

Thus the Lord revealed to Isaiah that human efforts would never establish lasting happiness. Not even the widespread preaching of God's Word by consecrated men would produce lasting joy on earth. Only through the direct interposition of divine power could such a result be accomplished.

This interposition is described in verse 21: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth."

The word translated "punish" in verse 21 and "visit" in verse 22 would be better rendered "intervene regarding." is translated many different ways in the King James Version. Thus it is rendered "appoint" six times, "call to remembrance" once, "enjoy" once, "look" once, "remember" once, "count" twice, "number" 110 times, "punish" seven times, and "visit" 57 times.

Such a variety of translations might almost suggest that the word had no definite meaning but could be fit into the context in any way that seemed reasonable to the translator. But examination of all the occurrences soon reveals the real meaning of the word. It is used to indicate the intervention of a higher power in the affairs of a lower one. Thus many times it is used of a king numbering his soldiers for battle, or numbering the people from whom he can draw individuals for military or other service. Aside from a king dealing with his troops, use of is nearly always limited to divine activity. It represents the intervention of a higher authority to make a great change in one's situation. This change need not mean punishment or injury; it may equally well denote a blessing. Thus we read in Ruth 1:6 that "the LORD had visited his people" in giving them relief from the famine. While Exodus 34:7 says that God visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation, and Psalm 89:32 says that God will "visit their transgression with the rod," Psalm 106:4 says, "O LORD, . . . visit me with thy salvation."