

# CHAPTER 4

## INTRODUCTION TO JUDGES 4

This chapter shows how that Israel sinning was delivered into the hands of Jabin king of Canaan, by whom they were oppressed twenty years, (~~000E~~Judges 4:1-3); and that Deborah and Barak consulted together about their deliverance, (~~000E~~Judges 4:4-9); and that Barak, encouraged by Deborah, gathered some forces and fought Sisera the captain of Jabin's army, whom he met, and obtained a victory over, (~~000E~~Judges 4:10-15); who fleeing on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber, was received into it, and slain by her while asleep in it, (~~000E~~Judges 4:16-22); which issued in a complete deliverance of the children of Israel, (~~000E~~Judges 4:23,24).

**Ver. 1.** *And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord,* etc.] Which was the fruit and effect of the long rest and peace they enjoyed; and which is often the case of a people favoured with peace, plenty, and prosperity, who are apt to abuse their mercies, and forget God, the author and giver of them; and the principal evil, though not expressed, was idolatry, worshipping Baalim, the gods of the nations about them; though it is highly probable they were guilty of other sins, which they indulged in the times of their peace and prosperity:

*when Ehud was dead;* Shamgar is not mentioned, because his time of judging Israel was short, and the people were not reformed in his time, but fell into sin as soon as Ehud was dead, and continued. Some choose to render the words, "for Ehud was dead"<sup>f77</sup>, who had been, the instrument of reforming them, and of preserving them from idolatry, but he being dead, they fell into it again; and the particle "vau" is often to be taken in this sense, of which Noldius<sup>f78</sup> gives many instances.

**Ver. 2.** *And the Lord sold them,* etc.] Delivered them into a state of bondage and slavery, where they were like men sold for slaves, (see ~~000E~~Judges 3:8);

*into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor;* there was a city of this name, and a king of it of the same name, as here, in the times of Joshua, which city was taken and burnt by him, and its king slain,

(~~6100~~Joshua 11:1,10,11); and either the country about it is here meant, as Jericho in the preceding chapter is put for the country adjacent to it; or this city had been rebuilt, over which reigned one of the posterity of the ancient kings of it, and of the same name; or Jabin was a name common to the kings of Canaan, as Pharaoh to the Egyptian kings; and by Canaan is meant, not the land of Canaan in general, but a particular part of it inhabited by that, or some of that nation or tribe, which was peculiarly so called:

*the captain of whose host [was] Sisera*; Jabin maintained a standing army to keep the people of Israel in subjection, the general of which was Sisera, of whom many things are after said:

*which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles*; not Jabin, as many understand it, for he had his royal seat and residence in Hazor; but Sisera his general, and where the army under his command was. This place had its name either because it was built by some of various nations, or inhabited by workmen of different countries; or rather it was a wood originally, as the name signifies, to which many of the seven nations of the Canaanites fled from before Joshua, and hid and sheltered themselves, and in process of time built strong towers and fortresses in it, and became numerous and powerful; and so the Targum paraphrases the words,

“and he dwelt in the strength of the towers of the people;”

and in other times, as Strabo relates <sup>f79</sup>, the northern parts of the land of Canaan, as those were where Hazor and Harosheth were, were inhabited by a mixed people, Egyptians, Arabians, and Phoenicians; such were they, he says, that held Galilee, Jericho, Philadelphia, and Samaria.

**Ver. 3.** *And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord*, etc.] Because of their hard bondage, and begged deliverance from it, being brought to a sense of their sins, and humbled for them:

*for he had nine hundred chariots of iron*; the same with the *αρματα το δρεπανηφορα*, chariots which carried scythes at the side of them, fastened to the orbs of the wheels <sup>f80</sup>, and were on both sides; and in some stood out ten cubits <sup>f81</sup> which running furiously among the infantry, cut them to pieces in a terrible manner; of which Cyrus had in his army at first but an hundred, afterwards increased to three hundred <sup>f82</sup>; and yet here a petty prince of Canaan had nine hundred of them; and which Josephus <sup>f83</sup> has increased, beyond all belief, to the number of three thousand; which struck great

terror into the Israelites, and who therefore durst not attempt to shake off his yoke, but cried to the Lord for help:

*and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel*; as they increased their sins, and repeated their revolts, the Lord increased their oppressions, and continued them the longer; the first was only eight years, the next eighteen, and this twenty, and which was a very heavy one; the other being foreign princes that oppressed them, but this a Canaanitish king, an implacable enemy, and who doubtless used them the more severely for what they had done to his ancestors, killed his father or grandfather, burnt the city of Hazor, and destroyed the inhabitants of it in Joshua's time; and the servitude was the harder, and the more intolerable to the Israelites, that they were under a people whose land had been given them to possess, and whom they had expelled, and now were become subject to them.

**Ver. 4.** *And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth*, etc.] Deborah was a name common to women with the eastern people, (see <sup>GEN</sup>Genesis 35:8); as Melissa, which is of the same signification with the Greeks, and both signify a "bee"; and to which Deborah answered in her industry, sagacity, and sweetness of temper to her friends, and sharpness to her enemies: she was a "prophetess", and foretold things to come, as the drawing of Sisera and his army to a certain place named by her, the victory that should be gained over him, and the delivery of him into the hands of a woman. Who Lapidoth was, or what is meant by the name, is not certain; most take it to be the name of her husband, which seems best, but who he was is not known; the Jews will have him to be the same with Barak, there being, as they think, some agreement in the names, Barak signifying lightning, and Lapidoth, lamps; but the whole context shows the contrary, that he was not her husband. Some render the words, "a woman of Lapidoth", taking it for the name of her native place or habitation; but where there was a place of this name no account can be given: some say she was so called from her employment before she was a prophetess and judge, making wicks for the lamps in the sanctuary, as Jarchi relates; and others take it to be expressive of her excellencies and virtues, which shone in her as lamps; the first sense is best:

*she judged Israel at that time*; toward the close of the twenty years' oppression under Jabin, being raised up of God as other judges were, and eminently endowed with gifts and grace; she endeavoured to convince the people of their sins, exhorted them to repentance, and was a means of

reforming them, and administering justice and judgment in all cases brought before her; and which Jabin might admit of, connive at, or take no notice of, she being a woman, of whose growing power and interest he had no jealousy.

**Ver. 5.** *And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah*, etc.] Her dwelling house was under a palm tree, or rather she sat under one, in the open air, when the people came to her with their cases, and it was called from hence after her name; though some, as Abarbinel observes, think it was so called, because Deborah, the nurse of Rebekah, was buried here, and which was near Bethel, one of the places next mentioned, (see <sup><ORIS></sup>Genesis 35:8),

*between Ramah and Bethel in Mount Ephraim*; which places were in the tribe of Benjamin in the borders of Ephraim, (see <sup><ORIS></sup>Joshua 16:2 18:22,25). The Jews conclude, from the situation of her, that she was a very opulent woman; the Targum is,

“she was dwelling in a city in Ataroth, Deborah was supported of her own; she had palm trees in Jericho, orchards in Ramah, olives producing oil in the valley, a place of watering in Bethel, and white dust in the kings mountain:”

*and the children of Israel came up to her*; from all parts of the land to the mount of Ephraim:

*for judgment*: to have her advice and counsel in matters of difficulty, and to have causes between contending parties heard and decided by her, so that she might be truly reckoned among the judges.

**Ver. 6.** *And she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedeshnaphtali*, etc.] So called to distinguish it from other places of the same name, this being in the tribe of Naphtali, and a city of refuge, (<sup><ORIS></sup>Joshua 20:7); of which tribe and place Barak was, but who he and his father Abinoam were we have no other account; it seems clear from hence that he was not the husband of Deborah, as the Jews say, or they would have lived together; though, according to Ben Gersom, she lived separate from him, because of the spirit of prophecy that was upon her; however, in this mission and message to Barak she acted not as a private person, but as a judge in Israel, and as having and exercising public power and authority:

*and said unto him*; when come to her upon her summons:

*hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded:* can any doubt be made of it? can Barak in the least question it, as if she should say? the interrogation carries in it a strong affirmation, that the Lord had commanded, and that he had commanded by her mouth:

*[saying], go and draw toward Mount Tabor;* a mountain on the border of Zebulun, and between the tribes of Issachar and Naphtali, and so lay very convenient for the inhabitants of these tribes to meet here; of which (see Gill on “<sup>(182)</sup>Joshua 19:22”); here Balak is directed to steer his course, and betake himself, and draw others with him by persuasive motives and arguments, urging the command of God by Deborah the prophetess, and the assurance given from the Lord by her of victory over their enemies, and deliverance from them; for otherwise the children of Israel were in great fear of Jabin, because of his large army, and iron chariots:

*and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali, and of the children of Zebulun?* which were near at hand, and were the tribes which perhaps were most oppressed, and therefore more easily to be persuaded to engage in this expedition; and the number of them is fixed, as being sufficient for this service, and whose hearts the Lord would engage in it, so that Barak would have little to do but to move it to them, and enforce it with proper arguments; and as they would willingly offer themselves, as it appears afterwards they did, he was at once to take them with him to Mount Tabor, on the top of which was a plain of twenty six furlongs or about three miles, as Josephus <sup>f84</sup> says, surrounded by a wall; though modern travellers make it much less, on which, however, he might draw up his army of ten thousand men, and muster and exercise them.

**Ver. 7.** *And I will draw unto thee,* etc.] Which are the words of the Lord by Deborah, as are the preceding, signifying, that by the secret and powerful influence of his providence he would so order things, and the circumstances of them; and so powerfully operate on the mind and heart of the Canaanitish general as to engage him to come

*to the river Kishon, Sisera the captain of Jabin’s army, with his chariots, and his multitude;* called the ancient river, the river Kishon, (<sup>(182)</sup>Judges 5:21). According to Mr. Maundrell <sup>f85</sup>, the fountain of it was near the valley, at the bottom of Mount Tabor, where Barak was to have his army in readiness to attack Sisera; and which river, according to the same traveller <sup>f86</sup> cuts his way down the middle of the plain of and then continuing his course close by the side of Mount Carmel, falls into the sea

at a place called with which agrees the account of Mr. Sandys<sup>f87</sup>, says it flows from the mountains of Tabor and Hermon, and, gliding by the north skirts of Carmel, discharges itself into the sea. This river is supposed to be the Chorsaeus of Ptolemy<sup>f88</sup>: hither the Lord in his providence would incline the mind of Sisera to come with his large army and chariots, and give Barak an opportunity to fall upon him:

*and I will deliver him into thine hand*; not his person only, but his numerous hosts, and his nine hundred chariots.

**Ver. 8.** *And Barak said unto her*, etc.] To Deborah, after she had delivered the words of the Lord unto him:

*if thou wilt go with me, then I will go*; which showed faith in the word of the Lord, for which he is commended, and a readiness to do the will of God, and courage to engage in such a work with a powerful adversary, and is therefore reckoned among the heroes for faith, (<sup>3112</sup>Hebrews 11:32);

*but if thou wilt not go with me, [then] I will not go*; which though it might discover some weakness in him, yet showed the high opinion he had of Deborah as a judge of Israel, and prophetess of the Lord; being desirous that he might have her with him to pray to God for him, to give him advice and counsel on any emergency, she being as the oracle God; and whereby he testified his regard to the Lord, and to his presence, which he concluded he should have, the prophetess being with him; and more especially his reason for insisting on her going with him might be to prevail upon the inhabitants of Naphtali and Zebulun to go with him, who he might fear would not believe him, or pay any regard to his words, and be in dread of engaging with the enemy, unless she was present; which he supposed would satisfy them as to the mind of God in it, and animate them, and give them heart and spirit.

**Ver. 9.** *And she said, I will surely go with thee*, She made no hesitation about it, but agreed at once to go with him for his encouragement; perceiving some degree of weakness in him, and yet an hearty and sincere inclination to engage in the work proposed, and that this might be no hinderance, she readily assents to it: adding,

*notwithstanding the journey thou takest*; the way or course he steered, the methods he took in insisting on it that she should go with him:

*shall not be for thine honour*; as a general of an army, who is commonly solicitous to have the whole glory of an action:

*for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman*; meaning either herself, for she being judge of Israel, and going along with him, would have the glory of the victory ascribed to her, as usually is to the principal person in the army; and so it would be said in future time, that the Lord delivered Sisera and his army, not into the hand of Barak, but into the hand of Deborah, whereby he would not have all the honour which otherwise he would have, if she went not with him; or else Jael, Heber's wife, is meant, into whose hands Sisera did fall, and by whom he was slain; but this seems to have no connection with Deborah's going or not going with him, it did not depend upon that one way or another; unless it can be thought that thus it was ordered in Providence as a rebuke of his diffidence and weakness, that because he would not go without a woman, Sisera should fall not into his hands, but into the hands of a woman; and if so, this is a clear instance of Deborah's having a spirit of prophecy, and of a prediction of a future contingent event:

*and Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh*; that is, they went together from the palm tree between Ramah and Bethel in Mount Ephraim, to Kedesh in Mount Naphtali, in order to raise the ten thousand men that were to fight with Sisera.

**Ver. 10.** *And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh*, etc.] This he did either by the sound of a trumpet, as Ehud did, or by sending messengers to them to collect ten thousand men from among them, which they accordingly did, and came to him in Kedesh:

*and he went up with ten thousand men at his feet*; they following him up to Mount Tabor cheerfully and readily, being all footmen; for the Israelites had no cavalry, and yet got the victory over Sisera's army, which, according to Josephus<sup>f89</sup>, had ten thousand horses in it:

*and Deborah went up with him*; and his ten thousand footmen, to the top of Mount Tabor, to encourage him and them with her presence, and give her best advice when to descend and engage the enemy.

**Ver. 11.** *Now Heber the Kenite*, etc.] A descendant of Kain, a principal man among the Midianites; the Targum calls him the Salmaean:

*[which was] of the children of Hobab the father in law of Moses*; who came along with the children of Israel through the wilderness into the land of Canaan, and first settled about Jericho, and then removed into the wilderness of Judah, (<sup><0016></sup>Judges 1:16);

*had severed himself from the Kenites*; which dwelt in the said wilderness; to whom he belonged when this separation was made, and on what account is not certain. Abarbinel thinks that it was done now, and with a design to help Israel, that hearing Barak was gone up to Mount Tabor, and seeing Sisera prepared to fight with him, he made as if he was disgusted with his own people, and separated from them, that Jabin, with whom he was at peace, might the more confide in him; when it was out of love to Israel, and with a view to assist them, as occasion should offer, that he removed; but this is not very likely, as these Kenites were a people that kept themselves from meddling with military affairs as much as possible:

*and pitched his tent unto the plain of Zaanaim, which [is] by Kedesh*: for these people dwelt in tents as the Midianites did, from whence they sprung, and as the Scenite Arabs; and yet near to cities, as here, and in places fit for the pasturage of their cattle, in which they were chiefly employed, and here pitched upon a plain where were fields and meadows: the Targum calls it a plain of pools, where were pools of water for the watering of their flocks; or rather it might be rendered the oak or grove of oaks of Zaanaim, the same with Alonzaananim, (see Gill on "<sup><0033></sup>Joshua 19:33"). This place lay between Harosheth of the Gentiles, from whence Sisera came, and Mount Tabor, where Barak was. This little piece of history is inserted here, partly to account for it that there should be any Kenites here, when we are told before they settled in the wilderness of Judah, and partly on account of the following narrative of Sisera being slain by this man's wife.

**Ver. 12.** *And they showed Sisera*, etc.] Either some of the Canaanites that dwelt near Tabor, or some spies that Sisera had out; though some think the Kenites told him, who were at peace with Jabin, (<sup><0017></sup>Judges 4:17); yet whether out of good will or ill will cannot be said: however, so it was ordered by the providence of God, that by some means or another Sisera should be informed

*that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to Mount Tabor*; and no doubt at the same time he was told the number of men that went with him; from whence he might well conclude, that such a warlike man, with such a force collected together, and having posted himself in an high and strong



mountain, must have some design to cause a revolt of Israel from Jabin his prince.

**Ver. 13.** *And Sisera gathered together all his chariots*, etc.] Or “therefore” he gathered them together, which might lie some in one place, and some in another, for the better quartering of the men that belonged to them:

*[even] nine hundred chariots of iron*; and which, as before observed, are magnified by Josephus, and made to be three thousand;

*and all the people that [were] with him*; his soldiers, Jabin’s army, of which he was captain, and are called a multitude, (<sup><0047></sup>Judges 4:7); and which, the above writer says <sup>f90</sup>, consisted of three hundred thousand foot, and ten thousand horse, besides the iron chariots: these he collected together, and brought with him,

*from Harosheth of the Gentiles*; the place where he resided with his army, (<sup><0042></sup>Judges 4:2);

*unto the river of Kishon*; which was near Mount Tabor, the rendezvous of Barak and his men, (see <sup><0046></sup>Judges 4:6,7).

**Ver. 14.** *And Deborah said unto Barak, up*, etc.] Not go up higher for they were upon the top of a mountain; but rise, bestir thyself, prepare for battle, put the army in rank and file, and march and meet the enemy without delay:

*for this [is] the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand*; by a spirit of prophecy she knew this was the precise day, the exact time in which it was the will of God this deliverance should be wrought; and she speaks of it as if it was past, because of the certainty of it, and the full assurance she had of it, and Barak might have; nor is what she says any contradiction to what she had said before, that Sisera should be sold or delivered into the hands of a woman, (<sup><0049></sup>Judges 4:9); for both were true, Sisera first fell into the hands of Jael, a woman, and then into the hands of Barak, and into the hands of both on the same day:

*is not the Lord gone out before thee?* it was manifest he was, at least to Deborah, who was fully assured of it, and therefore it became Barak and his men, and great encouragement they had, to follow, since as the Lord went before them as their Generalissimo, they might be sure of victory:

perhaps there might be some visible appearance, some shining lustre and splendour of the Shekinah, or divine Majesty; the Targum is,

“is not the angel of the Lord gone out before thee, to prosper thee?”

*so Barak went from Mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him*; no mention is made of Deborah’s coming down with them, perhaps she stayed on the mountain till the battle was over: nor might Barak be urgent upon her now to go with him, being confident of success, and having all the ends answered by her presence he could wish for.

**Ver. 15.** *And the Lord discomfited Sisera and all [his] chariots, and all [his] host*, etc.] Frightened them, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions, or disturbed them with a noise and tumult, as the word signifies; with a noise in the heavens, which were in their ears, as Abarbinel observes, like the noise of a large army, as was the case of the Syrians, (<sup><12076></sup>2 Kings 7:6); and they saw, he says, horses and chariots of fire, and the like, which terrified them; and all this he supposes was done before Barak descended from the mountain, so that he had nothing to do when he came but to pursue and kill, whereby it plainly appeared it was the Lord’s doing. Josephus <sup>f91</sup> says there was a great tempest of rain and hail, and the wind blew the rain in their faces, which so blinded their eyes, that their slings and arrows were of no use to them; and they that bore armour were so benumbed, that they could not hold their swords. Something of this kind is intimated by Deborah in her song, (<sup><10751></sup>Judges 5:20); and this was accompanied or followed by a slaughter

*with the edge of the sword before Barak*; the fright and dread they were put into was increased by the appearance of Barak, who fell upon them in their confusion, and cut them to pieces:

*so that Sisera lighted down off [his] chariot, and fled away on his feet*; being very probably swift of foot; and besides thought it safest to quit his chariot, which in the confusion was in danger of being run against by others; as also he might judge he should not be so easily discerned who he was when on foot, as a common soldier, as in his splendid chariot; and this he might do in his fright, not considering his horses were swifter than he: thus Homer represents a Trojan warrior leaping out of his chariot to escape Diomedes, and another as doing the same to get clear of Achilles <sup>f92</sup>.

**Ver. 16.** *But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles, etc.*] The place from whence they came, and to which they endeavoured to escape: but he followed them, so close all that way, and made such havoc of them, that

*all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword, [and] there was not a man left*; no, not one, excepting Sisera, as in (<sup><00417></sup>Judges 4:17); or “even to one”<sup>193</sup>, as in the original text; not one escaped to Hazor to acquaint Jabin of the loss of his army. Philo Byblius says, that nine hundred and ninety seven thousand of Sisera’s army were slain.

**Ver. 17.** *Howbeit, Sisera fled away on his feet, etc.*] Got off, and made his escape

*to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite*; before spoken of, (<sup><00411></sup>Judges 4:11); and he made to that, because he might think himself safer in a tent than in a town; and especially in the tent of a woman, where he might imagine no search would be made; for women of note, in those times, had separate tents, (see <sup><01245></sup>Genesis 24:67); and the rather he made his escape hither for a reason that follows:

*for [there was] peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite*; which Jabin might the more readily come into, because these were not Israelites, nor did they make any claim to the country, and lived only in tents, and attended their flocks, and were a quiet people, and not at all disposed to war; and it might be so ordered by the providence of God, as a rebuke to the Israelites for their sins, when those who were only proselytes kept close to the worship of God, and so enjoyed liberty, peace, and prosperity.

**Ver. 18.** *And Jael went out to meet Sisera, etc.*] Seeing him coming, and knowing him full well, she stepped forward towards him, to invite him into her tent: some think she was looking out, that if she saw Israelite in distress to take him in; and very probably had been some time at her tent door, to inquire the battle went, and which, no doubt, living so near Kedesh, she knew was expected:

*and said unto him, turn in, my lord*; that is, into her tent: and she addresses him with the title of “lord”, for the sake of honour, having been general of a large army; and not because her husband was a servant, and in subjection to him, as Abarbinel suggests:

*turn in to me, fear not*; she repeats the invitation, to show she was hearty and sincere, and that he had nothing to fear from her, nor in her house; and it may be at first she had no thought of doing what she afterwards did to him, it put into her heart after this:

*and when he had turned in unto her in the tent*; and laid himself down upon the ground, being weary:

*she covered him with a mantle*; either to hide him, should any search be made for him, or it may be to keep him from catching cold, being in a sweat through his flight, and being also perhaps inclined to sleep through weariness. The word for a mantle, according to Kimchi, signifies such a garment which has locks of wool on both sides of it, a sort of rug, and so very fit to cover with, and keep warm. So David de Pomis<sup>f94</sup> describes it, as having locks and threads hanging down here and there.

**Ver. 19.** *And he said unto her, give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink, for I am thirsty*, etc.] Which might be occasioned by the heat of the battle, and by the heat of the day, and by heat in running; he asks for a little water, that being very desirable by persons athirst. Some think he did not ask for wine, because he knew the Kenites did not drink any, and so of course kept none in their tents; but though this was the custom of the Rechabites, who were the same with the Kenites, (<sup><248></sup>Jeremiah 35:8); yet it is very probable this custom had not yet obtained among them, since it was enjoined by Jonadab their father, who lived in the times of Jehu, (<sup><205></sup>2 Kings 10:15);

*and she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him to drink*; which she did either out of courtesy, being a better liquor, or with design to throw him into a sleep, which milk inclines to, making heavy, as all the Jewish commentators observe; though Josephus<sup>f95</sup> has no authority to say, as he does? that the milk she gave him was bad and corrupt:

*and covered him*: again, after he had taken a draught of milk, which it seems she poured into a dish with the cream on it, (see <sup><085></sup>Judges 5:25).

**Ver. 20.** *And he said unto her, stand in the door of the tent*, etc.] This he said, not in an imperious way, as some think, but by entreaty:

*and it shall be, when any man shall come and inquire of thee*; seeing her at the door, and where he desired she would stand to prevent their coming into the tent:

*and say, is there any man here?* any besides what belongs to the family? or any of Sisera's army?

*that thou shalt say, no;* there is no man; but to this she made no answer that is recorded.

**Ver. 21.** *Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a nail of the tent,* etc.] When she perceived he was fast asleep, and it being now put into her heart to kill him, having an impulse upon her spirit, which she was persuaded, by the effect it had upon her, that it was of God; not filling her with malice and revenge, but a concern for the glory of God, the interest of religion, and the good of Israel, she took this method to effect the death of this enemy of God, and his people; having no arms in the house, for the Kenites used none, she took up an iron pin, with which her tent was fastened to the ground:

*and took a hammer in her hand;* which perhaps she knew full well how to handle, being used to drive the pins of the tents into the ground with it:

*and went softly unto him;* lest she should awake him

*and smote the nail into his temples:* as he lay on one side, these being the tenderest part of the head, from whence they have their name in the Hebrew language, and into which therefore a nail, or iron pin, might be more easily driven:

*and fastened it into the ground;* she smote the nail with such force and violence, that she drove it through both his temples into the ground on which he lay; and then, as it seems, from (<sup><OR></sup>Judges 5:26); cut off his head, to make sure work of it:

*for he was fast asleep and weary;* and so heard not; when she came to him:

*so he died;* not in the field of battle, but in a tent; not by the sword, but by a nail; not by the hand of a man, but of a woman, as Deborah foretold, (<sup><OR></sup>Judges 4:9).

**Ver. 22.** *And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera,* etc.] Knowing the way he took, at least as he supposed:

*Jael came out to meet him;* as she did Sisera, but with greater pleasure:

*and said unto him, come, and I will show thee the man whom thou seekest;* for she full well knew whom he was in pursuit of:

*and when he came into her [tent];* at her invitation:

*behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail [was] in his temples:* which she did not attempt to draw out, but left it there, that it might be seen in what way she had dispatched him.

**Ver. 23.** *So God subdued on that day Jabin king of Canaan before the children, of Israel.*] Freed Israel from subjection to him and delivered him into the hands of the Israelites; for Josephus<sup>196</sup> says, that as Barak went towards Hazor, he met Jabin, and slew him; who perhaps having heard of the defeat of his army under Sisera, came forth with another against Israel, which being overcome by them, he was slain, and the city utterly destroyed, as the same writer says; but by what follows it seems rather that the total conquest of him was afterwards and gradually accomplished.

**Ver. 24.** *And the hand of the children of Israel, prospered and prevailed against Jabin, the king of Canaan,* etc.] They continued their wars with him, in which they were successful:

*until they had destroyed Jabin, king of Canaan;* took him, and put him to death, and took his cities, and destroyed the inhabitants of them, and so acted more agreeably to the declared will of God, that they should not spare the Canaanites, but destroy them.