The Song of Deborah  
Judges 5:2–31  
New King James Version  
David R. Erb, 2016

“When leaders lead...”

When leaders lead in Israel, *  
When the people willingly offer themselves, Bless the LORD!

Hear, O kings! Give ear, O princes! *  
I, even I, will sing to the LORD;

I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.

When leaders lead in Israel, *  
When the people willingly offer themselves, Bless the LORD!

Hear, O kings! Give ear, O princes! *  
I, even I, will sing to the LORD;

I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.

LORD, when You went out from Seir,  
When You marched from the field of Edom, *  
The earth trembled and the heavens poured,  
The clouds also poured water;

The mountains gushed before the LORD, *  
This Sinai, before the LORD God of Israel.

In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath,  
In the days of Jael, *  
The highways were deserted,  
The travelers walked along the byways.

Village life ceased, it ceased in Israel, *  
Until I, Deborah, arose,  
Arose a mother in Israel.

They chose new gods;  
Then there was war in the gates; *  
Not a shield or spear was seen  
Among forty thousand in Israel.

My heart is with the rulers of Israel *  
Who offered themselves willingly with the people.  
Bless the LORD!

R. When leaders lead...
“Speak, you who ride / on white donkeys, *
Who sit in judges’ attire,
And / who walk along the road.

Far from the noise / of the archers, *
Among the / watering places,
There they shall recount the righteous acts of the LORD,
The righteous acts for His villagers / -ers in Israel; *
Then the people of the LORD / shall go down to the gates.

“Awake, awake, Deborah!
Awake, awake, / sing a song! *
Arise, Barak, and lead your captives away,
O son / of Abinoam!

R. When leaders lead...

Then the survivors came down,
The people against the nobles; *
The LORD came down for me / against the mighty.

From Ephraim were those whose roots / were in Amalek. *
After you, Benjamin, with your peoples,
From Machir rulers came down,
And from Zebulun those who / bear the recruiter’s staff.

And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah;
As Issachar, so was Barak
Sent into the valley under / his command; *
Among the divisions of Reuben
There / were great resolves of heart.

Why did you sit among the sheepfolds,
To hear the pipings / for the flocks? *
The divisions of Reuben / -ben have great searchings of heart.

Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan,
And why did Dan re- / main on ships? *
Asher continued at the seashore,
And / stayed by his inlets.

Zebulun is a people who jeopardized their lives / to the point of death, *
Naphtali also, on the / heights of the battlefield.

R. When leaders lead...
The Song of Deborah, cont’d

“Heart, O kings! Give ear, O princes! I, even I, will sing to the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.

“Hear, O kings! Give ear, O princes! I, even I, will sing to the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.

When leaders lead in Israel, When the people willingly offer themselves, Bless the LORD!}

R. When leaders lead...
“Most blessed among women is Jael,
The wife of Heber the Kenite; *
Blessed is she among women in tents.

He asked for water, she gave milk; *
She brought out cream in a lordly bowl.

She stretched her hand to the tent peg,
Her right hand to the workmen’s hammer; *
She pounded Sisera, she pierced his head,
She split and struck through his temple.

At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still; *
At her feet he sank, he fell;
Where he sank, there he fell dead.

R. When leaders lead...

The mother of Sisera looked through the window,
And cried out through the lattice, *
‘Why is his chariot so long in coming?
Why tarries the clatter of his chariots?’

Her wisest ladies answered her, *
Yes, she answered herself,
‘Are they not finding and dividing the spoil:
To every man a girl or two; *
For Sisera, plunder of dyed garments,
Plunder of garments embroidered and dyed,
Two pieces of dyed embroidery for the neck of the looter?’

‘Thus let all Your enemies perish, O LORD! *
But let those who love Him be like the sun
When it comes out in full strength.’

R. When leaders lead...