

they see before them.

fruitful

In verse 17 we have a complete reversal between forest and/field. It is interesting that the forest is here named Lebanon. The word for fruitful field is the same word which we have for Mt. Carmel. It is generally thought that the name of the mountain comes from ~~this~~ very word. The two are spelled exactly the same. It is thought that probably Carmel was covered with fruitful fields right to its top, and hence took the name. It is interesting that the contrast, then, is not merely between forest and fruitful field, but also ~~between~~ between the distant Lebanon and the near, the Israelites' Carmel. Lebanon is to take the place of Carmel and Carmel is to be thought of as if it were Lebanon. A forest is to take the place of a fruitful field and a fruitful field is to be thought of as if it were forest. How remarkably this fits in with Paul's ~~interpretation~~ use of the figure of the potter and the clay, rejecting the people of Israel for a time and grafting in the wild olive branches into the olive tree; (later re-grafting the olive branches of Israel into their own olive tree/).

It is interesting also that the word for fruitful field, Carmel, is generally considered/^{to be} derived from the word for vineyard, and we are all familiar~~ly~~ with the parables in both Old and New Testaments/ⁱⁿ which Israel is spoken of as a vineyard which God has tilled and cared for, but from which he received no fruit, and which therefore he places under a malediction. Certainly the most probable interpretation of this verse seems to be that God ~~is~~ is going to take from those who are outside, like Lebanon, like the forest, the Gentiles, and/^{he} is going to make them into his fruitful field, his Carmel, and he is going to esteem his fruitful field as if it were a forest.

Verses 17 to 21 describe that which God is going to do. 17 tells us of the tremendous things which he is going to bring about. Verse 18 should surely be interpreted in connection with the previous verses. These men refuse to read the Word because some say they can't read and some say the book is sealed. They