

Also he fears they may leave their homes at the mercy of Sisera who may take hostages and treat them cruelly. He is not sure that Sisera, even with the over-confidence which twenty years of victory and oppression might create within his mind, will make this fatal error of allowing his cavalry to get into the region where they can be bogged down by the waters of the Kishon if it overflows its banks, nor does he feel certain that the freshets will come at just the right time to bog down the opposing army. He does not feel ready to risk defeat simply on the word of the prophetess, Deborah. Consequently in verse 8 he says that he is ready to go if she will go, but that he will not go alone.

He is not willing to take upon himself the responsibility for this act, but if Deborah is ready to take the blame so that it is her prestige rather than his which will suffer if the thing does not work out, then he is ready to go.

Now we find Deborah making a prediction in verse 9: "And she said, I will surely go with thee; notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman..."

Doubtless Barak understood the prediction in the latter part of this verse very differently from the way in which it was actually fulfilled. With our knowledge of the story, we immediately think of the fact that it was the woman Jael who actually killed Sisera and received the credit for the deed. Without this knowledge of what followed, we would think that ^{Deborah} ~~she~~ meant that she herself would receive the credit for the victory. Barak must have understood it as an effort to arouse his pride and thus to induce him to go alone and to take the responsibility upon himself. Actually the words were literally fulfilled, but in a way which would hardly have occurred