

because the angel of the Lord has come and destroyed it. In this interpretation it is of course necessary to take verse 26 as a figurative statement of the great light that God lets in upon them. Instead of being shut up in narrow streets, ~~that~~ in the dark, dingy sections of the city with the gates closed fearing the enemy at any moment, they can stream out into the fields where the sunlight comes upon them and it seems as if they ~~had~~ ^{get} more light in one day than they had in seven shut up within the city expecting the seige at any moment. The interpretation which occurs to me in verse 26 is less satisfactory than of most of the other verses in this interpretation, in this general viewpoint, and yet hardly a matter of real difficulty. It is not, of course, to be cast aside altogether as a possibility ~~xxx~~ that in 26 there is to some extent a look into the far more distant future. However, the previous section does seem to look pretty definitely toward ~~that~~ which happens in the days of Hezekiah when God gave deliverance from the Assyrians.

Another indication which would look in this direction is that which we find over in verse 31 where God says that through his voice the Assyrians will be dismayed and with his rod he will smite ~~them~~. There is a post in the distance which seems to point to all his dealings with the delivery from Assyria. Then it would seem proper to interpret verse 27 following as picturing the coming of the Lord to deliver his people, coming like a great storm, like a great tempest with thick, rising smoke from a devouring fire, coming like a great stream that reaches even to the neck. We have been previously told how the Assyrian is like a great stream that God sends, but here God comes as a great stream to sift the nation. God is coming to deliver from this terrific scourge which God has sent for his own purposes. He will put a bridle in their jaws causing them to go the way He wants them to go instead of the way they want to go. In this terrible night of gloom and deceit, the people are to have a song of joy.