

refers directly and exclusively to Hezekiah after the invasion. In a secondary sense one may, of course, use it as a description of the wonderful blessings to which we look forward when we shall see the Lord Jesus Christ reigning in His beauty in that millennial age which all who believe on Him will share. We look with longing toward that glorious land which is far off from us now, and know that we shall see it with rejoicing. Yet this is not the direct meaning of the verse but only a secondary application, for in its context it refers to Hezekiah as God's representative, delivered from the threat of destruction by the Assyrian aggressor.

Verses 18-19 continue the description of the joy that will come after the downfall of the Assyrian. Verse 18 shows how the people of Jerusalem will look back over the time of terror through which they have gone. They "meditate" upon it, or, as the American Standard Version renders it, they "muse on the terror." It hardly seems real any more. This terrific danger which seemed certain to destroy them is now merely a memory of the past. It seems like a dream. They ask, "Where is the scribe? where is the receiver? there is he that counted the towers?" or, as the American Standard Version has it, "Where is he that counted, where is he that weighed the tribute? where is he that counted the towers?" It is possible to apply these words either to the representatives of the Assyrians or to the Israelite officials themselves. Doubtless the people occasionally saw the Assyrian representatives come within sight of the city to look upon its towers and count them and figure up just how large a force it would take to destroy them. The ambassadors told how the Assyrians had weighed out the tribute which was sent in vain by Hezekiah. The words might conceivably also include the Israelite tax collectors or the officials who counted out the ancient equivalent of ration points as they divided so carefully the little food which was available. The expressions are, from any viewpoint, a vivid description of the careful reckoning in the days of war when disaster seemed so near.

In view of the three-fold repetition of the word where in the questions here and of the use of the word scribe, it has been thought by many that Paul was thinking of this passage when he wrote 1 Corinthians 1:20: "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?" Although