



## Mercy in Violence? A Case Study of Judges 4 and 5 Vis-À-Vis Contemporary Situations

### ABSTRACT

*The article aims to contribute to a contemporary reflection on how the mercy of God, “hesed” in the Hebrew Bible, can be appropriated in our contemporary situations of violence and injustice. The Hebrew Bible presents God as both merciful and a punisher (Ex 34:6-7). Our analyses of the three characters in Judges 4 and 5: Yahweh, Deborah and Jael, and the main events described in the two chapters – the Canaanite oppression of the Israelites and the Israelites’ response to it, and insights from some theologians, Papal teachings and Church documents, have shown that every situation demands discernment and prayer. There is no easy answer. Every case has to be judged in the light of the Word of God, primarily guided by God’s mercy and justice.*

Keywords: Hesed, mercy, justice, missionary spirituality, scriptural analysis, Hermeneutics



## INTRODUCTION

The Lord reveals himself to Moses as  
*“The Lord, the Lord, a God gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger and abounding in love and fidelity,  
continuing his love for a thousand generations  
and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin;  
yet not declaring the guilty guiltless,  
but bringing punishment for their parents’ wickedness  
on children and children’s children to the third  
and fourth generation” (Ex 34:6-7).*

The text presents the God of the Hebrew Bible as one who is both merciful and a punisher. He is gracious, merciful, slow to anger and abounding in love and fidelity, yet he punishes the guilty – from the parents till the fourth generation.

This paper analyzes three characters in Judges 4 and 5: Yahweh, Deborah and Jael, and the main event described in the two chapters – the Canaanite oppression of the Israelites and the Israelites’ response to it. The result of this analysis serves as a starting point of reflection on how to respond to contemporary situations of violence and injustice in the light of insights from some theologians, Papal teachings and Church documents.

## METHODOLOGY

The first part in this case study is an examination of the word *ds,x, hesed*, in the Hebrew Bible. The second part is an analysis of the event and characters in Judges 4 and 5 employing diachronic and synchronic approaches. The third part presents some challenges for our contemporary situation in the light of the Word of God and insights from some theologians, Papal teachings and Church documents.

This paper does not offer any definitive answers to existential questions but raises questions for us as guidelines in decision making and in making choices.

## *Hesed* in the Hebrew Bible

*Hesed* in the Hebrew Bible<sup>1</sup> is commonly translated as mercy, steadfast love or loving kindness. *Hesed* describes both an attitude of God to human beings and a disposition which should characterize human dealings.<sup>2</sup> Jepsen observes that *hesed* always designates not just a human attitude, but also the act that emerges from this attitude.<sup>3</sup> This is the most common “word used to describe the disposition of faithful kindness with which God regards his people.”<sup>4</sup>

There are three elements constitutive of the concept *hesed*:<sup>5</sup>

1. It is active. It is an act that preserves and promotes life, an intervention on behalf of someone suffering misfortune or distress. It demonstrates friendship or piety, thus it pursues what is good and not what is evil.
2. It is social in nature; it lies in the realms of interpersonal relations. It is done primarily between: wife and husband, father and son, host and guest, relatives, friends, and those who have formed a relationship based on unexpected acts of kindness. By nature, *hesed* belongs to the realm of family and clan society.
3. It is enduring. Seen in the context of the *brît*, covenant, *hesed* requires enduring and reliable kindness as an essential element of its protective function. Yahweh requires kindness toward the members of the covenanted community. Glueck defines *hesed* as the very content of the *brît* and a “conduct in accordance with the mutual relationship of rights and duties between allies.”<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>For the occurrence of and an extensive discussion on *ds,x*, *hesed* in the Hebrew Bible, see H.-J. Zobel, “*ds,x*,” in G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Vol. 5. trans. David E. Green (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 44-64.

<sup>2</sup>J. L. Houlden, “Mercy,” in *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*, eds., Alan Richardson and John Bowden (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983), 356.

<sup>3</sup>A. Jepsen, “Gnade und Barmherzigkeit im AT,” *Kerygma und Dogma*, vol. 7 (Göttingen, 1961), 266.

<sup>4</sup>Houlden, “Mercy,” 356, cites Ps 138:8 and Jer 33:11 to support his theory.

<sup>5</sup>Zobel, *TDOT*, 5:51-53.

<sup>6</sup>N. Glueck, *Hesed in the Bible* (New York: The Hebrew Union College Press, 1975), 46. For a critique to this opinion, see Zobel, *TDOT*, 5:52-53.

In sum, W. R. Smith states that *Hesed* “is the virtue that knits together society.”<sup>7</sup>

### *Diachronic and Synchronic Analysis of Judges 4 and 5*

#### *A. Historical background of Judges 4 and 5*

The redactional history and the historicity of Judges 4 and 5 are very complex.<sup>8</sup> In spite of some differences in opinions in this regard, majority of scholars agree that the main events recounted therein can be traced back to the pre-monarchical period, while the redaction itself was done after the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BCE, that is, during the exile of the Jews in Babylon.

The time of the judges covers from the end of the conquest of Canaan to the beginning of the monarchy. It starts from the death of Joshua (Jos 24:29-31; Jdg 1:1ff.) and ends when the demand of the Israelites for a king was granted (1 Sam 8:22).

#### *B. Literary genre*

Judges 4 in general fits well as prose and Judges 5 as poetry.<sup>9</sup> The events in Judges 4 proceed in a sequential manner, a characteristic feature of a prose.

---

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 28.

<sup>8</sup>For an extensive study on the historical setting of Judges 4, see Robert G. Boling, *Judges. Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1975), 98-99.

On Judges 5 as one of the oldest literature in the Hebrew Bible, see Michael D. Coogan, “A Structural and Literary Analysis of the Song of Deborah,” *CBQ* 40 (1978), 143-66; Frank M. Cross and David Noel Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1975); A. Globe, “The Literary Structure and Unity of the song of Deborah,” *JBL* 93 (1974) 493-512.

<sup>9</sup>F. Landy, “Poetics and Parallelism: Some Comments on James Kugel’s *The Idea of Biblical Poetry*,” *JSOT* 28 (1984), 71-72. W.G.E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques*, *JSOTS* 46 (Sheffield 1984), 46, 154, takes Jdg 4:18 as an example of poetic “staircase parallelism.”

Judges 5 is a hymn of triumph,<sup>10</sup> a song aimed at arousing dedication in the community in which it is sung.<sup>11</sup>

*C. Analysis of Judges 4 and 5: Characters and main event*

1. Deborah is described as a prophetess, wife,<sup>12</sup> and judge (v 1) who summoned Barak to prepare for battle against the Canaanites, in obedience to the Lord's command (v 6). Deborah means "bee."<sup>13</sup> Klein<sup>14</sup> claims that in the biblical text, bees are depicted as vanquishers and attackers of men.
2. Jael's role in the narrative is described in six verses (4:17-22). Jael speaks twice; she is the active subject of nine verbs: went out to meet (2x), said (2x), covered (2x), opened, got, took, approached, drove. The narrative portrays Jael as the hero of Judges 4 and proclaimed as such by the poetic version in Judges 5. In the midrash, Jael is listed among the judges of Israel.<sup>15</sup> However, some modern commentaries say that she committed murder, violated a treaty and the rules of hospitality.<sup>16</sup>

The description of Jael's act both in the narrative and the poem implies that she indeed had committed a murder:

---

<sup>10</sup>W.H. McClellan, "The Elements of Old Testament Poetry: Part I," *CQ* 3 (1941) 203-13; 321-336; see also L. Alonso-Schökel, *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics*, Subsidia Biblica 11 (Roma, 1988), 8-13, who holds that Judges 5 is a victory song.

<sup>11</sup>W. Richter, *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Richterbuch*, BBB 18 (Bonn, 1963), 104; N.K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible a Socio-Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia, 1985), 237-238, considers the song of Deborah a hymn of triumph memorializing a victory that is also treated in saga form.

<sup>12</sup>For an extensive discussion on Deborah as a wife see, Tammi J. Schneider, *Judges. Berit Olam*. Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2000), 64-67.

<sup>13</sup>*BDB*, 184.

<sup>14</sup>L. R. Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges* JSOTS/Bible and Literature Series 14 (Sheffield: Almond, 1989), 41-42.

<sup>15</sup>L. Bronner, "Valorized or Vilified?" in *A Feminist Companion to Judges*, Athalya Brenner, ed. *Feminist Companion to the Bible 4* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 87.

<sup>16</sup>L. Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, JSOTS/Bible and Literature Series 14 (Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1989), 42-43; K. Lowery, "Jael," *ABD* 3, 610-611.

4:21	5: 26
<p>Jael wife of Heber took a tent-peg, and took a hammer in her hand and went softly to him (Sisera) and drove the peg into his temple, until it went into the ground – he was lying fast asleep from weariness – and he died.</p>	<p>She put her hand to the tent-peg and her right hand to the workman’s mallet; she struck Sisera a blow, she crushed his head, she shattered and pierced his temple.</p>

Yet in the Song, she is referred to as “most blessed of women” (twice in 5:24). This indicates that her act described in 4:21 and 5:26 is condoned – Jael is blessed. Her act is not given an evaluation in the narrative. It is only in the poetic version where her actions, which involve killing the general of the enemies, are seen to be praiseworthy. Schneider observes that “Both the narrative and poetic accounts view Jael’s actions as pivotal to the story, positive, and worthy of as any lines, if not more, than are allotted to the entire battle.”<sup>17</sup>

Jael, a non-Israelite woman, comes to the aid of the Israelites to save them from their Canaanite enemy. For Olson, “Jael emerges as the singular hero or judge in this story.”<sup>18</sup>

The Song portrays Jael’s act as God’s just punishment upon the Canaanites’ greed, exemplified in the soliloquy of Sisera’s mother (5:28-30).

<sup>17</sup>Schneider, *Judges*, 93.

<sup>18</sup>Dennis T. Olson, “The Book of Judges: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections” in the *The New Interpreter’s Bible, A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, Vol. II (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998) 782.

Schneider concludes that “In the poem Baraq does not appear after the battle. Instead the focus of the battle in the poetic account is on the role of the weather, deity and Jael. Baraq did nothing and Jael receives praise.”<sup>19</sup>

3. Yahweh the God of Israel. In the narrative, the defeat of the Canaanite King Jabin, who reigns in Hazor, is attributed to the Israelite deity.<sup>20</sup> Both chapters identify the Israelite deity as “Yahweh the God of Israel.”

In the narrative, Yahweh is both the speaker and the doer:<sup>21</sup> he delivers his message for Barak through Deborah (4:6-7), throws Sisera and his army into confusion (4:15), allows Jael to murder Sisera (4:21) and empowers the Israelites to annihilate Jabin king of Canaan (4:23). The narrator presents Yahweh as the one who acts through persons and events. Yahweh allowed the Israelites to be oppressed by the Canaanites, but when they cried to him, he sent Deborah, Barak, and Jael as instruments to liberate them from the Canaanite oppression.

The narrative depicts God intervening in the life of his people through human activities involving shared leadership, mutual responsibility and glory that is distributed among several of the main characters (Deborah, Jael, and Barak).<sup>22</sup> Boling concludes, “Thus the point of the narrative is that neither Deborah nor Baraq subdued Sisera on that day – but God did!”<sup>23</sup>

In the song, God works through the forces of nature (5:4-5), Jael the Kenite, and the forces of some of the Israelite tribes.

---

<sup>19</sup>Schneider, *Judges*, 93.

<sup>20</sup>In vv 6-7, 9, 14-15 the name used for the Israelite deity is *hwhy* while in v 23, it is *‘~yhil{a/*.

<sup>21</sup>For a presentation of Yahweh as the subject of kindness, see *Zobel, TDOT*, 5:54-58.

<sup>22</sup>Olson, *Judges* 783.

<sup>23</sup>Boling, *Judge*, 100.

The Song concludes with a prayer:

Jewish Publication Society	New International Version
So may all Your enemies perish, O Lord! But may His friends be as the sun rising in might!	So may all you enemies perish, O Lord! But may they who love you be like the sun, when it rises in its strength.

The Song celebrates the defeat of the enemies of the Israelites, which are eventually considered enemies of the Lord. Violence is justified for the annihilation of those who oppress the Lord's chosen people.

#### *Hermeneutics for Contemporary Situations*

At present, we are confronted with various forms of violence. Which character would be worth emulating for our present situations: Deborah? Jael? Yahweh?

Let us also look around us and examine whether there are personalities who embody the traits of Deborah, or Jael, or Yahweh. The criterion would be one who stands and fights for the rights of the people of God. This surely needs great discernment for some claim for a "just war." Others fight for human rights against oppressive and inhumane regimes.

Here we offer some guidelines from Walter Kasper, from our Holy Father Pope Francis, and above all from Jesus Christ.

1. Walter Kasper writes,

*From the beginning of history, God's counteraction is at work against disaster. From the very beginning, God's merciful action is powerfully effective. In his mercy, God provides resistance to evil, which is getting the upper hand. He does not do this forcibly and violently; he doesn't simply do battle; rather, in his mercy*



*God repeatedly creates a new space for life and for blessing.*<sup>24</sup>

Let us highlight here three points of God's intervention in times of disaster: first, God's merciful action is powerfully effective; second, God resists evil, and thirdly, instead of resorting to violence, God creates new space for life and for blessing.

Are these possible to carry out in our present situation? This is indeed a great challenge for all of us.

Next, let us listen to what our Holy Father Pope Francis has to say.

## 2. Pope Francis

In his Bull of Indiction for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy entitled *Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis writes,

*We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy is the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. The mercy of God is not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality through which he reveals his love as that of a father or mother, moved to the very depths out of love for his child.*<sup>25</sup>

Pope Francis is obviously advocating mercy as the focal point in our relationship with one another and with nature, for this is the way God deals with us. God, through Jesus Christ, is the epitome of mercy. It is interesting that Pope Francis invites us to “contemplate

---

<sup>24</sup>Walter Kasper, *Mercy. The Essence of the Gospel and the Key to Christian Life*. trans. William Madges (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2013), 45.

<sup>25</sup>Pope Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus, Bull of Indiction for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy*, no. 2. Vatican Website. See [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_letters/documents/papa-francesco\\_bolla\\_20150411\\_misericordiae-vultus.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_bolla_20150411_misericordiae-vultus.html) (accessed August 1, 2019).

the mystery of mercy.” This ultimately means to contemplate on the words and deeds of Jesus Christ, the Immanuel, God-with-us. This leads us to the next section.

### 3. Jesus Christ

Jesus, the full revelation of the Father, is the Way and the Truth, who has come to give us the fullness of life. The gospels give us several instances wherein Jesus denounces injustice (e.g., Mt 18:23-35; Mk 12:38-41// Mt 23:1-33//Lk 11:37-54; 21:1-4) and irreverence to the temple (Mk 11:15-17//Mt 21:12-13//Lk 19:45-46// Jn 2:13-16), yet he also teaches that he desires mercy, not sacrifice, that he has come not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance (Mt 9:13).

The gospels also tell us that Jesus always takes the side of the poor and the oppressed, bringing to them the good news of salvation (Lk 4:18-21). To the sick he grants healing (e.g., Mk 2:1-12; Jn 5:1-9), to the prisoners of their own ego freedom from selfishness and gives hope and space to sinners to start a new life (e.g., Mt 9:9-12//Lk 5:27-32; Jn 7:53-8:11).

What does Jesus do to the oppressors? This is clearly manifested during his crucifixion – he prayed for them, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing” (Lk 23:34). Jesus condemns the act of oppression and injustice, but never condemns the sinner (e.g., Jn 8:11).

Jesus’ response to oppressors as narrated in the gospels indeed challenges our own response to the present situations of violence and oppression. With the above biblical and theological insights as guidelines, the next section reflects on contemporary situations: as

Christians, what are the missiological challenges and pastoral responses that we can offer to our suffering and oppressed brothers and sisters in faith?

### *Missiological Challenges*

Pope Paul VI authored *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, which became the *magna carta* for Catholic evangelization in the post-Vatican II era. He wrote that missionary evangelization is “the essential mission of the Church.”<sup>26</sup> This is the most quoted document in Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* issued in 2013.

In his eighth encyclical letter *Redemptoris Missio*, John Paul II urges a “fresh impulse to missionary activity.”<sup>27</sup> John Paul II throughout the document states several assertions on the centrality and urgency of missionary evangelization.

Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* writes, “The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized... Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus; we no longer say that we are ‘disciples’ and ‘missionaries,’ but rather that we are always ‘missionary disciples.’”<sup>28</sup> He continues to say that every Christian “ought to grow in awareness that he himself or she herself is continually in need of being evangelized.”<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup>Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Apostolic Exhortation (December 8, 1975), no. 14. Vatican Website. See [http://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_exh\\_19751208\\_evangelii-nuntiandi.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi.html) (accessed September 23, 2019).

<sup>27</sup>Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, Papal Encyclical on the Permanent Validity of the Church’s Missionary Mandate (December 7, 1990), no. 1. Vatican Website. See [http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_07121990\\_redemptoris-missio.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html) (accessed September 23, 2019).

<sup>28</sup>Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today’s World* (November 24, 2013), no. 120. Vatican Website. See [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html#II.%E2%80%82The\\_inclusion\\_of\\_the\\_poor\\_in\\_society](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html#II.%E2%80%82The_inclusion_of_the_poor_in_society) (Accessed September 25, 2019).

<sup>29</sup>*Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 164.

In chapter 2 (nos. 50–109), Pope Francis focuses on the challenges facing the proclamation of the Gospel today; he mentions consumerism, complacency, blunted consciences, relativism, secularist rationalism, violence, poverty indifference, greed, narcotics; ...all these weaken the impulse of missionary renewal in the Church. He exhorts the faithful: “Challenges exist to be overcome! Let us be realist, but without losing our joy, our boldness and our hope-filled commitment. Let us not allow ourselves to be robbed of missionary vigor.”<sup>30</sup>

These challenges are too grand for us to surmount. We cannot face them squarely by ourselves; we need a special grace from the Lord. We need to develop a missionary spirituality.

### *Missionary Spirituality*

According to the Second Vatican Council’s Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity (*Ad Gentes*),

*The Church on earth is by its very nature missionary, since, according to the plan of the Father, it has its source in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit. This flows from a ‘fountain-like love,’ the love of God the Father.*

*As the principle without principle from whom the Son is generated and from whom the Holy Spirit proceeds through the Son, God in his great and merciful kindness freely creates us and moreover, graciously calls us to share in his life and glory... It pleased God to call men to share in his life, and not merely singly, without any bond between them, but he formed them into a people, in which his children who had been scattered were gathered together<sup>31</sup>*

---

<sup>30</sup>Ibid, no. 109

<sup>31</sup>Second Vatican Council, *Ad Gentes*, Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity, no. 2. Vatican Website. See [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decree\\_19651207\\_ad-gentes\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_ad-gentes_en.html) (accessed September 27, 2019).

Based on the above text, mission is now popularly known as *missio Dei*. Mission is God's own mission to which the Church is a participant. Chapter two of *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 9-17, deals with the Church as the people of God. We are the Church. Missionary spirituality can be said to be a personal appropriation of the spiritual nature and character of the missionary activity of God. Missionary activity is a manifestation of the activity of God in the life of the missionary disciple. It is a relational between the missionary and God, between the missionary and the people to whom he is sent, and between God and his people through the mediation of the missionary.<sup>32</sup>

The gifts of fortitude and discernment are essential elements of missionary spirituality. Fortitude is the inner strength that comes from a life of faith and trust in God. It is also referred to as courage, an interior steadfastness in the face of adversity or difficulty. It is a virtue that overcomes fear and provides the firmness to do the will of God in the midst of obstacles. It is the virtue of martyrs who are willing to give up their lives rather than renounce their faith. It is rooted in the power of God's love.

Discernment is one of the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:10). The goal of discernment is to decide what needs to be done to fulfill the Gospel message with the sense of prudence and justice. While discernment provides the right thing to do, fortitude gives the strength to do it.<sup>33</sup>

In our present complex and chaotic world, the life of a missionary needs to be immersed in the fountain-like love of the Trinity because "mission and missionary spirituality are inseparable since both pertain to the love of the Trinity."<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup>*Ad Gentes*, no. 7.

<sup>33</sup>Wilfredo A. Saníel, "Missionary Spirituality," in *Fanning the Flame of Mission. Mission Formation Manual*, Andrew Gimenez Recepcion, editor (San Andres, Manila: ERES Books Publishing, Inc.: 2016), 101.

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, 93.

## CONCLUSION

Our analysis of the characters and main event in book of Judges 4 and 5 has shown a God who fights for the liberation of the Israelites who were oppressed by the Canaanites. God has manifested violence for the oppressors but mercy for the oppressed.

Recent theological reflections, Papal encyclicals and Church documents call for missionary disciples who will proclaim and witness to the saving love of God. How will missionaries then confront violence and injustice in our present world? This indeed needs spiritual discernment and fortitude. Each one has to discover for herself/himself the proper response to violence and justice as members of the mystical Body of Christ, the Church. In this endeavor we need the guidance and light of the Holy Spirit.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alonso-Schökel, L., *A Manual of Hebrew Poetics* in *Subsidia Biblica* 11. Roma, 1988.
- Boling, Robert G. *Judges. Introduction, Translation, and Commentary*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1975.
- Botterweck, Johannes and Ringgren, Helmer, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Vol. 5. Translated by David E. Green. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986.
- Bronner, L. "Valorized or Vilified?" in Athalya Brenner, ed., *A Feminist Companion to Judges*, Edited by Athalya Brenner. *Feminist Companion to the Bible* 4. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993.
- Coogan, Michael D. "A Structural and Literary Analysis of the Song of Deborah," in *CBQ* 40. 1978.
- Cross, Frank M. and Freedman, David Noel, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry*. Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1975.
- Globe, A. "The Literary Structure and Unity of the song of Deborah," in *JBL* 93. 1974.
- Glueck, Nelson. *Hesed in the Bible*. New York: The Hebrew Union College Press, 1975.

- Gottwald, N.K. *The Hebrew Bible A Socio-Literary Introduction*. Philadelphia, 1985.
- Houlden, J. L. "Mercy," in *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*. Edited by Alan Richardson and John Bowden. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983.
- Jepsen, A. "Gnade und Barmherzigkeit im AT," *Kerygma und Dogma*, vol. 7. Göttingen, 1961.
- Kasper, Walter. *Mercy. The Essence of the Gospel and the Key to Christian Life*. Translated by William Madges. New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2013.
- Klein, L. R. *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges* in JSOTS/ Bible and Literature Series 14. Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989.
- Landy, F. "Poetics and Parallelism: Some Comments on James Kugel's *The Idea of Biblical Poetry*," in *JSOT* 28. 1984.
- McClellan, W.H. "The Elements of Old Testament Poetry: Part I," in *CQ* 3. 1941.
- Olson, Dennis T. "The Book of Judges: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections" in the *The New Interpreter's Bible, A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, Vol. II. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.
- Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium, Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World* (November 24, 2013), no. 120. Vatican Website. See [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html#II.%E2%80%82The\\_inclusion\\_of\\_the\\_poor\\_in\\_society](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html#II.%E2%80%82The_inclusion_of_the_poor_in_society).
- Pope Francis, *Misericordiae Vultus, Bull of Indiction for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy*, no. 2. Vatican Website. See [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_letters/documents/papa-francesco\\_bolla\\_20150411\\_misericordiae-vultus.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_bolla_20150411_misericordiae-vultus.html).
- Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, Papal Encyclical on the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate (December 7, 1990), no. 1. Vatican Website. See [http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_07121990\\_redemptoris-missio.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html).

- Pope Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Apostolic Exhortation (December 8, 1975), no. 14. Vatican Website. See [http://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_exh\\_19751208\\_evangelii-nuntiandi.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi.html).
- Richter, W. *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Richterbuch* in BBB 18. Bonn, 1963.
- Saniel, Wilfredo A. "Missionary Spirituality," in *Fanning the Flame of Mission. Mission Formation Manual*. Edited by Andrew Gimenez Recepton. San Andres, Manila: ERES Books Publishing, Inc.: 2016.
- Schneider, Tammi J. *Judges. Berit Olam*. Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2000.
- Second Vatican Council, *Ad Gentes*, Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, no. 2. Vatican Website. See [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decree\\_19651207\\_ad-gentes\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_ad-gentes_en.html)
- Watson, W.G.E. *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques* in JSOTS 46. Sheffield 1984.