the Levites (Josh 21:15; 1 Chr 6:43 [v. 58 ET]). It is also a city associated with the Anakim who were driven out by Joshua (Josh 11:21). Its former name is said to have been Kiriath-sepher in Josh 15:15 and Judg 1:11, but in Josh 15:49 it is called Kiriath-sannah (perhaps a scribal error caused by confusion with the ending of the previous city *Dannâ*). The location of Debir is disputed. It had been identified with Tell Beit Mirsim, 13 miles southwest of Hebron, based on excavations led by W. F. Albright in 1926–32, but this has been challenged by K. Galling and M. Kochavi who argue that Khirbet Rabud, 7½ miles west of Hebron, is more likely the site of Debir.

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II. In Northern Judah

Debir (*Dĕbîr*) in Josh 15:7 is name of one of the cities along the northern border of the tribe of Judah. In the list of cities along the southern boundary of Benjamin (Josh 18:15–19), which corresponds to the northern boundary of Judah, Debir is omitted. This omission, in addition to a variant in the LXX of Josh 15:7, has raised doubts about the existence of a city named Debir in this region. The LXX reads "upon the fourth" (τὸ τέταρτον) instead of Debir, but this can be explained as a misreading of the Hebrew where *dbrh* (Debir) is read as *rbʿh* (fourth). The MT is generally taken as the preferred reading. The exact location of this Debir is unknown, but the similarity in name with the *Wadi Dabr* and *Thoğret ed-Dabr* (Debir pass or crevice) coupled with the *Khan el-ḥatrur* ruins that were at the head of the *Wadi Dabr* suggest this area as a possible location. Nothing of these ruins can be seen today for they have been covered over and displaced by the Jericho-Jerusalem highway and the building of an inn.

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III. Boundary of the Tribe of Gad

Debir (*Dĕbîr*) in Josh 13:26 LXX is a city in the territory allotted to Gad. Debir is also found in the Syriac and the Vulgate, but in the MT it is *Lidbīr*. It may be that the initial *lāmed* was understood by the LXX translators as a preposition and dropped. If the MT is the preferred reading, then *Lidbir* is probably the same city mentioned in 2 Samuel and Amos though it is pointed in different ways: 2 Sam 9:4, 5 *Lô-dĕbār*; 17:27, *Lōʾ-dĕbār* (different o); Amos 6:13 *Lōʾ-dābār*. Its location remains unknown.

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Pauline A. Viviano

Deborah (Grandmother of Tobit)

Deborah taught her orphaned grandson Tobit the Law (Tob 1:8). She is credited with his righteousness that leads to his success in marriage and family.

Leah Rediger Schulte

Deborah (Judge)

I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

The prophetess and judge Deborah played an important part in liberating Israel from Jabin, king of Canaan, and his army commanded by Sisera by encouraging Barak to take up his responsibility as commander of the Israelite army and by gathering the tribes of Israel (Judg 4–5). In different ways, Deborah the judge and the two other women who bear the name Deborah in the HB and the deuterocanonical books are related not only by name. According to Judg 4:5, the prophetess Deborah used to sit "under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel." It is likely that this is a reference to Deborah the nurse of Rebekah who was buried beneath an oak (Spronk: 236–37). Deborah the grandmother of Tobit acts like the prophetess who was said to be "as a mother in Israel" (Judg 5:7) and who is described in line with the great leader Moses (Block: 240; Gillmayr-Bucher: 190).

The Hebrew name *Dĕbôrâ* means "honey-bee" (cf. Isa 7:18), but in the Judges story, which employs many puns on names, it is likely that a pun is intended (Asen; Bedenbender), probably related to the verb *d-b-r*, "to speak" (Van Wolde: 288). Such a name is befitting for a prophet(ess) according to the descriptions in Deut 18:18 and Jer 18:18, for a prophet is one who speaks God's words to the people. The relationship between her name and this verb is also indicated in a pun in Judg 5:12 (Assis: 124).

Deborah is presented in Judg 4:4 as *ʾiššâ nĕbîʾâ*, "prophetess," and *ʾēšet lappîdôt*, which is usually translated as "the wife of Lappidoth." The second expression can also be translated as "woman of torches" or "fiery woman." This would present her as the female counterpart to Barak, the commander of the Israelite army, who does not live up to the

expectations evoked by his name, which means "lightning."

Deborah is described as "judging" (*šǫpĕṭâ*) Israel, suggesting that she has the same role as the men with this function who act in this book as deliverers and rulers of Israel. In Judg 4:5, however, her "judging" does not have the political meaning that it has in the rest of this book, but it refers to administering justice, thus ascribing a special place to Deborah among the "judges." She also plays an important role in the communication with the divine at the moment of battle and there are many analogies to this function in extrabiblical literature (Block: 244–47). There is no scholarly consensus on the historical background or literary history of the text of Judg 4–5. Within the context of the book of Judges, Deborah serves as a striking contrast to the men in the book, who fail to communicate with God. Deborah stands closer to men like Moses and Samuel than to men like Gideon and Samson.

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Klaas Spronk

II. Judaism

■ Second Temple and Hellenistic through Medieval Judaism ■ Modern Judaism

A. Second Temple and Hellenistic through Medieval Judaism

1. "A Doe Let Loose." Deborah's tribal affiliation in the Bible is unclear. She is aided by Barak, from the tribe of Naphtali, and the midrash traces her lineage to Naphtali as well. In the exegetical expansion, when Jacob blesses his sons before his death he refers to Deborah in his blessing of Naphtali: "Naphtali is a doe let loose, that gives beautiful words" (Gen 49:21); "a doe let loose" is a reference to Deborah, who would be born into this tribe and "that gives beautiful words" is an allusion to her Song (*MidTeh* 22:1).

2. Wife of Lappidoth. Judges 4:4 states that Deborah, "wife of Lappidoth (*eshet lappidot*), was a prophetess." Josephus explains the name Deborah as meaning "bee" without further elaboration (*Ant.* 5.201). According to the Talmud (*bMeg* 14b), her name means "hornet" (*zibborta*), an ugly name, which she deserved because of her arrogance. It would seem that the intention here is that a bee has both honey and a sting. Deborah was blessed with the prophetic spirit but displayed her arrogance when she summoned Barak instead of going to him herself.

The ancient rabbis and medieval Jewish commentators derive *eshet lappidot* from the word *lappid* ("torch"). The phrase *eshet lappidot* refers to her vocation, which was preparing the wicks for the Tabernacle (*bMeg* 14a; Rashi and Radaq on Judg 4:4). Another rabbinic tradition understands *lappidot* as referring to her husband. Deborah prepared thick wicks, which would give much light; these her husband would bring to the Tabernacle, thus earning him the appellation *lappidot*. Thus, Deborah enabled Lappidoth, though unlettered, to merit life in the world to come. The rabbis applied to Deborah and those like her the verse: "The wise woman builds her house" (Prov 14:1). When God, who tests people's innermost thoughts, saw Deborah's actions, he told her: "Deborah, you intended to increase My light; I, too, shall increase your light in Judah and in Jerusalem" (*SER* 10; *YalqShim* Judg 4:42). As her reward, Deborah became a prophet.

3. Deborah the Judge. The midrash identifies Deborah and Barak as the judges mentioned in Ruth 1:1: "In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land (*RutR* 1:1). In Judg 4:5, Deborah "used to sit under the Palm of Deborah." According to one interpretation, Deborah would sit outdoors, under a palm, to teach Torah in public, because a woman would not normally be alone with men within her house (*SER* loc. cit.). Others view the palm tree as symbolic. One comment asserts that that generation was united in its faith in God, and had only a single heart for their father in heaven, like a palm tree, all of whose branches issue forth from the same place (*bMeg* 14a). Another interprets the symbolism of the palm tree as a negative commentary on the generation of Deborah. In Israel's sorry state, those who came to learn from her were like half a date tree (*SER* 10).

Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Judg 4:5 explains her extraordinary status and influence by assuming that she was wealthy. Where she sat indicates how she made a living. She owned palm groves in Jericho, vineyards in Ramah, and olive groves in the Beth-El valley.

4. Deborah the Prophet. Deborah is included among the seven women prophets of Israel (*bMeg* loc. cit.). Scripture states that "she used to sit … between Ramah and Bethel" (Judg 4:4–5); the rabbis interpret "Ramah" (literally, "height") as descriptive of the spiritual qualities of her prophecy.

They compare it with that of Samuel, also from Ramah (*SER* 10). Gersonides opined that Deborah had attained such a high level of prophecy that whenever she prophesied, torches of light would be seen, whence her epithet, *eshet lappidot* (Gersonides on Judg 4:4).

In the midrashic account, prophecy departed from Deborah because of her pride. Deborah boasted (Judg 5:7): "Deliverance ceased, ceased in Israel, till you arose, O Deborah, arose, O mother, in Israel!" Thereupon prophecy departed from her as punishment for her arrogance, leading her to plead (v. 12): "Awake, awake, O Deborah! Awake, awake, [Deborah,] strike up the [prophetic] chant!" With these words Deborah requested that the prophetic spirit return to her (*bPes* 66b; Rashi on Judg 4:12). This midrash alludes to a certain degree of rabbinic displeasure with Deborah. In a similar vein, David Qimḥi (on Judg 4:4) limits Deborah's prophetic abilities, claiming that her prophecies were only for her own time, not for the future.

5. Deborah and Barak. In other narratives in the Book of Judges, one central figure leads the people and is responsible for their deliverance. In the story of Deborah, by contrast, a number of characters participate in leading the people. The division of labor between Deborah and Barak in the biblical narrative is replete with tension, a fact that did not escape the rabbis' attention. Some traditions present Barak as Deborah's husband, who is also called "Lappidoth" (*SER* 10; Qimḥi and Gersonides on Judg 4:4). Claiming that they were a married couple eases the tension for the readers.

According to Qimḥi and Gersonides (on Judg 4:6), Deborah had separated herself from her husband (i.e., she no longer shared a bed with him, *hayetah perushah mimmennu*; Qimḥi) from the moment she began to prophesy and sit under the palm tree. Therefore she had to call for him to tell him God's word (cf. *bMeg* 14b, loc. cit.).

The biblical narrative presents Deborah as a strong woman who gives orders to Barak. She also comes to the battlefield, where she chants her victory song. Barak, in contrast, displays a lack of confidence when he asks Deborah to join him on the battlefield. Ignoring these differences of character, but stressing the hierarchy of the sexes, the midrash maintains that, from the outset, Barak should have been the one to bring the victory and to sing the song. Since he behaved improperly and made himself subservient to Deborah, he was punished by becoming secondary in the warfare. Sisera was killed by Jael, while the victory song was chanted by Deborah (*BerR* 40:4). The presentation of the relationship between Deborah and Barak as both exceptional and inappropriate reaffirms the patriarchal family structure of the rabbinic period.

According to another tradition Barak's behavior stems from his lack of faith and not from his weak nature (*Tan Shofetim* 17). Other traditions, in contrast, take a favorable view of the cooperation between Deborah and Barak. The inclusion of Barak's name in the headline of her song is regarded favorably by the Rabbis. Barak trusted in the God of Israel and believed in Deborah's prophecy and therefore merited participating in her song (*SER* 10).

6. The Song of Deborah. The Song of Deborah has become one of the fundamental elements of the poetry of the Jewish people. It is associated with the Song of Moses in the cycle of synagogue readings. The rabbis include it in their list of ten songs (*MekhY, Masekhta de-Shirah, Be-shallaḥ* 1). The midrash explains that Deborah used her song to educate Israel to walk in the ways of the Lord. She encouraged the Israelites to participate in prayer and study, through which they will merit deliverance from their enemies (*SER* 11). Another midrash explains that the Song of Deborah is an anthology of statements by different people, all revealed to Deborah by the divine spirit (*MidShem* 10:4).

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Tamar Kadari

B. Modern Judaism

Grace Aguilar's *Women of Israel* (1845) inaugurates the modern period of Jewish interpretation of Deborah, in which Deborah is taken to be a heroine and a role model for Jewish women. But it is particularly since about 1990 that Jewish feminist scholars have devoted a great deal of attention to the story of Deborah and the Song of Deborah. Deborah's exceptional role as warrior, prophet, judge, and singer is contrasted to the usual biblical norm of patriarchal dominance, and contrasted as well to the later exclusion of women from roles of public leadership in Jewish life.

In Jewish popular culture as well, Deborah has become an important female role model. For instance, in her "Devorah's Song," written in 2000, the Jewish singer/songwriter Debbie Friedman, identifies herself with her biblical namesake.

While some observers, such as Aguilar herself, have emphasized that Deborah's leadership role was carried out while she was a wife and mother, most, like Letty Cottin Pogrebin, have emphasized the absence of father, husband, or brother in the story. Deborah's husband Lappidoth plays no role in the story, and many modern Jewish readers, including both Aguilar and Pogrebin, implicitly reject the rabbinic identification of Lappidoth with Barak.

The Song of Deborah, with its trio of female characters (Deborah, Yael, and the mother of Sisera) has also been interpreted from a feminist point of view. Tikva Frymer-Kensky argues that the portrayal of Sisera's mother is derisive and does not evince female solidarity across ethnic lines, but many others read it as expressing empathy with the Canaanite mother. Nechama Aschkenasy has argued, more complexly, that the song contrasts the three women, and that it criticizes the very lack of female initiative and of female solidarity shown by Sisera's mother, as she sits at home and indulges her cruel wish that her son will bring her female slaves.

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Joseph Davis

III. Literature

Deborah has been invoked as a celebrated woman warrior. Edmund Spenser, referring to famous women of antiquity, tells how "stout Debora strake / Proud Sisera" (*The Faerie Queene* [1590] 3.4) – though none can compare to the virgin knight Britomart from whose stock blossomed Queen Elizabeth, his poem's true subject. In Shakespeare's *Henry VI,* Part 1 (1591), Charles of France, overcome by Joan de Pucelle, cries,

> Stay, stay thy hands! Thou art an Amazon,
> And fightest with the sword of Deborah (1.2.104–5).

Both allusions are loose at best since the biblical Deborah herself does not fight. Cuddie Headrigg's fanatical mother, in Walter Scott's *Old Mortality* (1816), makes more apposite use: "Transported to ecstasy" when her Presbyterian Covenanter cohorts repulse an attack, she shouts,

> Faer naething for me! I will stand, like Deborah, on the tap o' the cairn, and tak up my sang o' reproach against these men of Harosheth of the Gentiles, whose horse-hoofs are broken by their prancing (ch. 17).

Likewise, Tennyson's Princess Ida (1847) sings a victory song for her champions:

> But high upon the palace Ida stood
> … Like that great dame of Lapidoth she sang:
> "Our enemies have fallen, have fallen …"

Deborah is often understood in terms of social conventions regarding women holding positions of authority or engaging in war. That is, for much of the modern period she demands approbation as a judge and prophetess raised up by God but can be a problem as a model for the contemporary social order. A favorite rhetorical strategy for deflecting her witness to the legitimacy of powerful women has been to argue that Deborah, like other women rulers, was an exception that proved the rule that women are forbidden to teach or have authority over men (1 Tim 2:12). As Calvin comments (1559, on Mic 6:4), God giving authority to a woman, as in Deborah's case, was an "extraordinary thing" and not to be considered a common rule. Another strategy was to invest her with "manly" attributes. Erasmus (1522) praises her memory, along with that of Rahab and Judith: "since they surpassed their own sex and showed manly strength of soul, [they] are celebrated not among women but among heroes." Or as the anonymous writer of *Sacred Biography* (1818) put it, when Deborah says (Judg 5:13, KJV) that God gave her dominion over the mighty, she suggests that "by endowing a woman with more than manly sagacity and resolution, and by making her the life and soul of a sinking nation," God created "a new thing on earth" to gain the people's praise (302). A third path taken is to say little or ignore her completely. Protestant children brought up on Johann Hübner's biblical stories for almost two centuries (from 1714, many editions; both German and English in the USA) would have learned of Samson but not a word of Deborah. Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1898) protested:

> We never hear sermons pointing women to the heroic virtues of Deborah as worthy of their imitation … The lessons doled out to women … are meekness and self-abnegation.

Joseph Hall (1615) nicely captures the perplexity of many a writer on Deborah. God raises up not a prince of Israel, not Barak the captain, not Lappidoth the husband, but Deborah the wife. "Who shall ask God any reason of his elections, but his own pleasure?" At least Barak's part in the story is a welcome qualification:

> Deborah was to sentence, not to strike; to command, not to execute. This [latter] act is masculine, fit for some captain of Israel. She was the head of Israel; it was meet some other should be the hand.

Hall finds more energy writing of Jael, imagining for her a powerful soliloquy as she contemplates action.

A characteristic of Deborah's reception is that it frequently yields to that of Jael. The story loses Deborah as protagonist to end dramatically with Jael. Typically, in the United States, Altemus' widely-sold Beautiful Stories Series includes Deborah, but only in J.H. Willard's *With Hammer and Nail: The Story of Jael and Sisera* (1906).

Yet Deborah has her champions. Jesuit Pierre Le Moyne (1647) accords Deborah first place in his gallery of heroic women. More splendor may attend the thrones of kings but less natural majesty and true glory than found with Deborah under her palm tree. Nor did any woman ever speak more sovereignly yet with sweetness and efficacy: "Prophecy and Law were never expounded by a more powerful mouth." Jansenist Nicolas Fontaine (writing as Le

Sieur de Royaumont, 1680), whose Scripture history became a staple of Catholic education in Europe and North America for two centuries, is equally affirming. God can give to women as much as to men wisdom and fortitude to take charge of great affairs. Deborah had the honor to be the first woman God established as sovereign over his people, and her administration lacked none of the advantages that could have attended the most valiant of men. If he so pleases, God can confound human expectations. Young English novelist Grace Aguilar (1845) appeals to Deborah, a prophetess with "vast superiority of mental and spiritual acquirements" chosen by God (her sex notwithstanding), to argue that Aguilar's ancient Jewish forebears (she was of Portuguese Marrano descent) did not disparage women or equate them with slaves as some critics claimed. With Deborah's history in hand young daughters of Israel need no other creed nor a denial of the old law to learn their proper position.

Among other women writing in the 19th century, Francis M. Caulkins (1861) hails Deborah as guardian of a wasted land, dispensing justice with supreme command, or rapt in prophetic ecstasy:

> When manly bosoms quailed with fear and awe,
> A woman, great but lowly,
> Assumed the sceptre and gave forth the law,
> Aroused the nation, led the tribes to war,
> Returned in triumph holy …

No longer, however, is it woman's duty to wage war:

> Gentler her task – to lead the wanderer back,
> Sow the true seed, supply the poor man's lack,
> And all true goodness nourish.

Etty Woosnam (1881) sees Deborah's role as an unfortunate necessity: the men of Israel had been so neglectful of their duty that women (i.e., Deborah) had to act the part of warriors, "*which ill becomes them*" (her italics).

Although 19th- and 20th-century children's stories often lack the story, when Deborah appears she is praised as good, wise, and brave. In "words of one syllable," Harriet Comstock (1900) tells how

> Ba-rak had no hon-or at all be-cause he had been a-fraid. But I think Deb-o-rah and [Jael] were brave, true sol-diers, don't you?

Addie Richman Altman (1932), writing for Jewish children, says that Deborah ordered all the men to a meeting and

> formed them into an army, just as easily as the boys in the street form a little company of make-believe soldiers, only Deborah's men were really soldiers.

In Olive Beaupré Miller's narrative (1940), Deborah prepared food for her family, spun wool and flax, spoke prophecies, and did judgment. When she saw

> that men failed as leaders for her people, she took courage to herself and said: "O my soul, march on with strength! I, Deborah, a mother in Israel, will rise up and save my people!"

Dutch author J. L. Klink (1959/67) continues the story:

> From then on men sang the song of Deborah by the wells and drinking-places and, as they sang, their courage was restored.

In a quite different vein, adapting Deborah to a well-selling genre, Israeli writer Eva Etzioni-Halevy (2008) injects some missing love and sex into her romance novel. Barak will fight only if Deborah offers herself as a reward on his return, which she (now divorced) does with relish. But Barak has other women in his life, including Jabin's daughters. As these other affairs play out, Deborah must content herself with governance and, at the eleventh hour, renewed love of Lapidoth and a grand peace between Israel and Canaan.

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David M. Gunn

IV. Visual Arts

In Judg 4 and 5, the prophetess Deborah tells the general Barak to position his army at Mount Tabor in order to defeat the army of Jabin, the king of Canaan, who was oppressing the people of Israel. Barak asked Deborah to accompany him, which she did, but she also prophesied that Jabin's captain Sisera would fall by the hand of a woman and not by Barak's hand. Barak defeated Sisera's army, but Sisera fled to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the

Kenite, an ally of Jabin. Jael gave him milk to drink and a bed in which to sleep, and promised secrecy. However, when Sisera was fast asleep, she killed him by driving a tent peg into his temple with a hammer, and delivered the body to Barak (Judg 4:17–22). Then Deborah and Barak sang a song of praise to the Lord (called the "Song of Deborah") in which they retold the story, recounting how the Lord dealt with the enemies of Israel (Judg 5). So it was not a warrior but a woman, Jael, who managed to dispose of one of Israel's most dangerous enemies, just as Judith and Esther did in the biblical books bearing their names. Therefore, in artistic representations of the story of Deborah, the emphasis is nearly always on Jael who, as one of the courageous heroines of the HB/OT, has grown into one of the most popular biblical women in the visual arts. Because of the lack of appealing narrative details in Deborah's story, the prophetess herself is only rarely depicted.

In medieval illustrated Bibles and Psalters, she is sometimes seen prophesying under a palm tree or marching with Barak's army. (See, e.g., Deborah going into battle, sword in hand, guided by an angel overhead, in the *Bible moralisée*, Cod. Vindobonensis 270, fol. 105; in the 14th-century Queen Mary Psalter [British Library MS Royal 2.VII] she is shown talking to Barak, convincing him to do battle against the Ammonites). As a prophetess she figures in a series of bust portraits on the choir stalls in the cathedral of Ulm by the studio of Jörg Syrlin the Elder (ca. 1470), with a sword and banderol as attributes. Exceptional in the iconographical repertoire is a painting by the Haarlem artist Salomon de Bray (1635; Museum the Catharijneconvent, Utrecht; *see* →plate 8). Instead of the usual scene of the killing of Sisera, the panel shows three half-length portraits of the leading characters of the story: a young and very serious-looking Jael with the hammer and peg in her hands, Barak in armor, and between them Deborah as an old, wrinkled woman with a black headdress. The prophetess is not looking at the viewer as are the two others, but is praying with folded hands, her eyes raised to heaven. Apparently she is captured at the moment she is singing her song of praise to the Lord in the company of Barak and Jael, whom she was calling "most blessed of women."

Modern portrayals of Deborah include the *Victorious Fight of the Israelites* by Luca Giordano (1634–1705), in which the triumphant Deborah is depicted on a rock overlooking the battle scene; Marc Chagall's portrayal of Deborah under the palm tree, judging the people, in a stained glass window in the Collegiate Church of St. Stephan in Mainz; and a striking image by artist and illustrator Arthur Szyk of Deborah as one of the four "queens" on a set of playing cards (along with Ruth, Esther, and Judith; see fig. 12).

Fig. 12 A. Szyk, "Deborah" (playing card; 1930s)

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Ilja M. Veldman

V. Music

Deborah is one of the biblical women who has received considerable attention in music history. The subject was already prominent before George Frederick Handel's famous oratorio. The *Deborah* libretto (1656) of the priest Arcangelo Spagna must be regarded as a milestone in the early history of the oratorio, since it exemplified Spagna's agenda to transform the genre into a "melodramma spirituale" by eliminating the part of the testo (narrator). The libretto was set to music by G. Francesco Rubini in the same year. In 1732, *The Song of Deborah and Barak* by the English composer Maurice Greene illustrated the great dramatic potential the story of Deborah offered both to opera and oratorio composers who wished to use splendid choral and orchestral resources. Handel's version, performed as "An oratorio; or Sacred Drama" in 1733, takes up these possibilities, which contributed considerably to Handel's influential concept of the English oratorio. The libretto by Samuel Humphreys closely follows Judg 4 and 5. However, Jael is named as the woman by whose hand Sisera will fall in the first act

already; she is given prominence as a female hero throughout the oratorio, whereas Deborah appears as sovereign prophet. A strong emphasis is given to the choruses, representing the Israelites and the Priests of Baal, and on the orchestra, which added dramatic thrust and sonic splendor to the oratorio.

This dramatic potential was further unfolded in later Deborah compositions. Pietro Guglielmi's "azione sacra" *Debora e Sisara* (libretto by Carlo Sernicola), composed in 1788 for the Teatro S. Carlo in Naples, was frequently staged throughout Europe in the late 18th century, thus blurring the genre distinction between oratorio and opera. Generally, the subject was adapted to a broad spectrum of vocal and dramatic genres: oratorios (e.g., Antonio Draghi, José Picañol, Baldassare Galuppi, Gregor Joseph Werner, Jean-François Le Sueur, Berthold Damcke), operas (e.g., Leopold Anton Koželuch, Josef Bohuslav Foerster, Arthur-Joseph Coquard, Harrison Millard, Ildebrando Pizzetti), cantatas, dramatic scenes, and songs for solo voices with piano or orchestral accompaniment (Johann Heinrich Knecht; Anton Liste; Jules Jordan; Sergiu Natra). Literary models included Klopstock's *Messias* and Salomon Hermann Mosenthal's famous theater play *Deborah* (1848), which was frequently staged with music (Eduard Tauwitz; Andreas Randel; Robert von Hornstein). Most notable among the 20th-century Deborah settings is Ildebrando Pizzetti's opera *Débora e Jaèle* (1922, Milan) on a libretto by the composer, which presents Deborah as an inflexible representative of the established law, while Sisera and his lover Jael appear as tragic heroes standing in for a new vision. The opera was frequently staged and greatly appreciated in Italy up to the 1970s. Noam Sheriff's choreographic movement for chorus, brass, percussion, and synthesizers *The Story of Deborah* (1976) represents a modern interpretation of the subject on the part of an Israeli composer.

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Linda Maria Koldau

VI. Film

Although Deborah's story describes the fascinating work of the only woman in the HB involved in a military struggle to deliver her people, no major movie or documentary has been made detailing Deborah's life and ministry. A rare exception is a 12-minute segment that appeared in a DVD for children called "People of Faith" (prod. Ikonographics, 1998), a series of studies on biblical characters, distributed by Franciscan Communications. In the video, Deborah is presented as a prophetess, judge, woman, wife, charismatic leader, advisor, and as a decision maker who called the tribes of Israel together to lead them into battle against the Canaanites. At the end of the segment, children are exhorted to remember that they are called to stand against injustice and to stand up for the rights of people who are oppressed.

Claude Mariottini

Deborah (Nursemaid of Rebekah)

I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

Deborah (MT *Dĕbōrâ*; LXX Δεββωρα), the nurse of Isaac's wife Rebekah, appears once as an unnamed character (Gen 24:59) and a second time by name (Gen 35:8). After Isaac's son Jacob erected an altar at El-Bethel, the elderly Deborah died and was buried beneath a nearby oak. The story functions etiologically; the place is called Allon-Bacuth, that is, "oak of weeping" (cf. Judg 2:4–5). Deborah's role as nurse to the matriarch Rebekah, as well as Jacob and his family mourning over her death, have led both Jews and Christians to view her favorably, as one who exhibited faithful service. Jews have expressed more concern than Christians that Deborah nursed Esau in addition to Jacob, and have suggested that her funeral along with Rebekah's was held at night to avoid the curses of onlookers.

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Daniel Stulac

II. Judaism

Deborah, Rebekah's nursemaid, accompanied Rebekah on her journey to the land of Canaan (Gen 24:59). When Jacob fled to Haran, Rebekah assured him that she would fetch him from there (Gen