In verse 12 it is declared that after the Lord has carried out His full will regarding Zion and Jerusalem He is going to punish the king of Assyria. In verse 15 the king of Assyria is likened to an instrument in the hand of God and Isaiah points out how absurd it is that an instrument should boast itself against the one who uses it. Then verses 16-19, using the picture of a forest, show the terrible punishment and destruction that will end the Assyrian Empire.

Deliverance

This naturally leads us, in verses 20-23, to the other side of the picture, God's mercy on His own. Israel will not always be trusting in wicked plots and conspiracies such as that of Ahaz. She will cease to lean upon him that smote her. She will lean upon the Lord. Although God is going to bring a great consumption, in punishment of wickedness in the midst of the land, yet a remnant is to return and to be delivered. We thus have again the note of blessing to God's faithful people, mingled with references to the punishment which He will bring upon the wicked in Israel.

In verses 24-27 a specific revelation of the inscrutable will of God is given. Although the Assyrian is to overrun the greater part of Judah and to be a tremendous threat to the people living in Jerusalem, yet, for the present, God will deliver His city from them. Despite the boastful threats of the Assyrians, God will not allow them to conquer Jerusalem, but will make an overwhelming destruction of them, comparable to that in the days of Gideon. It will be like the event when the Israelites marched through the Red Sea. As Moses' rod, stretched out over the sea, was the instrument God used in showing that He was going to divide the sea and deliver the people by His own omnipotent power, even so God is going to deliver them from Sennacherib by His own interposition without their having to fight at all. This was marvelously fulfilled when the angel of the Lord smote the great host of Sennacherib, as is described in chapters 36 and 37 in the historical portion of the book of Isaiah.