

Paul does not quote the verse directly, it is extremely likely that it was in his mind. Isaiah pointed out how all the human figuring and planning came to nought as God by His marvelous intervention destroyed the army of Sennacherib. Paul also pointed out how all human plans and schemes prove worthless in the face of the marvelous intervention of God who gave salvation through the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross and through that alone. In both instances, God made foolish the wisdom of this world.

We have seen that the receivers of tribute will become but a memory. Verse 19 continues the description of the enemy who will disappear: "Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of deeper speech than thou canst perceive; of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not understand." The verse reminds us of Isaiah's words in chapter 28 at the banquet of the nobles a few years before this terrible Assyrian invasion. At that time when they thought that their clever scheme of securing help from Assyria would bring an end to all their troubles, Isaiah pointed out that the Assyrian would in the end be a menace to Judah itself. He declared then that people who would not listen to the simple teaching of God through His prophet would be taught "with stammering lips and another tongue." In the invasion of Sennacherib, this terrible experience has been theirs; now God will deliver them, and the invasion of brutal aliens will be at an end.

The Tent Not Torn Down

In verses 20-24, the attention of the prophet is turned to Zion. It is promised that the people will no longer see it as a city menaced by the forces of war, but rather as "a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down." It is worthy of note, however, that while it is described as a city that is not going to be taken down, the word tabernacle is still used. It is not a permanent dwelling place, but a "tabernacle." The Hebrew word is the same word which is elsewhere translated "tent." It is a temporary abode. For the time being, God's people are secure there. The stakes of this tent are not going to be removed or its cords broken down. It had seemed to be in danger of being completely destroyed.