

it will be taken off because Messiah is coming, but the meaning would be that as the Lord is providing them salvation, he is the one, the Lord provides, this is what the Lord provides to keep His people safe in order that they may continue being instruments for the carrying out of His will which involves the bringing of the Messiah into the world. It would be interesting to see what the commentaries have to say about those words, because of the anointing. But it seems to me that along that line you get a very sensible interpretation that fits in to the use of terms elsewhere. And I frankly don't see any others to compete against it, though there are some very fertile minds that study these things and probably have come up with something. It seems a bit strange to have Lebanon mean Assyria because after all Assyria is way across the desert from Lebanon, Assyria is the great Mesopotamian power. Lebanon is up in Syria, or rather in Phoenicia, but of course from the viewpoint of Judah, they're both a long distance away, even though one is four times as far away as the other. And they' both represent powerful things outside of the land, of their land. Lebanon is the great forest where the tremendous big trees are, so that --outside of their country--so it is a good figure to stand for a great hostile empire, and I don't think there is any difficulty in seeing the figure and understanding what it means. Once in a while you strike somebody who says he takes the whole Bible literally, every word literally, including the cover, and when somebody says that, why here, does he think that this now is talking about the forest of Lebanon, actually? And he will cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one. This is a picture of some deforestation in Lebanon of Syria, quite out of place in the whole concept. It is a figure of speech but the meaning of the figure is quite clear. It doesn't make it obscure, that it's a figure, in fact it just makes it clearer, but it's perfectly obvious what it is. Always try the literal meaning on anything. You may be surprised sometimes, when you would never think it would fit, when you find out how it does fit. Always try the literal, but recognize the fact that there are occasional, in fact, rather frequent, when figures of speech used. It impresses