

## DEBORAH'S THIRD PREDICTION

As Barak thought over these various possibilities he decided that he had confidence enough in Deborah's judgment to risk his life following her orders. Yet he was not willing to risk his reputation. He wanted it thoroughly understood, if he undertook this procedure, that it was because of Deborah's statement and because of his belief that God had spoken through her. He was determined that it should be absolutely clear to everyone, if the plan should fail, that it had been her mistake and not his. Consequently, he said (verse 8), "If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go."

In verse 9 we find Deborah's answer: "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."

These words of Deborah present the third prediction in the chapter. Barak probably misunderstood. He thought that Deborah meant, "If I go with you people will give me the credit for the victory rather than you." Barak said to himself, "If we win a great victory, there will be plenty of credit for both of us. I don't need to worry about that. If we lose it will be Deborah's fault, and my reputation will not suffer."

However, those of us who have read the chapter know that the surface understanding of these words is not what God really meant by them. Instead they refer to the death of Sisera, under circumstances that no human being could have guessed in advance. Verse 11 tells us that Heber, the Kenite, had left the rest of the Kenites, and had pitched his tent in a region not far from the area in which Sisera would make his encampment. Later on we find that when the victory came Sisera was not killed by one of the swords of the Israelites.