond the Jordan; and Dan, why does he gather into  
ships? Asher dwelt at the shore of the seas, and by his breaches he  
abides.
18. Zebulun is a people that jeopardized their lives to die, as did Naphtali,  
upon the high places of the field.
19. The kings came and fought; then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach  
by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money.
20. From heaven they fought; the stars from their courses fought against  
Sisera.
21. The brook Kishon swept them away, that ancient brook, the brook  
Kishon; tread down, O my soul, (their) strength.
22. Then were pounded the heels of the horses by reason of the prancings,  
the prancings of their mighty ones.
23. ‘Curse you Meroz,’ said the messenger of the Lord, ‘curse you bitterly  
(you) inhabitants thereof,’ because they came not to the aid of the Lord,  
to the aid of the Lord against the mighty.
24. Blessed above women shall Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, be; above  
women in the tent shall she be blessed.
25. Water he requested, (but) milk she gave him; in a lordly bowl she  
brought him cream.
26. She put forth her hand to the pin, and her right hand to strike the weary;  
she struck Sisera, pierced his head, and wounded and penetrated his  
temple.
27. At her feet he sank, fell, lay; at her feet he sank (and) fell; where he  
sank, there he fell down dead.
28. Through the window the mother of Sisera looked forth, and peered  
through the window; why is his chariot late in coming? Why tarry the  
strides of his chariots?
29. The wisest of her princesses answer her, she too returns answers to  
herself.
30. Are they not finding (and) dividing the spoils? A damsel, two damsels to  
every man; a spoil of dyed garments to Sisera, a spoil of dyed garments  
of embroidery; dyed garments of embroidery for the neck of the spoiler.
31. So may perish all Your enemies, O Lord; but they that love Him (should  
be) as the sun when he goes forth in his might.”

And the land rested forty years.

Translation of M. O'Connor  
1980  
*Hebrew Verse Structure*

- 2a When locks were long, in Israel,  
2b When people vowed themselves, they blessed Yahweh.  
3a Listen, kings.  
3b Give ear, potentates.  
3c I will sing of Yahweh,  
3d I will sing.  
3e I will chant of Yahweh, Israel's god.  
4a Yahweh, when you emerged from Seir,  
4b When you marched from the field of Edom,  
4c Earth shook.  
4d The clouds of heaven dripped.  
4e The clouds of heaven dripped down water.  
5a Hills shuddered  
5b Before Yahweh of Sinai,  
5c Before Yahweh, Israel's god.  
6a In the days of Shamgar, Anat's child,  
6b In the days of Yael, caravan routes prospered.  
6c Path followers followed circuitous caravan routes.  
7a Warriors prospered in Israel,  
7b They prospered on booty,  
7c When you arose, Deborah,  
7d When you arose as a mother, in Israel.  
8a He chose new gods.  
8b He served them food.  
8c Neither shield nor sword was seen  
8d In the forty companies of Israel.  
9a My heart belongs to Israel's leaders.  
9b Those who volunteer themselves for the people bless Yahweh.  
10a You who ride on tawny she-asses.  
10b You who rule over the Madon realm.  
10c You who travel through the Madon realm.  
11a Let the voices of recruiters resound amid waterholes.  
11b There let them repeat the victories of Yahweh's warriors,  
11c The victories of Yahweh's warriors on behalf of Israel.  
11d The army of Yahweh went down to the gates.

- 12a Get up, get up, Deborah.  
 12b Get up, get up.  
 12c Sing the song.  
 12d Arise, Baraq, Abinoam's child.  
 12e Capture your captives, Baraq, Abinoam's child.  
 13a The army of Yahweh went down to Sarid, against the mighty.  
 13b It went down against the strong for me.  
 14a From Ephraim they root them out of Amaleq.  
 14b Benjamin delays you among the people.  
 14c Out of Machir, commanders go down.  
 14d Those who march with scribal rod are from Zebulon.  
 15a The princes are in Issachar with Deborah.  
 15b Issachar is Baraq's support.  
 15c It is sent through the valley at his feet.  
 15d In Reuben's divisions, great are the stouthearted.  
 16a Why do you sit among hearths  
 16b Listening to herds hissing?  
 16c Great are the heartsearchings about Reuben's divisions.  
 17a Gilead dwells on the Jordan's far shore.  
 17b Dan: why does he dwell on shipboard?  
 17c Asher lives on the seashore.  
 17d He encamps by his harbors.  
 18a Zebulon is a people of scorn.  
 18b His appetite for death.  
 18c Naphtali surmounts the highest hills.  
 19a The kings came. They fought.  
 19b The kings of Canaan fought  
 19c In Taanach, near Megiddo Waters.  
 19d They did not take silver booty.  
 20a The stars fought from their heavenly paths.  
 20b They fought with Sisera from their heavenly paths.  
 21a Wadi Qishon swept them away.  
 21b Wadi Qishon is an ancient wadi.  
 21c O my soul, tread down the mighty.  
 22a The horses' heels hammered.  
 22b The horses' heels thundered.  
 22c His stallions thundered.  
 23a Curse Meroz,  
 23b The messenger of Yahweh says,  
 23c Curse vehemently her inhabitants.  
 23d They did not come to Yahweh's help,  
 23e To Yahweh's help, against the warriors.

- 24a Most blessed among women is Yael,  
24b The wife of the Qenite Heber.  
24c She is most blessed among women in the tent.  
25a He asks for water.  
25b She gives milk in a bowl.  
25c She brings the mighty one butter.  
26a She extends her left hand to the tent-peg.  
26b She extends her right hand to the workers' mallet.  
26c She pounds Sisera's skull.  
26d She smashes Sisera's skull.  
26e She smashes and pierces his temple.  
27a Between her legs he crouches.  
27b He falls. He lies prone.  
27c Between her legs he crouches. He falls.  
27d In that place he crouches.  
27e There the oppressed one falls.  
28a Through the window lattice she looks out.  
28b Sisera's mother wails through the window lattice.  
28c Why does his chariot tarry in coming?  
28d Why does his chariotry's clatter delay?  
29a She gives her words back to her:  
30a Haven't they found, aren't they dividing the spoil?  
30b One woman, or two, goes for each man.  
30c Booty of dyed stuff goes to Sisera.  
30d The booty of dyed stuff is embroidered.  
30e The booty of embroidered stuff belongs on plunderers' necks.  
31a Thus perish all your enemies, Yahweh.  
31b Those who love him are like sunrise in his strength.

D. J. Harrington's Translation of  
Judges 5 in Targum Jonathan  
1986<sup>276</sup>

1. *And Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam gave praise in that time, saying:* 2. "When the house of Israel rebelled against the Law, the nations came upon them and banished them from their cities. And when they turned to do the Law, they were victorious over their enemies; they drove them out from upon the territory of the land of *Israel* rebelled against the Law, the nations came upon them and banished them from their cities. And when they turned to do the Law, they were victorious over their enemies; they drove them out from upon the territory of the land of Israel. Therefore on account of the punishment of the breaking of Sisera and his army, and on account of the sign and the redemption that was worked for Israel, that the sages returned to sit in the synagogues at the head of the exiles and to teach the people the words of the Law—therefore *bless* and give thanks before *the Lord*. 3. *Hear, kings; pay attention, princes.* Deborah speaks in prophecy before the Lord: "I am praising, giving thanks, and blessing before *the Lord the God of Israel*. 4. Your Law that you gave to them, to Israel, when they transgress it, the nations have power over them; and when they turn to it, they are victorious over their enemies. O Lord, on the day when you revealed yourself so as to teach *from Seir*, when you showed forth your glory upon the territories of *Edom, the earth shook, also the heavens bent down, also the clouds spread rain*. 5. *The mountains shook from before the Lord. This Sinai* was shaken up; its smoke went up like the smoke of the furnace because *the Lord the God of Israel* was revealed upon it.

6. "When they sinned *in the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, they ceased* traveling on roads and those who were walking on pathways turned to go in hidden roads. 7. The ruin of the unwalled cities where they were dwelling in the land of *Israel* was captured, and their inhabitants were carried off *until* I was commissioned—I Deborah—I was commissioned to prophesy in the midst of the house of *Israel*. 8. When the house of Israel *chose* to serve *new* idols, which were made nearby, with which their fathers had not occupied themselves, the nations came against them and drove them from their cities. And whenever they returned to the Law, they could not overpower them, so that when the enemy came against them (and with him were men holding shields and spears) with *forty-thousand* army-chiefs, they were not able to wage battle in Israel.'

9. "Deborah speaks in prophecy: I was sent to give praise to the teachers of Israel who, when that affliction happened, did not cease from studying in the Law; and who, whenever it was proper for them, were sitting in the synagogues at the head of the exiles and were teaching the people the words of the Law and blessing and giving thanks before God. 10. Those who were ceasing their labors, riding upon asses that were saddled with kinds of embroideries, and were going in all the territory of the land of Israel, and were being chosen to sit for judgment, they will be going on their ways and talking about the wonders that were done for them. 11. From the place where they were assaulting them and

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<sup>276</sup> Based on the text in A. Sperber's *The Bible in Aramaic: Volume II: The Former Prophets according to Targum Jonathan* (Leiden: Brill, 1959).

taking what was in their hands-the place of seats of the toll-collectors and the residence of bandits, in back of the water trough-there they will give thanks on account of the righteousness of the Lord, on account of the righteousness of him who was dwelling in the unwalled cities in the land of Israel. Then they went down from the strong fortresses to dwell in the unwalled cities-the people of the Lord. 12. Give praise, give praise, Deborah, give praise, and give thanks; speak praise. Arise, Barak, and capture your captives, son of Abinoam. 13. Then one from the armies of Israel went down and shattered the strength of the warriors of the nations. Behold this was not from might, but rather the Lord shattered before his people the strength of the warriors of their enemies.

14. From those of the house of Ephraim, there arose Joshua the son of Nun; he first waged battle against those of the house of Amalek. After him there arose King Saul from those of the house of Benjamin; he killed those of the house of Amalek and waged battle against the rest of the nations. From those of the house of Machir, those who were marked went down in battle; and from the tribe of Zebulun they were writing with the pen of a scribe.

15. And the captains of Issachar were listening to the words of Deborah, and the rest of the tribe of Issachar were serving before Barak, being sent forth in the cities of the plain to every place where there was need in his sending them forth. In the clans of Reuben there were many crafty of heart. 16. Why did you sit apart from the armies of war, to sit between the borders, to hear good news, to know bad news? My army is victorious with her. Was it right for you to do (so), you of the house of Reuben? Did you not know that before me the thoughts of the heart are revealed? 17. Those of the house of Gilead camped out across the Jordan. And those of the house of Dan passed over, crossed the Jordan, put their goods in ships. Those of the house of Asher camped out on the shore of the seas; the cities of the nations that they destroyed-they turned, built them, and dwelt in them. 18. Those of the house of Zebulun opposite to the nations that blasphemed-they handed over their life to killing. They and those of the house of Naphtali-all the inhabitants of the land gave them praise.

19. The kings came; they waged battle. Then they fought the kings of Megiddo; wealth of silver they did not take. 20. From the heavens the battle was waged with them; from the place where the stars go forth, from the courses of their movements, there the battle was waged with Sisera. 21. The Wadi Kishon shattered them, the wadi in which signs and mighty acts were done for Israel from of old-that Wadi Kishon-there my soul crushed their warriors dead by force.

22. Then the hoofs of their horses slipped, the galloping that gallops before the chariots of his warriors. 23. "Curse Meroz," said the prophet of the Lord. "Curse, and shatter its inhabitants, for they did not come to the aid of the people of the Lord, to the aid of the people of the Lord, when it waged battle with warriors."

24. May Jael the wife of Heber the Shalmaite be blessed with the blessing of good women, may she be blessed like one of the women who serve in the houses of study. He asked her for water; she gave him milk to drink; to find out if his pleasure was in the bowls of warriors, she brought before him cream-cheese. 26. She reached out her hand for the tent-peg, and her right hand for the

hammer to shatter wicked men and oppressors. She struck it down into Sisera, she shattered his head; she crushed his brain; she made it pass through in his temple. 27. Between her feet he collapsed, he fell, he lay down. Between her feet he collapsed, he fell. In the place where he collapsed, there Sisera fell, plundered.

28. From the window the mother of Sisera looked out and was gazing from between the laths. She was saying: "Why are the chariots of my son slow to come? Why are the runners who are bringing to me the letter of victories detained?" 29. The wisest of her chambermaids were answering her. Even she according to her wisdom was answering and saying to her: 30. "Are they not dividing from what they are finding, giving as spoil a man and his household to each and every one? Much spoil before Sisera, spoil of dyed embroidered cloth upon his neck, rich possessions, and delightful things before his warriors who despoiled."

31. Like Sisera, so may all the haters of your people perish, Lord; and may his mercies be ready to give light with the light of his splendor 343 times over, like the rising of the sun in its might. And the land of Israel was at rest forty years.

Translation of J. Gray (partial)  
1988  
"Israel in the Song of Deborah"

- 5:1  
5:2 Because the people of Israel regained liberty, (Soggin)  
Because of the total commitment in Israel. (Craigie)
- 5:3  
5:4a  
5:4b The earth quaked,  
Yea, the sky was laden with water,  
Yea, the clouds dripped water,
- 5:5 The mountains were convulsed  
Before Yahweh, Lord of Sinai,  
Before Yahweh, God of Israel.
- 5:6a From the days of Shamgar the son of Anath to that of Jael,  
  
(Weiser)
- 5:6b  
5:7  
5:8 They chose new gods,  
Gods which they had not known of old. (Weiser)
- 5:9 I noticed the leaders in Israel  
Who proved themselves nobles among the people.
- 5:10 [The gentle] who ride on tawny she-asses lay to heart;  
[The simple] who walk on the road meditate.
- 5:11 By the voices of those singing antiphonally at the watering-places  
Where they repeat in response  
Yahweh's acts of vindication,  
The vindication of His champions in Israel,  
Then let the people of Yahweh come down from the settlements.
- 5:12 Rouse thyself, rouse thyself, Deborah,  
Rouse thyself, rouse thyself, lead thy train of captives;  
Arise, Baraq and lead captive  
Those that would have taken thee captive, thou son of Abinoam.
- 5:13 Then down came Israel represented by the nobles,  
The people of Yahweh came down to Him in the person of the men of  
substance.
- 5:14 From Ephraim (came down) the princes among the people,  
After them Benjamin represented by their headmen;  
From Machir came down the directors,  
And from Zebulun those who hold the staff (of authority).

- 5:15 And the princesses of Issachar with Deborah,  
And Naphtali with their (famous) son Baraq;  
Swarmed after them into the valley.
- 5:16 Why did you sit between the converging fold-walls  
To listen for the whistling of the herdsmen?  
Among the clans of Reuben  
There were great heart-searchings
- 5:17 Gilead remained settled beyond Jordan,  
And Dan remained inactive;  
Asher stayed by the seashore  
And remained settled by his bights.
- 5:18 Zebulun was a folk which held their life cheaply, risking death,  
And Naphtali on the high places of the open country.
- 5:19
- 5:20 The stars in their courses fought with Sisera,  
The torrent of the Qishon headed him off.

Translation of B. Lindars  
1995  
*Judges 1–5*

5<sup>1</sup> Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abimoam on that day, as follows:

*The liturgical opening*

2 That the leaders took the lead in Israel  
that the people offered themselves for service.  
bless Yahweh!

3 Listen, you kings;  
give ear, you princes;  
I will to Yahweh,  
I will sing;  
I will chant to Yahweh  
the God of Israel.

4 Yahweh, when you came forth from Seir,  
when you marched from the steppe of Edom,  
the earth shook,  
yes, the heavens poured forth  
(yes, the clouds poured forth water).

5 Mountains quaked  
in the presence of Yahweh,  
(this means Sinai)  
in the presence of Yahweh  
the God of Israel.

*The Rise of Deborah*

6 In the days of Shamgar son of Anath,  
in the days of Jael,  
caravans ceased.

Travellers on the roads  
went circuitous ways.

7 Villagers were inactive,  
were inactive in Israel –  
until you, Deborah, arose,  
you arose, a mother in Israel.

8 God chooses new men;  
then the armed men of the cities came forth;  
though a shield was not found or a spear  
among forty thousand in Israel.

*A story to tell*

<sup>9</sup>My thoughts turn to the commanders of Israel,  
to the people who offered themselves for service:  
bless Yahweh!

<sup>10</sup>You who ride on tawny asses,  
sitting on saddle-cloths,  
and you who pass along the way, give praise!

<sup>11</sup>Amid the sound of the revellers  
at the watering places,  
there let them celebrate  
the victories of Yahweh,  
the victories of his villagers in Israel.

(Then down to the gates went the people of Yahweh.)

*Deborah's oracle*

<sup>12</sup>Rouse yourself, rouse yourself, Deborah!  
rouse yourself, rouse yourself,  
speak in song.

Rise up Barak,  
take hold of your captives,  
you son of Abinoam.

*The tribes who respond*

<sup>13</sup>Then down went the remnant like the mighty,  
the people of Yahweh got themselves down like heroes:

<sup>14</sup>from Ephraim  
went officers into the vale  
'After you, Benjamin, in your companies!';

from Machir  
commanders went down,  
and from Zebulun those who hold the musterer's staff;

<sup>15</sup>the leaders in Issachar were with Deborah;  
so Issachar, true to Barak,  
set out in the vale at his feet.

*The tribes who fail*

In the divisions of Reuben  
there were great searchings of heart.

<sup>16</sup>Why did you stay  
among the sheepfolds  
to listen to the whistling for the flocks?

(In the divisions of Reuben  
there were great searchings of heart.)

<sup>17</sup>Gilead remained  
 across the Jordan  
 and Dan – why  
 did he linger at the ships?  
 Asher stayed  
 at the shore of the seas,  
 and remained besides its harbours.

*Zebulun and Naphtali*

<sup>18</sup> Zebulun is an army which scorned  
 its life to death,  
 Naphtali also, on the heights of the open country.

*The battle*

<sup>19</sup> The kings came; they fought,  
 then fought the kings of Canaan  
 at Tanaach by the waters of Megiddo.  
 No profit of silver did they take!  
<sup>20</sup> From the heavens fought the stars,  
 from their pathways they fought against Sisera.  
<sup>21</sup> The torrent Kishon swept them away,  
 it forestalled them, the torrent Kishon.  
 (My soul, trample in strength!)  
<sup>22</sup> Then hammered the hooves of the horses  
 from the galloping, galloping of his stallions.

*Curse Meroz*

<sup>23</sup> Curse Meroz,  
 says (the angel of) Yahweh  
 curse most bitterly its inhabitants.  
 For they did not come  
 to the help of Yahweh,  
 the help of Yahweh alongside the heroes.

*Jael's deed*

<sup>24</sup> Let Jael be blessed above women  
 (the wife of Heber the Kenite),  
 above women of the tent let her be blessed.  
<sup>25</sup> He asked for water.  
 She gave him milk.  
 In a lordly dish  
 she offered him curds.  
<sup>26</sup> Her hand she reached out for the tent-peg,  
 her right hand for the labourer's hammer.

She hammered Sisera,  
    she crushed his head,  
    she shattered and pierced through his temple.  
<sup>27</sup> Between her feet  
    he collapsed, he fell, he lay,  
between her feet  
    he collapsed, he fell,  
where he collapsed,  
    there he fell slain.

*Sisera's mother*

<sup>28</sup> Through the window,  
    looked out and peered  
the mother of Sisera,  
    through the lattice:  
'Why so slow has been  
    his chariot to come?  
why so delayed have been  
    the hoofbeats of his chariots?'  
<sup>29</sup> The wisest of her ladies replies to her,  
    indeed she answers her words for herself:  
<sup>30</sup> Surely they have gained  
    and divided the spoil,  
one or two wenchies  
    for each of the men,  
spoil of gay fabrics,  
    for Sisera gay fabric,  
one or two brocade scarves  
    for his neck as spoil.

*Conclusion*

<sup>31</sup> So may all your enemies perish, Yahweh!  
    May your friends be as when the sun comes out in its strength.

The land was at peace for forty years.

A *targum* into Israeli Hebrew of  
McDaniel's translation "The Song of Deborah"  
(See above, pages 90–105.)  
2000

מבא בפרווה

4:23 אלוהים החליש באותו היום את יבין, מלך כנען, בפני הישראלים.  
4:24 ואומנם, ידם של הישראלים הלכה וחזקה על יבין, מלך כנען,  
עד אשר, לבסוף, השמידו את יבין, מלך כנען.

הקדמה שירית 5:1 – 2b, 5:6 – 7, 3:31

3:31 או הופיע שמגר בן ענת בתמונה!  
הוא היכה במעדר את שתי חבורות השודדים;  
הוא בוז מאות אנשים במוש שוורים.  
הוא מונה למנהיג, והוביל את ישראל לנצחונות!  
5:6 מימי שמגר בן ענת,  
מהימים שבם נהג לתקוף בהפתעה, שירות פסקו,  
והולכי דרך החלו ללכת בדרכי עקיפין  
הלוחמים נסתלקו, מישראל הם נעלמו.  
עד שעלתה דבורה, והפכה לאם בישראלם  
5:1 דבורה הצעידה באותו היום את ברק בן אבינועם,  
כשקראה הניבורה לישראל להראות גבורה,  
כשהצבא זומן (על ידה) היא אמרה.

דבורה קוראת לעם 5:2c – 4, 5:8 – 9

5:2c ברכו יי!  
5:3 שמעו מלכים, האוינו רוונים, אני לצד יי!  
5:4 אני, כן אני, אני אתקוף, אני אלחם לצד יי אלוהי ישראל!  
יי, כשצאת משעיר,  
כשצעדת מערבות אדום,  
הארץ רעדה ברעש, השמים קדרו ונפערו,  
והעננים המטירו גשמי עז.  
5:5 המים זרמו במורדות ההרים מטכחות יי,  
שהופיע בסיני, מטכחות יי, אלוהי.  
אלוהים יתן כוח (ללוחמים)

- 5:8 אלוהים יניס את המרונים.  
 כשהאמיצים ילחמו,  
 יכנס גם מגן וכידון  
 לשימוש בין ארבעים אלף ישראלים.  
 הענו לקריאה מנהיגי ישראל!  
 אחם המטיסים לצבא!  
 (וגם אתם) שנקראתם לצבא, ענו!  
 5:9d ברכו יי!
- הצעת הכוחות 5:10–13
- 5:10 רוכבי אתונות צעירות,  
 היושבים על פרדים,  
 ואלה הולכים בדרכים,  
 5:11 מהרו לדרכי ההר,  
 הודריו למעברי ההרים  
 שבהם יתן נצחון יי,  
 נצחון שני לוחמי (אלוהים) בישראל,  
 כאשר סערות הגשם ירדו (בהוראת) אלוהים.
- 5:12 צבאות דבורה הכינו עצמו,  
 להשמיד את צבאות המתקיפים.  
 ברק הכין להתקפה,  
 בן אבינעם (הכין) לשבת אסירים.  
 5:13 כאשר התקדם מנהיג השירה להזעמת באצילים,  
 (וכאשר) ירדו צבאות אלוהים (מההרים),  
 (הם) מלווים בחיילי (צבאות אלוהים)!
- אסטרטגית המלחמה 5:14–16
- 5:14 כמה (לוחמים) מאפריים, ממהרים דרך עמלק, יתקפו מאחור.  
 בנימין יתקף ממקום סתר;  
 ממכיר מפקדים ירדו.  
 5:15 ומזבולון ייצאו הנושאים שרביש מנקה;  
 וקצינים מיששכר יחד עם דבורה.  
 ברק תיכנן את תבוסת (היריב) כשהוא נחבא במישור.  
 ראובן נשלח עם חיילי הרגלים לאורך הוודיות.  
 גד הצטרף אליהם.

- 5:16 בעלי האומץ הסתובבו וחכו בין הגיאיות  
להקשיב למודנבים בוודיות  
לנצח את המפקדים מוני הלב.
- התקפת הישראלים 5:17–18
- 5:17 גלעד בעבר הורדן נכנס לדריכות.  
דן באומץ לב התקף אוניות!  
אשר הסתער לחוף הים, ותקף את נמלי הים.
- 5:18 זבולון צלל, סיכן חייו,  
נפתלי תקף מרום.
- התקפת הגד של כנען 5:19
- 5:19 המלכים נאלצו לבוא. הם נלחמו.  
כשמלכי כנען נלחמו,  
מתעך לאורך מי מגידו,  
שלל כסף לא לקחו.
- מפלת הכנענים 5:20–23
- 5:20 הכוכבים נלחמו מהשמים,  
מעמדתם נלחמו הם בסיסרא.
- 5:21 נחל קישון סחף אותם,  
הנחל שזרם לכיוון הים  
נחל קישון שטף (אותם), הוא עלה על גדותיו,  
הם חיפשו מחסה.  
סוסיהם ומרכבותיהם נסוגו לגבהים  
גם מרכבתו, סוסו (של סיסרא).  
5:23 ננזר עליהם למות, נכנסו לבהלה  
יי שלח שבר ענן!  
רוכביהם נכנסו לבהלה מוחלטת!  
עשורי נצחון היו אלה שהתגיסו עם יי, "איש מלחמה,"  
עם יי, "איש מלחמה" וגבורי (צבאות)!

## רצח סיכרא 5:24–25, 5:27a, 5:26, 5:27b

- 5:24 המבורכת בין הנשים היא יעל, אשת חבר הקיני,  
בין הנשים באוהלים מבורכת מכולן.
- 5:25 מים הוא ביקש, חלב היא נתנה.  
בנביע הדור היא הגישה שמנת.
- 5:27a בין רגליה שתה, ונרדם.  
5:26 היא הושיטה ידה ליתר האוהל,  
יד ימנית (החזיקה) לפשיש פועלים.  
הלמה בסיכרא, מחצה ראשון,  
שברה וחצתה צוארו.
- 5:27b בין רגליה מעולף נפל;  
חסר תנועה וחסר כוח, שם הוא נפל מת.

## התדיגשות בחצר סיכרא 5:28–30

- 5:28 דרך החלון הציצה, אך דבר לא ראתה.  
אם סיכרא (עמדה על יד) החלון בקשה לדעת.  
”מדוע מתעכב רכבו להגיע?”  
”מדוע מתעכב קול מרכבותיו?”
- 5:29 החכמות, גבירותיה נחשו  
אמנם, מנידת) העתידות שלה דווחה לה.
- 5:30 ”המנצחים חצו (המים).  
הם מחלקים שלל  
נערה א' שתיים לראש הגבר,  
שלל מלבושים צבעוניים לסיכרא,  
שלל טובי הבגדים,  
לבש רקמה א' שניים,  
כסודרים לבעלי השלל.”

## סיום שירית 5:31a

לכן כל אויבי יי יאבדו!  
ואוהביו יהיו כשמש הוורחת,  
מפני כוח יי (צבאות).

## סיום פרוזה 5:31b

- 5:31b והאריץ שקמה ארבעים שנה.