

in addition "they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink," because they have turned away from God and are erring in their decisions from other causes as well as from intoxication. They are unwilling to listen to the Word of God. They have the book before them and could easily read it, but they refuse to do so. The man who is learned says, "I cannot read it for it is sealed," and the man who is not learned says, "I cannot read." The one who is learned does not bother to break the seals; the one who is not learned does not bother to take it to someone who can read it to him. How similar this is to the attitude of many people today, who have the Word of God and fail to read it, finding it more interesting to spend their time hearing the ideas of human beings than meditating on the Word of God. The punishment which God declares here against the Judean nobles is one which we today would do well to take to heart.

The prophet now proceeds, in verses 13-14, to give us a bird's eye view of God's future dealing with His people. He declares that He is going to do a marvelous work among them. He is going to cause the wisdom of the wise man to perish, and the understanding of the prudent man to be hid. This reminds us of the words of Isaiah 53: "Who has believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" The Apostle Paul declares in 1 Corinthians that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty" shall come to the knowledge of the truth. It is only those of humble heart, whether wise or ignorant, who can receive the Word of God.

Verse 15 refers again to the secret plans of the Judean nobles to deliver their land by alliance with a wicked power, while leaving God out of account. Their works are in the dark, and they say, "Who sees us?" and "Who knows us?" This is an utter turning upside down of God's method of doing things. They think that they are going to make plans which utilize wicked forces in order to accomplish what will be good. God shows that this cannot be done, that it is only as righteousness is triumphant that anything good will be accomplished. He Himself has created them. They are but the clay and He is the potter. He says that He can turn things upside down if He chooses, but that they are unable to do so. Then in verse 17 He declares that He actually will