

suggested as a guess for an unknown word, but it is rather hard to see how one can have any certainty in deriving such a meaning from the Hebrew word used here. In view of what follows it is not at all impossible that it predicts pilgrimages from Egypt to the soil of Judah, when the idolatry of Egypt should be replaced by worship of the one true God.

Further support for this interpretation is suggested by the fact that the word translated "to be afraid" is one which is often used in the phrase "to fear the Lord." The noun related to it is often used in the phrase "the fear of the Lord." In Genesis 31:42, 53 it occurs in the phrases "the fear of Isaac" and "the fear of his father" and designates God Himself.

The phrase at the end, "which He has determined against it." might lead one to think that verse 17 is a declaration of doom against Egypt, rather than a statement of God's purpose of salvation, but the phrase can be just as easily translated, "which He has purposed concerning it."

In this connection let no one think that the Hebrew is so ambiguous that one can make anything mean anything. This is far indeed from being the case. In all languages a word expresses an area of meaning rather than a point and every sentence has various possibilities of interpretation. In studying any language it is necessary to interpret sentences in relation both to the immediate context and to similar passages elsewhere. It is sometimes said that you can make the Bible mean anything you want. This is true if you take a verse out of context and arbitrarily adopt one of various possible meanings of the particular verse. It is equally true of every book that ever was written. Every sentence has various possibilities of meaning. It is always necessary to consider the immediate context and also the area of possible meanings of each word in order to determine the exact thought which the writer intended to convey.

The Hebrew preposition used near the end of verse 17 may have the meaning "against," "concerning," "upon," or "near." This does not mean that Hebrew prepositions are more ambiguous than English prepositions. Every English preposition has a large range of possible meanings. It is possible to say that in the two world wars the United States fought with Germany, but it is equally possible to say that in those wars the United States fought with England and