

Now the promise is given that it is to continue a while longer.

A portion of the English of verse 20 suggests something more permanent. We note the words *not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed*. The phrase *not one of* is not in the Hebrew. The American Standard Version is somewhat better here, for it simply says "the stakes whereof shall never be plucked up." Yet both of them, in using *ever* or *never* fail to get the exact meaning of the original. The Hebrew word is preceded by the preposition *for*, and should be rendered "forever" or "perpetually." The phrase is better translated "the stakes shall not be perpetually plucked up" or "removed forever." It does not suggest that the city is never going to be destroyed. As a matter of fact, we know that one hundred fifty years later, God Himself caused Nebuchadnezzar to destroy the city for the sin of the people and to take them into exile. What the passage means is that this city did not suffer from Sennacherib the same fate which other cities suffered at his hands. Those cities he utterly destroyed and left as a perpetual desolation. He pulled up their stakes forever. That he was unable to do to Jerusalem. We should note also that the word here translated "ever" is not the word usually so translated in the Old Testament. Observation of the few instances of its use listed under "EVER-," or under "EVER, for-" in Young's Concordance (entry no. 1 under both words) makes striking the comparison with the greater number of instances in which other words are so translated. Two interesting instances of its use may be cited. One of these is Jeremiah 15:18, where the prophet, complaining of the very bad treatment which he is receiving at the hands of those who refuse to accept his message, says, "Why is my pain perpetual?" We may note also Amos 1:11, where the prophet tells of God's judgment against Edom, because Edom, which became angered against Israel long before, continued to show enmity against his brother. This thought is expressed in the words and he kept his wrath forever. Clearly there is no thought of eternity in either of these two passages.

Verse 21 is rendered better in the American Standard Version than it is in the King James Version. It does not mean that God is going to be a place. The American Standard