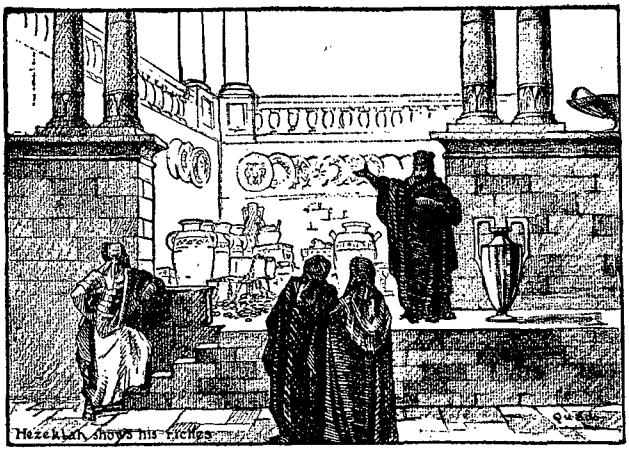
M. L. Andreasen



SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON QUARTERLY

SENIOR DIVISION
Third Quarter, 1928

Lessons from
The BOOK *of* ISAIAH

Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, September 29, 1928
Work for INDIANS IN SOUTH AMERICA

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No. 133 MOUNTAIN VIEW, CAL., JULY, 1928 20c A YEAR

Isaiah, The Gospel Prophet

Part I

By M. L. Andreasen

A Sabbath School Lesson Help for This Quarter

The historical setting.
The times of Isaiah.
The lessons for to-day.

No other prophet had a clearer vision of the results of sin and of righteousness. But as Isaiah denounced sin, so he lifted up Him who only can save from sin.

The writer of this book, and the two parts which are to follow, has had a long experience in teaching the Bible in our colleges, and also as an evangelist. He therefore brings to this presentation the education and the study of many years.

Parts II and III of this book will be ready to use as Lesson Helps the last quarter of 1928 and the first quarter of 1929.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

For a number of years the General Conference Sabbath School Department has printed in the Lesson Quarterly, in connection with each lesson, "Suggestions for Daily Family Study." Our purpose in this was to encourage daily study of the lesson by all members of the family.

We feel that we have come to the time when the "Suggestions for Daily Family Study" may be safely discontinued. The principal reason for this is our need of the space taken by the "Suggestions," for the full notes that must accompany these lessons on the book of Isaiah. Further, we hope our Sabbath school members are so established in the practice of daily lesson study that they no longer need the help of "Suggestions."

We sincerely trust that all will continue the Heaven-inspired plan of spending some time each day with the word of God as presented in the Sabbath school lessons. The usual recognition to all those maintaining a perfect record for a quarter or a year will still be given.

LESSON 1

THE TIMES OF ISAIAH; SPIRITUAL CONDITIONS; THE CALL OF ISAIAH

July 7, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 6.
MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 6: 8.
LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 303-310.

INTRODUCTION

Isaiah has been called the greatest of the Old Testament prophets, "the king of all prophets." His name signifies "Jehovah is salvation." Nothing is known of his father beyond the mere fact of his name, Amoz. Isaiah lived in Jerusalem, and it is concluded that he sprang from a family of some rank, as he seems to have had easy access to the king (Isaiah 7), and was on terms of intimacy with the priest (Isa. 8:2). He had two sons. Isa. 7:3; 8:3.

Various authorities state that Isaiah began to prophecy between the years 759-740 B. C. As his active labors continued more than sixty years, he must have died some time after 680 B. C., during the reign of Manasseh. (See "Prophets and Kings," pp. 310, 382.) Tradition records that he was sawn asunder, to which there may be a reference in Hebrews 11: 36-38.

THE LESSON

1. During the reign of what four kings did Isaiah prophecy? With whom do the visions especially deal? Isa. 1: 1.

NOTE.—The chronology of the time of Isaiah is indicated by the reign of these kings. Uzziah, also called Azariah (2 Kings 14:21), who reigned fifty-two years (2 Chron. 26:3), died about the year 740 B. C. His son, Jotham, was associated with him on the throne after Uzziah was stricken with leprosy (2 Chron. 26:21), and reigned sixteen years. Jotham was followed by Ahaz, who is also said to have reigned sixteen years. 2 Chron. 28:1. He again was followed by Hezekiah, who reigned twenty-nine years. 2 Chron. 29:1. Manasseh, who followed Hezekiah, began to reign early in the seventh century, about 699 B. C., and reigned fifty-five years. 2 Chron. 33:1.

2. What is said of Uzziah's relation to God in the beginning of his reign? How long was he prospered? 2 Chron. 26:3-5, 15.

NOTE.—"The long reign of Uzziah in the land of Judah and Benjamin was characterized by a prosperity greater than that of any other ruler since the death of Solomon, nearly two centuries before. For many years the king ruled with discretion. Under the blessing of Heaven, his armies regained some of the territory that had been lost in former years. Cities were rebuilt and fortified, and the position of the nation among the surrounding peoples was greatly strengthened. . . . This outward prosperity, however, was not accompanied by a corresponding revival of spiritual power. The temple services were continued as in former years, and multitudes assembled to worship the living God; but pride and formality gradually took the place of humility and sincerity."—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 303, 304.

3. What caused Uzziah's downfall? Relate the story of his transgression, and the result. Verses 16-21.

NOTE.—"His heart was lifted up." (Compare Eze. 28:17.)

The sin that resulted so disastrously to Uzziah was one of presumption. Neither his exalted position nor his long life of service could be pleaded as an excuse for the presumptuous sin by which he marred the closing years of his reign, and brought upon himself the judgment of Heaven.

4. What is said of the son of Uzziah? What did he fail to remove? What did the people continue to do? 2 Kings 15:32-35.

NOTE.—"The judgment that befell Uzziah seemed to have a restraining influence on his son. Jotham bore heavy responsibilities during the later years of his father's reign, and succeeded to the throne after Uzziah's death." The "high places" here mentioned in which the people continued to worship were altars for idolatrous worship. (See 2 Kings 17-32, 33.)

In trying to serve Jehovah and other gods at the same time, the Israelites were not unlike many professed Christians to-day. But God calls this doing "corruptly." 2 Chron. 27:2.

5. When God called to repentance and weeping, how did the people respond? Isa. 22:12-14.

6. In the year that King Uzziah died, what vision came to Isaiah? Where was the Lord? Isa. 6:1.

7. What description is given of the seraphim? Where did they stand? Verse 2.

NOTE.—The seraphim are an exalted order of angels that stand above or around the throne. The cherubim are another order, mentioned in Ezekiel, chapters 1 and 10. "Suddenly the gate and the inner veil of the temple seemed to be uplifted or withdrawn, and he [Isaiah] was permitted to gaze within, upon the holy of holies, where even the prophet's feet might not enter. There rose up before him a vision of Jehovah sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, while the train of His glory filled the temple. On each side of the throne hovered the seraphim, their faces veiled in adoration, as they ministered before their Maker, and united in the solemn invocation, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory,' until post and pillar and cedar gate seemed shaken with the sound, and the house was filled with their tribute of praise."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 307.

8. What was their constant refrain? Verse 3. (Compare with Rev. 4: 8.)

9. How did the tribute of praise affect the very building? With what was the house filled? Isa. 6: 4. Compare with the experience on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2:1-4.

10. How did this view of God's holiness and glory affect the prophet? Isa. 6:5.

11. When the prophet realized and cried out that he was undone, how was help provided? Verse 6.

12. Where was the coal applied? What was said? Verse 7.

NOTE.—What was the significance of having a live coal touch the lips? James 3:2. It is "out of the abundance of the heart" that "the mouth speaketh." Matt. 12:34. It might be well to ask the Lord each day, "Lord, consecrate these, my lips, this day to Thee."

13. To what call was Isaiah now ready to respond? Verse 8.

14. To whom was Isaiah sent? Would the people understand his message? Why not? Verses 9, 10.

NOTE.—"It is not God that blinds the eyes of men or hardens their hearts. He sends them light to correct their errors, and to lead them in safe paths; it is by the rejection of this light that the eyes are blinded and the heart hardened."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 322.

15. As the prophet asks, "How long?" what answer is given? Verses 11, 12.

NOTE.—"The evils that had been multiplying for many generations could not be removed in his day. Throughout his lifetime he must be a patient, courageous teacher,—a prophet of hope as well as of doom. The divine purpose finally accomplished, the full fruitage of his efforts, and of the labors of all God's faithful messengers, would appear. A remnant should be saved."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 309.

16. What hope is given the prophet? Verse 13.

NOTE.—"The Promised Land was not to remain wholly forsaken forever. . . . This assurance [verse 13] of the final fulfillment of God's purpose brought courage to the heart of Isaiah."—Id., pp. 309, 310.

The last of the ten tribes were taken captive in 721 B. C., not many years after this vision. Jerusalem was taken more than a hundred years later.

LESSON 2

THE REBELLION OF ISRAEL AND ITS RESULTS; GOD'S CALL TO REPENTANCE

July 14, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 1.
MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 1:18.
LESSON HELPS: "Patriarchs and Prophets," pp. 634, 635 (new ed., pp. 661, 662); "Steps to Christ," pp. 26-33, 40, 41; "Prophets and Kings," pp. 599, 600, 605, 606.

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of Isaiah is characteristic of the book. It is really a summary of all Isaiah's teachings. God has a controversy with His people. He calls heaven and earth to witness the awful fact that rebellion has sprung up in His family. God Himself is the plaintiff. His people are the defendants. The charge is rebellion. The court scene presented is most solemn. What can the people say in defense? They have kept up the form of worship, they have brought their sacrifices, they have made "many prayers;" but all this has been done only as a matter of form. The Lord is provoked. He is weary of all these empty forms, and hates them. But instead of pronouncing sentence

upon the people, He says: "Come now, and let us reason together, . . . though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." How anxious God's people should be to accept the proffered pardon!

THE LESSON

1. What is God's complaint against His people? Isa. 1:2.

NOTE.—This scene has been called, "the great arraignment." Surely it must be a serious situation when God Himself makes the charge of rebellion against His people. "Rebellion originated with Satan, and all rebellion against God is directly due to satanic influence."—"Patriarchs and Prophets," p. 635. (See 1 Sam. 15:23.)

2. What impressive illustration does God use to show how low Israel has fallen? Verse 3.

3. How does God speak of His people? What is said of the Holy One of Israel? Verse 4.

NOTE.—What a fearful condition is here portrayed! In contrast with this, God is spoken of as "the Holy One of Israel." In vision, Isaiah had seen "the Holy One," and had heard the seraphim sing, "Holy, holy, holy." That impression never left him. God was to him, "holy, holy, holy." Twenty-five times this expression is used by Isaiah, and in the Old Testament elsewhere only six times.

4. How does God express the uselessness of further punishment? How completely had the body been afflicted because of their transgression? Verses 5, 6.

5. What had befallen their country? What would have taken place had there not been "a very small remnant"? Verses 7-9.

NOTE.—"Hearts that respond to the influence of the Holy Spirit are the channels through which God's blessing flows. Were those who serve God removed from the earth, and His Spirit withdrawn from among men, this world would be left to desolation and destruction, the fruit of Satan's dominion. Though the wicked know it not, they owe even the blessings of this life to the presence, in the world, of God's people whom they despise and oppress."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 306.

6. How does God now address the rulers? The people? To what should they give ear? Verse 10.

7. By what questions does God try to cause them to consider the real purpose of sacrifices? How does He speak of their offerings? Verses 11, 12.

8. What definite command does God give with reference to vain oblations? How is incense mentioned? New moons and sabbaths? Solemn meetings and appointed feasts? Verses 13, 14.

NOTE.—No form or ceremonies can ever take the place of heart service. Without Christ, without true repentance, no act is of any value in God's sight. Even prayer may become an abomination. Prov. 28:9.

9. When the people spread forth their hands in prayer, what would God do? Why would not God hear their "many prayers"? Verse 15.

10. What does God exhort them to do? What were they to cease to do? Verse 16.

11. What should they learn? What should be their attitude toward the oppressed? the fatherless? the widow? Verse 17. (See James 1:27.)

12. What invitation does God extend? What happy condition follows the acceptance of this invitation? Verse 18.

NOTE.—For comment on this verse see "Steps to Christ," pp. 48, 55.

13. On what conditions does God promise His people the good of the land? Verse 19.

14. What attitude on the part of the people will lead to their destruction? How sure is this? Verse 20.

NOTE.—"Here are the promises, plain and definite, rich and full; but they are all upon conditions. If you comply with the conditions, can you not trust the Lord to fulfill His word? Let these blessed promises, set in the framework of faith, be placed in memory's halls. Not one of them will fail. All that God hath spoken, He will do. 'He is faithful that promised.' "—"Testimonies," Vol. 5, p. 630.

15. What change had taken place in the city? How are the princes, or chief men, spoken of? Verses 21-23.

NOTE.—The city here spoken of is Jerusalem. It had been full of judgment, and righteousness had lodged in it. But now all was changed. The chief men had become companions of thieves, and justice was not to be had. How like conditions in the world to-day!

16. What will God do to His adversaries? What will He do for His own people? Verses 24-26.

17. How shall Zion be redeemed? Verse 27.

NOTE.—A "very little remnant" will be redeemed. "Her converts" literally means "those in her who turn." Some will turn, and they will be redeemed with judgment and with righteousness.

18. What will happen to transgressors and sinners? Verses 28-31.

LESSON 3

THE CALL OF THE PEOPLE TO THE HOUSE OF JACOB; A CONTROVERSY WITH ZION; A REFUGE IN ZION

July 21, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 2 to 4.
MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 4: 5, 6.
LESSON HELPS: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 323, 324; "Patriarchs and Prophets," pp. 101, 102 (new ed., pp. 98, 99).

THE LESSON

1. For what time was this vision given? Where shall the mountain of the Lord's house be established? Who shall be drawn to it? Isa. 2:1, 2.

NOTE.—We make a distinction between "the Lord's house" and "the mountain of the Lord's house." "The Lord's house" is His people. (See Heb. 3:6.) "The mountain of the Lord's house" here mentioned is

apparently a religious power of the latter days which exalts itself to rulership over other powers and to whom the nations of the earth will give honor. It is a power in which many, even of God's professed people, are led to put their trust, instead of trusting the Lord.

These verses can not refer to the time of the setting up of the true kingdom of God; for when the true kingdom is set up, all others are broken to pieces together. (See Dan. 2:35.) Here they are not broken to pieces, but this religious power merely exalts itself over the other mountains (or "hills"). Hence this power here spoken of does not refer to God's true people, but to the counterfeit power that will usurp God's place.

2. What will many people say? Verse 3.

NOTE.—"Many people shall go and say." This is not God's saying. It is not, "Thus saith the Lord," but the people "go and say."

Compare "all nations shall flow unto it," verse 2, and "many people," verse 3, with Revelation 13:3, "all the world," and verse 8, "all that dwell upon the earth." When the power here mentioned shall be exalted over the kings of the earth,—the other mountains,—we may expect the whole world to wonder after the beast.

3. What further will the people say? What will they propose to do with their swords and spears? What peace plans will they endeavor to establish? Verses 4, 5.

NOTE.—Verse 4 has found a remarkable fulfillment in the peace talk and peace conferences of late years. Many nations, indeed, have said that they would not lift up the sword against other nations, and that they would not learn war any more. In contrast with what the people say, note what God says. Joel 3:9-13. Note also Isa. 8:9, 12.

4. How does the prophet express God's displeasure with the house of Jacob? As the result of their idol worship, what will God refuse to do? Verses 6-9.

NOTE.—Verse 5 mentions the house of Jacob as the ones addressed by the "people." Now God expresses His displeasure against those who say, "Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord" (verse 3), and yet have their land "full of idols" (verse 8). These people have all that man's natural heart could desire, yet God has forsaken them (verse 6), because of their idolatrous bowing and humbling themselves (verse 9), and He says, "Therefore forgive them not."

5. How does God rebuke haughtiness and self-exaltation? Verses 10-17.

NOTE.—When the last great deception shall come, the climax is shown in him who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped. That power having been brought to view in Isaiah 2:1-4, God now tells how He regards it.

6. In the day of the Lord, what will men do? Why do they seek to hide themselves? Verses 19-21.

7. What are we counseled to do? Verse 22.

NOTE.—God's children had rebelled against Him, had so completely yielded themselves to the enemy, so debased themselves, that they were no longer to be accounted more than the breath they breathed. Instead of relying upon man's leadership, God would have men turn to Him.

8. What did God say He would remove from Judah and Jerusalem? Who should rule over them? Isa. 3:1-5.

NOTE.—Before Israel and Judah were taken captive, they suffered intensely for lack of bread during the straitness of the siege of both Samaria and Jerusalem. The countryside was also denuded. When the cities were captured, the leaders were disposed of by their conquerors. Of the house of Judah under Zedekiah it is written in "Prophets and Kings," pp. 459, 460, "Zedekiah was taken prisoner, and his sons were slain before his eyes. The king was led away from Jerusalem a captive, his eyes were put out, and after arriving in Babylon he perished miserably. . . .

"Many had escaped the horrors of the long siege, only to perish by the sword. Of those who still remained, some, notably the chief of the priests and officers and the princes of the realm, were taken to Babylon and there executed as traitors. Others were carried captive, to live in servitude." Without leadership, they preyed upon one another; seeking for leaders, but finding none, they have continued to this day a living testimony to the certainty of God's judgments.

9. What was the condition of Jerusalem and Judah? What witnessed against them? Verses 8, 9.

NOTE.—This chapter deals with conditions as they were in the time of Isaiah. "Only a few short years, and the ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel were to be scattered among the nations of heathendom. And in the kingdom of Judah also the outlook was dark. The forces for good were rapidly diminishing, the forces for evil multiplying."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 324. As conditions were then, so they are now. Hence we may confidently apply the principles of this chapter to this time also. Of them it was said: "The child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient." Verse 5. Of this time it is written that the children shall be "disobedient to parents." 2 Tim. 3:2. Their countenance at that time showed their sin; the marks of dissipation were upon them. Isa. 3:9. The sins of Sodom are still prevalent. The poor were oppressed then. Isa. 3:14, 15. So they are now. James 5:1-6.

10. What controversy does God have with the daughters of Zion? Verses 16-24.

NOTE.—"The prophecy of Isaiah 3, was presented before me, as applying to these last days; and the reproofs are given to the daughters of Zion who have thought only of appearance and display."—"Testimonies," Vol. 1, p. 270.

11. What is said of the men? Verse 25.

NOTE.—"I was shown that this scripture will be strictly fulfilled."—Ibid.

12. What is said of the women of Isaiah 4:1?

NOTE.—This text is connected immediately in thought with the last verses of the preceding chapter. In its broader prophetic and spiritual application, we would note that "woman" designates a church. Rev. 12:1, 2; 17:3; 19:7-9; 21:9. Apparently these seven women are not above reproach. Isa. 4:1, last part. They are desirous of having a name, but they will eat their own bread and wear their own apparel.

We would therefore conclude that these seven women represent the fallen churches. They do not accept the wedding garment. They will wear their own apparel. They will not sit down at the feast and feed on the word of God. That they have rejected. They will eat their own bread. They want the name, not the person, of Christ. They are Christians in name only. They want the name of being Christians, but they will eat and dress as they please. In contrast with these, the true people of God are spoken of in the following verses.

13. How does the prophet speak of the Branch of the Lord? Verse 2. (See also Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8; 6:12, 13.)

14. What shall they be called who are left in Zion and who remain in Jerusalem? Verse 3.

NOTE.—These verses speak of the remnant, they that are left, that remain, that "are escaped of Israel." Verse 2. The women spoken of in verse one are not above reproach, but these are holy. They are written among the living in Jerusalem. Moffatt translates it, "entered in the book of life." In the shaking time, many will be shaken out. Those that "remain," that are "left," will be holy, every one of them.

15. How will God accomplish His cleansing work? Verse 4. (See also John 16:7-11.)

NOTE.—"The word of the Lord to Israel was, 'I will turn My hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin.' To sin, wherever found, 'our God is a consuming fire.' In all who submit to His power, the Spirit of God will consume sin. But if men cling to sin, they become identified with it. Then the glory of God, which destroys sin, must destroy them."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 107.

16. What precious promises has God given His people? Verses 5, 6.

NOTE.—These verses will find their fulfillment in the last great crisis. "In one of the most beautiful and comforting passages of Isaiah's prophecy [Isa. 4:5, 6], reference is made to the pillar of cloud and of fire to represent God's care for His people in the great final struggle with the powers of evil."—"Patriarchs and Prophets," p. 283.

LESSON 4

THE VINEYARD; THE SIX WOES; MESSIANIC PROPHECIES; THE REMNANT

July 28, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 5; 7; 10; 11.
MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 9: 6.
LESSON HELPS: "Prophets and Kings," Introductory chapter, pp. 15-22; "Christ's Object Lessons," pp. 284-306 (new ed., pp. 287-311).

INTRODUCTION

The first part of the lesson deals with the Lord's vineyard. The Lord expected His people to bring forth good fruit, but, behold, they brought forth "wild grapes." Some of these wild grapes are mentioned

and condemned under the six woes in the latter part of chapter five.

The other part of the lesson deals with prophecies concerning the Messiah. He shall be born of a virgin, His name shall be Immanuel, and Jesse of the house of David shall be His father. The Spirit of God shall rest upon Him in full measure, and of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.

THE LESSON

1. What did God do for His vineyard? For what did He look? What was its fruitage? Isa. 5:1, 2.

NOTE.—"As the Lord's vineyard they were to produce fruit altogether different from that of the heathen nations. These idolatrous peoples had given themselves up to work wickedness. . . . In marked contrast was to be the fruit borne on the vine of God's planting.

"It was the privilege of the Jewish nation to represent the character of God as it had been revealed to Moses. In answer to the prayer of Moses, 'Show me Thy glory,' the Lord promised, 'I will make all My goodness pass before thee,' 'And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.' This was the fruit that God desired from His people. In the purity of their characters, in the holiness of their lives, in their mercy and loving-kindness and compassion, they were to show that 'the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.' "—"Christ's Object Lessons," pp. 285, 286. (Compare Christ's parable, Matt. 21:33-44. See also Isa. 27:2, 3.)

2. How does God appeal to the people? Verses 3, 4.

3. What does God say He will do? Who is the vineyard? What was the response to God's care? Verses 5-7.

NOTE.—"God in His Son had been seeking fruit, and had found none. Israel was a cumberer of the ground. Its very existence was a curse; for it filled the place in the vineyard that a fruitful tree might fill. It robbed the world of the blessings that God designed to give. The Israelites had misrepresented God among the nations. They were not merely useless, but a decided hindrance. To a great degree their religion was misleading, and wrought ruin instead of salvation."—Id., p. 215.

4. What does God condemn in the first of the six woes? Verses 8-10.

NOTE.—"The outlook was particularly discouraging as regards the social conditions of the people. In their desire for gain, men were adding house to house and field to field."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 306.

"Dwell alone in the midst of the land." Verse 8, A. R. V. Having bought up all the land about them, they would have no near neighbors. Many houses would be desolate (empty). Verse 9.

This first woe deals with greediness. God's punishment is to reduce the yield. Ordinarily ten acres in those days would yield five hundred baths, or four thousand gallons. The "ephah" was one-tenth part of an homer.

5. What is condemned in the second woe? Verses 11-17.

NOTE.—Drinking and feasting are here condemned. Men drink until they "regard not the work of the Lord." The Lord is working, but drink has stupefied the people. Strong drink has always been a curse, and is condemned by God.

6. Against what form of sin is the third woe directed? Verses 18, 19.

NOTE.—The sin here mentioned is that of open defiance against God. Isaiah has been warning the people that judgments will come upon them for their sins. They scoff at him. "Let Him make speed," they say, "and hasten His work, that we may see it." This defiant unbelief seems to have been common in Isaiah's day. (See Isa. 28:14, 15.)

7. To whom does the fourth woe apply? Verse 20.

NOTE.—This verse brings to view a complete confusion of moral distinctions. Good is evil and evil is good. This lack of understanding or appreciating moral standards is a sign of deep moral corruption. The situation to-day is no better than in Isaiah's time.

8. On whom does the fifth woe descend? Verse 21.

NOTE.—True wisdom and prudence are gifts from God; but to be wise in one's own eyes is an abomination to Him.

9. Against whom is the last woe directed? Verses 22-30.

NOTE.—This woe is especially directed against the leaders of the people, the judges "which justify the wicked for reward." In verses 11-17 drunkenness is spoken of as a hindrance to spiritual progress. Here it is mentioned as a curse and a hindrance to justice. Drunken judges will "let off guilty men for a bribe, and deprive the innocent of his rights." Verse 23, Moffatt's translation. (See also Isa. 10:1-4.)

Note the judgments of God in verse 24. The reason for all this is that "they have cast away the law of the Lord," and that also they have "despised the word of the Holy One of Israel." "The law" and "the word" need to be emphasized at this time. Verses 25-30 deal with the sure destruction that shall come because of sin.

10. What sign was given to the house of David when the faithless King Ahaz had refused to seek a sign? Isa. 7:10-16.

11. How is the coming Messiah spoken of? Isa. 9:6, 7.

12. What is said of Christ and His ancestry? Isa. 11:1, 2.

NOTE.—Jesse was the name of David's father. 1 Sam. 17:12. Christ, then, should be of the house of David. Luke 1:32. Note the sevenfold spirit mentioned in Isaiah 11:2.

13. In what words does the prophet describe the Lord's dealings with man? How is the coming kingdom described? Verses 3-9.

14. What will the remnant do in "that day"? Isa. 10:20, 21.

NOTE.—"In that day" "the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, . . . shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth." From "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" there will be some who will gladly respond to the message, "Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is

come." They will turn from every idol that binds them to earth, and will "worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." They will free themselves from every entanglement, and will stand before the world as monuments of God's mercy. Obedient to the divine requirements, they will be recognized by angels and by men as those that have kept "the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

15. Though many shall profess to belong to Israel, how many from among them will be saved? Verses 22, 23; Rom. 9:27, 28.

16. What shall the root of Jesse be in "that day"? What is said of His rest? Isa. 11:10.

17. Whom will the Lord set His hand to recover? From where will they be gathered? Verses 11, 12.

NOTE.—This will be the "second time" God recovers His people, and this prophecy has its fulfillment at the second coming of Christ. The first gathering was into the Promised Land in the time of Moses and Joshua.

18. What will become of envy and jealousy? Against whom will Israel use their united strength? Verses 13-16.

NOTE.—This has its application to God's people in all ages. Only as all envy and jealousy are banished from our hearts, can we ever successfully do the work given us. We must be a united people, or we shall fail.

LESSON 5

A SONG OF PRAISE; THE EARTH DESTROYED; THE FALL OF SATAN

August 4, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 12; 13; 24; 14.
MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 12: 2, 3.
LESSON HELP: "The Great Controversy," pp. 653-661 (new ed., pp. 735-743).

INTRODUCTION

The twelfth chapter of Isaiah is a song of praise which God's people will sing "in that day." The twenty-fourth chapter deals with the destruction of the earth and the gathering of God's people from its four corners. Chapter fourteen deals with Satan, and the causes of his fall and final destruction. These three chapters are "present truth" for this time. Although we may not be able to understand every detail of each verse, the main lessons are clear.

THE LESSON

1. "In that day," what will God's people say? Isa. 12:1-3.

NOTE.—"That day" evidently has reference to the time just preceding the coming of the Lord, as brought to view in the latter part of the eleventh chapter of Isaiah.

The twelfth chapter is a song of the experience of the people of God. For a little while God has been angry with them, but now they are comforted.

2. In what words will God's people further express their joy? Verses 4-6.

NOTE.—"Declare His doings." Tell the people that God is the Creator. Tell what He has done for your soul. Exalt His name. God has not left His people. He is still "the Holy One" in the midst of His own.

3. In the day of the Lord, who will be gathered to battle? How does that day come upon men? What will the effect be upon mankind? Isa. 13:4, 6, 7.

4. How is the day of the Lord spoken of? Verse 9.

NOTE.—The day of the Lord will come as a day of deliverance to the saints, but to the wicked it will be a day of wrath and fierce anger. (See Zeph. 1:14-18.)

5. What is said of the stars, the sun, and the moon? Verse 10. (See Matt. 24:29.)

NOTE.—The signs in the sun, moon, and stars are here mentioned. The sun was darkened in accord with the words of this prophecy, May 19, 1780; the moon, the following night; and the great sign of the falling stars took place November 13, 1833. One additional item of note is here mentioned: "The sun shall be darkened in his going forth," that is, before noon. This was literally fulfilled, the darkening of the sun beginning about 10 A. M.

6. What terrible destruction will God bring upon the world? What punishment will come to the wicked? Isa. 13:11, 13; 24:1, 3, 4.

NOTE.—Of the condition of the earth at that time the following is written: "The whole earth appears like a desolate wilderness. The ruins of cities and villages destroyed by the earthquake, uprooted trees, ragged rocks thrown out by the sea or torn out of the earth itself, are scattered over its surface, while vast caverns mark the spot where the mountains have been rent from their foundations."—"The Great Controversy," p. 657.

7. Why will this destruction come? Isa. 24:5, 6.

NOTE.—God's charge against the people is that they have "transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." This is true in our day. The laws of both God and man are lightly regarded, crime and transgression are rapidly increasing, and the everlasting covenant is broken.

8. What is the result of this destruction? Verses 7-12.

NOTE.—God will speak in ways that can not be misunderstood. When the earth shall be given over to desolation, the merry-hearted will sigh, the harp shall cease as well as the song, all joy is darkened and mirth is gone. Men now seem to be pleasure mad, but when the cities are broken down and destruction reigns, there will be sorrow and anguish. How significant is the expression, "city of confusion,"—Babylon!

9. **What will be the experience of the remnant at this time? Verses 13, 14.**

NOTE.—This is the shaking time. As when an olive tree is shaken, or as when grapes are gathered, there are a few left still, so a remnant shall remain firm. Psalm 91.

10. **Whence will come this song of praise? Verses 15, 16.**

11. **How does the Lord state the hopeless condition of the wicked? Verses 17, 18.**

NOTE.—Fear, panic, shall seize the inhabitants. As they flee, some will be caught in the snare, some in the pit. And should they escape from the one, they will fall into the other. "For the windows from on high are open." This is a similar expression to the clause, "the windows of heaven" in Malachi 3:10. There God pours out a blessing, here He pours out the vials of His wrath.

12. **How complete will be the destruction of the earth? Verses 19, 20.**

13. **Who will be punished? Where will they be gathered? For how long a time are they shut up? What is said of the sun and moon? Verses 21-23.**

NOTE.—"The high ones that are on high," as contrasted with the kings of earth, are the fallen angels, including Satan. The pit and prison in which they will be shut up is the devastated earth. Rev. 20: 1. "Many days" has reference to the one thousand years. "At the close of the thousand years the second resurrection will take place. Then the wicked will be raised from the dead, and appear before God for the execution of 'the judgment written.' . . . And Isaiah declares, concerning the wicked, 'They shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.' "—"The Great Controversy," p. 661. When the new kingdom is established, the glory will be so great that sun and moon will be pale in comparison, or, as the text expresses it, "be confounded" and "ashamed." (See Rev. 22:5.)

14. **By what name was Satan known before his fall? Isa. 14:12.**

15. **What caused the fall of Lucifer? What was the thought of his heart? Verses 13, 14.**

NOTE.—"Lucifer had said, 'I will be like the Most High;' and the desire for self-exaltation had brought strife into the heavenly courts, and had banished a multitude of the hosts of God. Had Lucifer really desired to be like the Most High, he would never have deserted his appointed place in heaven; for the spirit of the Most High is manifested in unselfish ministry. Lucifer desired God's power, but not His character. He sought for himself the highest place, and every being who is actuated by his spirit will do the same. Thus alienation, discord, and strife will be inevitable. Dominion becomes the prize of the strongest. The kingdom of Satan is a kingdom of force; every individual regards every other as an obstacle in the way of his own advancement, or a stepping-stone on which he himself may climb to a higher place."—"The Desire of Ages," pp. 435, 436.

16. How is Satan described by Ezekiel? Eze. 28:12, 13.

NOTE.—The king of Tyrus mentioned in verse 12 is evidently here used as a symbol of Lucifer, or Satan. The statement in verse 13, "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God," coupled with the statements in verses 14-17, makes it plain that no other could have been intended.

17. What high position did Lucifer hold? What is said of his "ways"? Verses 14, 15.

NOTE.—Moffatt translates it thus: "From the day you were created, you lived a perfect life, till you were discovered doing wrong."

18. What did God say He would do to this covering cherub? Why was he "lifted up"? Verses 16, 17.

LESSON 6

THE TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

August 11, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 25; 26.
MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 26: 3.
LESSON HELPS: "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 593-602; "The Great Controversy," pp. 635-642 (new ed., pp. 717-724).

INTRODUCTION

The twenty-fifth chapter of Isaiah is a hymn of praise to Jehovah by the remnant church, which has just escaped the events mentioned in chapter 24. The twenty-sixth chapter is a song of the experience of God's people in connection with the events just preceding the coming of the Lord. This makes these chapters "present truth" in a very real sense. As this lesson is studied, these experiences will become more real to us, especially as we know that the events portrayed are just before us.

THE LESSON

1. What reason does Isaiah give for praising God? Isa. 25:1, 2.

2. What has God been to the poor and needy? When will protection especially be needed against the storm and the heat? Verse 4. (See Rev. 16; Ps. 91.)

NOTE.—"The darkest hour of the church's struggle with the powers of evil, is that which immediately precedes the day of her final deliverance. But none who trust in God need fear; for 'when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall,' God will be to His church 'a refuge from the storm.' "—"Prophets and Kings," p. 725.

3. When will the events spoken of in verse 8 take place? 1 Cor. 15:54; Rev. 21:4.

NOTE.—"From garrets, from hovels, from dungeons, from scaffolds, from mountains and deserts, from the caves of the earth and the caverns of the sea, Christ will gather His children to Himself. On earth

they have been destitute, afflicted, and tormented. Millions have gone down to the grave loaded with infamy because they refused to yield to the deceptive claims of Satan. By human tribunals the children of God have been adjudged the vilest of criminals. But the day is near when 'God is judge Himself.' Then the decisions of earth shall be reversed. 'The rebuke of His people shall He take away.' White robes will be given to every one of them. And 'they shall call them the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord.' "—"Christ's Object Lessons," pp. 179, 180.

4. What will the redeemed say in that day? Isa. 25: 9.

NOTE.—"Those who would have destroyed Christ and His faithful people, now witness the glory which rests upon them. In the midst of their terror they hear the voices of the saints in joyful strains exclaiming, 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us.' "—"The Great Controversy," p. 644.

5. What song will be sung? Isa. 26: 1.

6. To whom will the gates be opened? Verse 2. (See Rev. 22:14.)

NOTE.—The gates of the New Jerusalem will be opened wide for the righteous people that keep the truth. There will not enter into it anything that defiles.

7. Through all the struggles and turmoil of the last days, what may he have whose mind is stayed on God? Why? Verse 3.

NOTE.—"Those who take Christ at His word, and surrender their souls to His keeping, their lives to His ordering, will find peace and quietude. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by His presence. In perfect acquiescence there is perfect rest. . . . Our lives may seem a tangle; but as we commit ourselves to the wise Master Worker, He will bring out the pattern of life and character that will be to His own glory. And that character which expresses the glory—character—of Christ, will be received into the Paradise of God. A renovated race shall walk with Him in white, for they are worthy."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 331.

8. What admonition does the Lord give? What reasons are given why we should trust in the Lord? Verses 4-6.

NOTE.—At this time when cities shall go down to destruction (verse 5), God counsels His people to put their trust in Him.

9. How is the way of the just defined? What name is here given to the One who will weigh men's actions? Verse 7.

NOTE.—The way of the just may be narrow, it may be steep, even stony, but it will not be crooked. It will be a "straight" path. Verse 7, Lesser's translation.

10. Where have the just waited for the Lord? What was their desire? Verses 8, 9, first part.

NOTE.—The people here spoken of have been waiting for the Lord. When His judgments were in the earth, they waited. Their desire was to the name of God and to His remembrance, or memorial. The American Revised Version of verse 8 reads: "Yea, in the way of Thy judg-

ments, O Jehovah, have we waited for Thee; to Thy name, even to Thy memorial name is the desire of our soul." God's name and His memorial have a familiar sound. The name of God is His character. And the remnant people will have the name of God in their foreheads. Rev. 14: 1. The Sabbath is the outstanding memorial of creation. "It is to be remembered and observed as the memorial of the Creator's work. Pointing to God as the Maker of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all false gods. All who keep the seventh day, signify by this act that they are worshipers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man's allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him. The fourth commandment is the only one of all the ten in which are found both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It is the only one that shows by whose authority the law is given. Thus it contains the seal of God, affixed to His law as evidence of its authenticity and binding force."—"Patriarchs and Prophets," p. 307.

11. What is the effect of God's judgments upon mankind? Verses 9, last part, 10, 11.

NOTE.—Thus it has ever been. When God's judgments are in the land, men humble themselves. They promise to do right. Verse 9. Let the judgments be taken away, let the danger pass, and many forget all their good intentions. Verse 10.

12. What does God ordain for His own? What has He done for them? Verse 12; Eph. 2:10.

NOTE.—The American Revised Version reads, "Thou hast also wrought all our works for us." God works in us both to will and to do. We can do "no good thing" of ourselves. But, says the apostle Paul, "I have strength to do everything through Him who gives me power."

13. What confession do God's people here make? What has happened to all the wicked? Isa. 26:13, 14.

14. How has God blessed His people? What did God's chastisement lead them to do? Verses 15, 16.

15. What joyful news is proclaimed concerning those who have died in the Lord? Verse 19.

16. What invitation is given to God's people during the time of the "indignation"? Verse 20.

NOTE.—"If the blood of Christ's faithful witnesses were shed at this time, it would not, like the blood of the martyrs, be as seed sown to yield a harvest for God. Their fidelity would not be a testimony to convince others of the truth; for the obdurate heart has beaten back the waves of mercy until they return no more. If the righteous were now left to fall a prey to their enemies, it would be a triumph for the prince of darkness. Says the psalmist, 'In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me.' Christ has spoken: 'Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the

earth for their iniquity.' Glorious will be the deliverance of those who have patiently waited for His coming, and whose names are written in the book of life."—"The Great Controversy," p. 634.

17. To what time does this refer? While God's people are safely hidden, what will come upon the wicked? Verse 21.

LESSON 7

THE VINEYARD; FALSE SECURITY

August 18, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 27; 28.
MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 28: 16.
LESSON HELPS: "Patriarchs and Prophets," p. 726 (new ed., p. 761); "Prophets and Kings," pp. 587-592; "The Desire of Ages," pp. 597-600.

INTRODUCTION

We are considering events happening in "that day," that is, in close connection with the day of the Lord. Note how many times "that day" occurs in Isaiah 27, 28. At the beginning of this lesson, God assures His people that He will keep His vineyard, that He will water it every moment, and that He thinks of it tenderly. He will stay the "rough wind in the day of the east wind." Isa. 27:8. The same tender care is evidenced in the parable of the plowman in chapter 28. God's people will be tried and tested, but they will not be crushed. Not so with the wicked. God will there do His "strange act." Verse 21. And there is no escape, no hiding; the bed is too short, the covering too narrow.

THE LESSON

1. Whom does God say He will punish in "that day"? Isa. 27:1.

NOTE.—The symbols, serpent and dragon, here used, refer to Satan. Rev. 20:2.

2. To what does the Lord compare His people? In what impressive way does He express His care for them? Verses 2, 3. (See also Isa. 5:1-7; John 15:1-8.)

3. What will be done to the briers and thorns? Isa. 27:4; Mal. 4:1.

4. What gracious promise is given to the repentant sinner? Isa. 27:5.

NOTE.—"Whoever under the reproof of God will humble the soul with confession and repentance, as did David, may be sure that there is hope for him. Whoever will in faith accept God's promises, will find pardon. The Lord will never cast away one truly repentant soul. He has given this promise: 'Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.' "—"Patriarchs and Prophets," p. 726.

5. Who will take root? Who will blossom? With what result? Verse 6.

NOTE.—How significant are the words "Jacob," "Israel"! They come "of Jacob," but they become "Israel." Jacob means a supplanter, a dishonest man. Israel meant a victor, an overcomer.

"Fill the face of the world with fruit." Of the early church it was said that they *filled Jerusalem with their doctrine.* Acts 5: 28. Of the last church it is said that they will fill the whole earth with fruit.

6. What else will come to pass in that day? How will they be gathered? Verse 12.

NOTE.—"The Lord shall beat off," that is, gather in the harvest. The metaphor is taken either from the beating of olive trees to obtain the berries (see Isa. 17:6), or from the beating out of the grain on the threshing floor (Ruth 2:17; Isa. 28:27) "one by one." It is personal work that brings people to the Lord one by one. Even where multitudes come into the truth, personal work must be done to establish them.

7. When will the great trumpet be blown? Whence will the redeemed come? What had been their condition? Verse 13.

NOTE.—God's people will have gone through great trials before their final deliverance. It will seem to them that they must perish; but when the trumpet of the Lord shall sound, those of God's people who have been scattered in all the earth (Assyria and Egypt being here used as symbols of the nations of the earth), will come and worship with the redeemed of all ages in the Holy City, in the "holy mount," the dwelling place of God. Read "The Great Controversy," page 622, last paragraph.

8. What will God be in that day to the residue of His people? Isa. 28:5, 6.

NOTE.—The Lord in that day shall be a crown of glory to the remnant, a diadem of beauty. When men glory in this or that achievement, the remnant glories in the Lord. Jer. 9:23, 24. God will give His people good judgment as well as strength in the battle.

9. What has strong drink caused both prophet and priest to do? Verse 7.

NOTE.—Strong drink has ever been a curse. Here the results of its use is shown on religious leaders. They have wrong visions, they stumble in judgment. While God's people are promised the gift of good judgment, these stumble in judgment and are "out of the way through strong drink."

10. Whom will God teach knowledge and doctrine? How will it be done? Verses 9, 10.

NOTE.—Commenting on these verses, the servant of the Lord says: "Thus the word of the Lord is patiently to be brought before the children, and kept before them, by parents who believe the word of God." —"Testimonies to Ministers," p. 418.

11. How did the word of the Lord come? For what purpose? Verse 13.

NOTE.—"The most valuable teaching of the Bible is not to be gained by occasional or disconnected study. Its great system of truth

is not so presented as to be discerned by the hasty or careless reader. Many of its treasures lie far beneath the surface, and can be obtained only by diligent research and continuous effort. The truths that go to make up the great whole must be searched out and gathered up, 'here a little, and there a little.'

"When thus searched out and brought together, they will be found to be perfectly fitted to one another. Each Gospel is a supplement to the others, every prophecy an explanation of another, every truth a development of some other truth."—"Education," pp. 123, 124. Why will they "fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken?"—"Because they did not heed the word of the Lord that came unto them."—"Testimonies to Ministers," p. 419.

12. What will scornful men say? Verses 14, 15.

NOTE.—"In the class here described are included those who in their stubborn impenitence comfort themselves with the assurance that there is to be no punishment for the sinner; that all mankind, it matters not how corrupt, are to be exalted to heaven, to become as the angels of God. But still more emphatically are those making a covenant with death and an agreement with hell, who renounce the truths which Heaven has provided as a defense for the righteous in the day of trouble, and accept the refuge of lies offered by Satan in its stead,—the delusive pretensions of Spiritualism. . . .

"They affect great pity for minds so narrow, weak, and superstitious as to acknowledge the claims of God and obey the requirements of His law. They manifest as much assurance as if, indeed, they had made a covenant with death and an agreement with hell,—as if they had erected an impassible, impenetrable barrier between themselves and the vengeance of God."—"The Great Controversy," pp. 560, 561.

13. What has God laid in Zion for a foundation? Verse 16; 1 Peter 2:6, 7.

NOTE.—"In infinite wisdom, God chose the foundation stone, and laid it Himself. . . . Christ is a 'tried stone.' Those who trust in Him, He never disappoints. He has borne every test. He has endured the pressure of Adam's guilt, and the guilt of his posterity, and has come off more than conqueror of the powers of evil. He has borne the burdens cast upon Him by every repenting sinner. In Christ the guilty heart has found relief. He is the sure foundation. All who make Him their dependence, rest in perfect security."—"The Desire of Ages," pp. 598, 599.

14. What will God measure by line and by plummet? Isa. 28:17.

NOTE.—Builders use the line and plummet in their work, the line for horizontal work, the plummet for adjusting walls to the vertical,—hence these terms are used figuratively for the standard of truth and righteousness. When God builds, it will be true to the line and the plummet, it will measure up to the standard of judgment,—the law. Eccl. 12:13, 14. But men's buildings will be swept away. Matt. 7: 24-27.

15. What will become of the covenant with death? By what will they be trodden down? Isa. 28:18, 19.

NOTE.—Men have thought to avoid God's judgments. But no one

can do this. The scourge, culminating in the seven last plagues will come. These plagues will take some time, for "morning by morning" and "by day and by night" they will harass.

16. What apt illustration does God use to show man's inability to save himself from the scourge? Verse 20.

17. Why is the act of punishing mentioned in verse 21 called "a strange act"?

NOTE.—"To our merciful God the act of punishment is a strange act. 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.' . . . Yet He will 'by no means clear the guilty.' 'The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked.' By terrible things in righteousness He will vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. The severity of the retribution awaiting the transgressor may be judged by the Lord's reluctance to execute justice."—"The Great Controversy," p. 627.

18. What illustration from the field does God now use? With what intent? Verses 23-29.

NOTE.—The picture here used is one all can understand. After the plowing and sowing comes the harvest, when the different grains are threshed, each according to its nature. Fitch, black cummin (A. R. V., margin), is too tender to be threshed with the ordinary "threshing sledge," a heavy instrument that would crush it entirely. Nor "is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin." This is another method of threshing that would be destructive to the seed. Another translation of verse 28 is: "Is bread grain crushed? Nay, he will not ever be threshing it, and driving his cart wheels and his horses over it: he doth not crush it." A. R. V., margin.

The lesson is plain. God will judge. God will punish. God will do His "strange act." His own people will not entirely escape. He will purify them in the fire, but the wicked will be destroyed. So take courage. God watches over His own. (See 1 Cor. 10: 13.)

LESSON 8

EVENTS CONNECTED WITH THE COMING OF THE LORD

August 25, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 29; 30.

MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 30: 21.

LESSON HELPS: "Testimonies," Vol. 1, pp. 186-188; Vol. 8, pp. 41-44; "Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing," pp. 213-216.

INTRODUCTION

The first part of the twenty-ninth chapter of Isaiah evidently refers to the judgments that were to come on Jerusalem. The enemy would lay siege against it and also raise forts. Verse 3. God had forewarned of these calamities, but the people did not heed. Their eyes were closed. To them the vision was as the words of a sealed book.

Even the leaders were blind. Verses 11, 12. The lesson begins with verse 13 speaking to the people who confess God with the mouth, but their hearts are far away.

The lesson deals mostly with the events of "that day." Even as Christ in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew mingles the description of the fall of Jerusalem and of the end of the world, so also does Isaiah. But there need be no confusion. The two accounts can easily be distinguished.

THE LESSON

1. What does the Lord say of a certain class of people? How is their fear of God regulated? Isa. 29:13. (See Matt. 15:7-9.)

NOTE.—"It would be more pleasing to the Lord if lukewarm professors of religion had never named His name. They are a continual weight to those who would be faithful followers of Jesus. They are a stumbling-block to unbelievers, and evil angels exult over them, and taunt the angels of God with their crooked course. Such are a curse to the cause at home or abroad. They draw nigh to God with their lips, while their heart is far from Him."—"Testimonies," Vol. 1, p. 188.

2. What will God do among this people? What will become of the wisdom of their wise and prudent men? Isa. 29:14.

3. On whom does God pronounce His woe? What is said of their works? What do they say? Verse 15. (See John 3:19.)

4. How do they turn things? How will their work be esteemed? What two statements are mentioned as being made by the creature to the Creator? Verse 16.

NOTE.—This verse throws light on the two preceding verses. The wise men spoken of in verse 14, while they are said to "seek deep," verse 15, nevertheless turn "things upside down." They come to the conclusion that God is not the Creator,—"He made me not." They do not believe there is an intelligent Being back of the universe,—"He had no understanding." They have accepted evolution, or some other theory of "science falsely so called" (1 Tim. 6:20), instead of creation, and have thus rejected the Creator.

5. What will happen to the deaf and the blind in that day? Verse 18.

NOTE.—It is well for God's people to hold true to the words of "the Book." It is thereby that the wise men shall be confounded. This is the "marvelous work" and "wonder" which God will perform. Verse 14. A small people who believe in their Creator and in "the Book" shall cause the wisdom of the wise men to perish.

6. In whom will the meek increase their joy? What is said of the poor? Verse 19.

7. What will happen to the scorner and to those that watch for iniquity? How is a man made an offender? Verses 20, 21.

NOTE.—There are those that "watch for iniquity," that will catch at a phrase or word and enlarge upon it, and thus make a man an "offender for a word."

8. What was the prophet commanded to do? For what time was this? Isa. 30:8, margin.

9. What should the prophet write? What will the people not hear? Verse 9.

NOTE.—God's charges against His people are for serious offenses, —rebellion, lying (Jer. 28:15-17), and disregard of law (Prov. 28:9).

10. What do the people say to the seers and the prophets? Verses 10, 11.

NOTE.—"The spirit of this generation is, 'Speak unto us smooth things.' But the spirit of prophecy speaks only the truth. Iniquity abounds, and the love of many who profess to follow Christ waxes cold. They are blind to the wickedness of their own hearts, and do not feel their weak and helpless condition. God in mercy lifts the veil, and shows them that there is an eye behind the scenes that discerns their hidden guilt and the motives of their actions.

"The sins of the popular churches are whitewashed over. . . . Many proclaim the law of God abolished, and surely their lives are in keeping with their faith. If there is no law, then there is no transgression, and therefore no sin; for sin is the transgression of the law."—"Testimonies," Vol. 4, p. 13.

Moffatt translates verse 11 as follows: " 'Out of our way,' they cry, 'clear out from us, and trouble us no more with talk of Israel's Majesty.' " This was the attitude of the Jewish nation toward the prophets, and it found its culmination in their rejection of the Son of God.

"By their actions they had long been saying, 'Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.' Now their desire was granted. The fear of God no longer disturbed them. Satan was at the head of the nation, and the highest civil and religious authorities were under his sway."—"The Great Controversy," p. 29.

11. What do they despise? In what do they trust? To what is their iniquity likened? Verses 12, 13.

NOTE.—The wicked rest in false security behind this "high wall," while at the same time they are despising "this word." But "suddenly" the break will come "at an instant." This harmonizes with 1 Thessalonians 5:3.

12. How complete will be the destruction? Verses 14.

NOTE.—The wall shall be broken in pieces. There shall not be left a piece large enough to take up a piece of burning coal on, or to dip water with.

13. Why does the Lord wait? What are they called who wait for Him? Verse 18; 2 Peter 3:9.

14. What will the people no longer do? What will God do when He hears? Isa. 30:19. (See also Rev. 21:4; Matt. 7:7, 8.)

15. Through what experience will God's people pass? Verse 20.

NOTE.—"Often the church militant is called upon to suffer trial and affliction; for not without severe conflict is the church to triumph. 'The bread of adversity.' 'The water of affliction,' these are the common lot of all; but none who put their trust in the One mighty to deliver will be utterly overwhelmed."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 723.

"Thine eyes shall see thy teachers." Isa. 54:13; John 3:2; 14:26. This whole experience is in contrast with Amos 8:11, where the "mul-

titudes will desire the shelter of God's mercy which they have so long despised." Instead, they will find a famine for the hearing of the words of the Lord, and although they seek they will not find.

16. What word will God's people hear? When will they hear it? Verse 21.

17. What is said of the light of the moon and of the sun at that time? Verse 26.

NOTE.—"Now the church is militant. Now we are confronted with a world in midnight darkness, almost wholly given over to idolatry. But the day is coming in which the battle will have been fought, the victory won. The will of God is to be done on earth, as it is done in heaven. Then the nations will own no other law than the law of heaven. All will be a happy united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving,—the robe of Christ's righteousness. All nature, in its surpassing loveliness, will offer to God a constant tribute of praise and adoration. The world will be bathed in the light of heaven. The years will move on in gladness. The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold greater than it is now. Over the scene the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy, while God and Christ will unite in proclaiming, 'There shall be no more sin, neither shall there be any more death.' "—"Testimonies," Vol. 8, p. 42.

18. How is the coming of the Lord here portrayed? Verses 27, 28.

19. In contrast with this picture, how are God's people spoken of? Verses 29, 30.

NOTE.—"It is now, in the hour of utmost extremity, that the God of Israel will interpose for the deliverance of His chosen. Saith the Lord: 'Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept.' . . .

"With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens, and seems to encircle each praying company. . . .

"By the people of God a voice, clear and melodious, is heard, saying, 'Look up,' and, lifting their eyes to the heavens, they behold the bow of promise. The black, angry clouds that covered the firmament are parted, and like Stephen they look up steadfastly into heaven, and see the glory of God, and the Son of man seated upon His throne."—"The Great Controversy," pp. 635, 636.

20. What is ordained of old? For whom? How is it described as to size and inflammability? How is it kindled? Verse 33.

NOTE.—Tophet means a place of burning, that is, hell. The king is Satan.

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING—SEPT. 29, 1928

Work for the Indians in South America

LESSON 9

THE JUDGMENT AND THE TIME OF TROUBLE

September 1, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 32; 33.
MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 33: 22.
LESSON HELPS: "The Desire of Ages," pp. 333-337; "Christ's Object Lessons," pp. 85-87 (new ed., pp. 87-89); "Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing," pp. 162-165.

INTRODUCTION

Isaiah is a prophet of the future. In chapter 32 the Man Christ Jesus is introduced as a king ruling in righteousness, and the princes in judgment. A special message is sent to rich women (churches), warning them of the calamities to come, and that troublous times may be expected until the Spirit is poured out from on high.

The thirty-third chapter is a most interesting chapter to the remnant church. Hypocrites will be in the church, but they will be "surprised." God will yet have a pure people. And they "shall see the King in His beauty," which is His holiness, His glory. For that saints and seers have longed. Then it will be a glorious reality.

THE LESSON

1. Who shall reign in righteousness? Who shall rule in judgment? Isa. 32:1.

NOTE.—The king is even the King of righteousness, Christ Jesus. The saints shall reign with Him in judgment. Matt. 19:28; Rev. 5: 10; 1 Cor. 6: 2, 3.

2. Under what different symbols is Christ mentioned? How will God estimate mankind in that day of judgment? Isa. 32:2-8.

NOTE.—Christ is here spoken of as a hiding place, a covert, rivers of water in a dry place, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Verse 2. Meditate on each of these descriptions. Christ is this, and much more.

The following verses apparently speak of the time of the judgment. God has given Christ "authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man." John 5:27. God will "judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained." Acts 17:31. Hence it is as man that Christ is mentioned in connection with the judgment. Isa. 32:2. It is at that time that "the eyes of them that see shall not be dim." Verse 3. "Now we see through a glass, darkly." 1 Cor. 13: 12. Then we shall see face to face.

3. What will be the effect when the Spirit is poured out? Verses 15-17.

NOTE.—Verses 9-14 are addressed to the rich "women [churches] that are at ease," that are "careless," telling them that trouble is coming, that the harvest shall fail, that, as a result of this, the houses of joy in the city shall be forsaken as well as the palaces. They have been living in ease, a care-free existence,—now the time of trouble is at hand. These troublous times shall continue until the Spirit be

poured out from on high. Then the wilderness shall be a fruitful field. Then shall come the time when the latter rain shall fall, far exceeding the former. Then all bands shall be broken. "The work will be similar to that of the day of Pentecost. As the 'former rain' was given, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the opening of the gospel, to cause the upspringing of the precious seed, so the 'latter rain' will be given at its close, for the ripening of the harvest. . . . The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel, are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. . . .

"The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. . . . Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord's side."—"The Great Controversy," pp. 611, 612.

4. Where will God's people be in the time of hail when the city shall be low? Verses 18, 19.

NOTE.—During the plagues when the hail descends and the cities fall (Rev. 16:19-21), there will be a tabernacle to shield God's people. Isa. 4:6.

5. In view of what is to come, who is called blessed? Verse 20.

NOTE.—Knowing that the judgments of God are in the earth, that soon we must give an account of our work, how well we ought to improve the opportunity of sowing the seed. "You are to sow the seeds of truth in every place. Wherever you can gain access, hold forth the word of God. Sow beside all waters. You may not at once see the result of your labors, but be not discouraged. Speak the words that Christ gives you. Work in His lines. Go forth everywhere as He did during His ministry on the earth."—"Testimonies," Vol. 7, p. 36.

6. What prayer ascends to God from His people in the time of trouble? Isa. 33:2.

7. How are conditions described when God begins to show His power? Verses 3-9.

NOTE.—These verses show the confusion at the beginning of the time of trouble. The people flee, the nations are scattered. Verse 3. There shall be complete destruction as when the caterpillar and the locust destroy. Verse 4. The valiant men shall cry, all travel ceases, cities go down. Verses 7, 8. Destruction shall even extend to nature. Verse 9. In the midst of this destruction, God's people will be safe. "The fear of the Lord" is their treasure. Verse 6.

8. What does God say He will do? What are the people likened to? Verses 10-13.

9. How will the sinners and hypocrites in Zion fare? What questions are asked? Verse 14.

NOTE.—"There are hypocrites now who will tremble when they obtain a view of themselves. . . . The people of God are unready for the fearful, trying scenes before us, unready to stand pure from evil and lust amid the perils and corruptions of this degenerate age. They have

not on the armor of righteousness, and are unprepared to war against the prevailing iniquity. Many are not obeying the commandments of God; yet they profess so to do. If they would be faithful to obey all the statutes of God, they would have a power which would carry conviction to the hearts of the unbelieving."—"Testimonies," Vol. 2, p. 446.

God is Himself a devouring fire. Heb. 12: 29. Hence the question really is, Who can dwell with God?

10. What six traits of character are mentioned as possessed by those who shall dwell with God? Verse 15.

11. What will be the reward? Verse 16.

NOTE.—"In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan, those who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. It will finally be decreed that they shall be put to death. But to the obedient is given the promise, 'He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.' By this promise the children of God will live. When the earth shall be wasted with famine, they shall be fed."—"The Desire of Ages," p. 122.

12. What two things will His people be permitted to see? Verse 17.

NOTE.—To see the Lord was the deep desire of Moses. Yet the Lord could not grant it. "There shall no man see Me, and live." Ex. 33:20. But the time shall come when there shall be no veil before our vision. We shall see the Lord. Rev. 22:4. This is the climax of all experience throughout eternity. There is no higher. But only those who have experienced the power of Isaiah 33:15 will ever see the King in His beauty.

"The land that is very far off," rather "the land of far distances." Not Palestine, where on a mountain on a clear day one can see almost from one end of the land to the other. This refers to the new earth in all its glory.

13. What questions will be asked? What shall they not see? Verses 18, 19.

NOTE.—As the people of God see this "goodly land," for a moment the thought will come to them, Is all this true? Am I really saved? Or is it a dream? Ps. 126:1. Will there be no one to oppress or destroy any more? "Musing on the terror that has vanished, you ask, Where are the tyrant's officers who taxed us, charged us, took our tribute?" Isa. 33:18, Moffatt's translation. (See Isa. 60:18; 54:14.)

14. What are God's people to look on? What shall they see? What shall not be taken down, or removed, or broken? Verse 20.

NOTE.—The tabernacle in the wilderness was taken down and removed as Israel moved from place to place. Here the promise is given that it shall be so no more. How blessed it will be when God's people at last shall have "a place of their own, and move no more"! 2 Sam. 7:10.

15. What shall the Lord be unto His people? Verse 21.

NOTE.—Here the Lord is likened to a place of broad rivers and streams. "A river never raided by a galley, sailed by no ships of war," is Moffatt's translation.

16. What three things is the Lord said to be? What will He do? Verse 22.

NOTE.—It may be well to stress the word "our" in this verse. The Lord is our judge, our lawgiver, our King.

17. What picture is here introduced? Verse 23.

NOTE.—The picture of the Lord as a place of broad rivers suggests the picture in this verse of a boat with sails slack, ropes loose, and the mast dangling so it can not hold the sails. Such a boat could neither pursue nor escape the enemy. It would become a prey and be spoiled. Its utter helplessness is suggested by the fact that even "the lame take the prey." The spiritual lesson is obvious. We must always keep "in trim," always be prepared, not slack nor unready.

18. What shall the inhabitants not say? What is their condition? Verse 24.

LESSON 10

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE EARTH; THE NEW EARTH

September 8, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 34; 35.
MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 35: 10.
LESSON HELP: "Great Controversy," pp. 672-678 (new ed., pp. 755-762).

INTRODUCTION

Two pictures are presented to us in this lesson. The thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah should cause us to do all we can to help others who are now in sin to escape the terrible destruction that is coming. The study of chapter thirty-five should cause us to examine closely our own hearts to see if we are really and earnestly preparing for such a home. "The unclean shall not pass over it" (Isa. 35:8); only "the redeemed shall walk there" (verse 9). Are we ready?

THE LESSON

1. Whom does the Lord call to hear what He has to say? What is coming upon the nations and their armies? What fearful picture of the slain is presented? Isa. 34:1-3.

2. What will be done to the host of heaven? What to the heavens? Verse 4.

3. What will come to pass in the day of the Lord's vengeance at the close of the millennium? Verses 5-8.

4. Into what are the streams as well as the land turned? Verse 9.

NOTE.—"Fire comes down from God out of heaven. The earth is broken up. The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth. De-

vouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven. The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. The earth's surface seems one molten mass,—a vast, seething lake of fire. It is the time of the judgment and perdition of ungodly men,—'the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.' "—"The Great Controversy," pp. 672, 673.

5. What book are we counseled to seek out and read? How sure are these predictions? Who commanded, and who gathered them? Verse 16.

6. What is said of the wilderness and solitary place? Isa. 35:1.

NOTE.—This text has an application to the gospel work now being done as well as to conditions as they will be in the new earth. "God's people have a mighty work before them, a work that must continually rise to greater prominence. Our efforts in missionary lines must become far more extensive. . . .

"The vineyard includes the whole world, and every part of it is to be worked. There are places which are now a moral wilderness, and these are to become as the garden of the Lord. The waste places of the earth are to be cultivated, that they may bud and blossom as the rose. New territories are to be worked by men inspired by the Holy Spirit. . . . The light is to shine to all lands and all peoples. And it is from those who have received the light that it is to shine forth. The day-star has risen upon us, and we are to flash its light upon the pathway of those in darkness."—"Testimonies," Vol. 6, pp. 23, 24.

"In the transformation of character, the casting out of evil passions, the development of the sweet graces of God's Holy Spirit, we see the fulfillment of the promise, 'Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree.' We behold life's desert 'rejoice, and blossom as the rose.' "—Id., p. 308.

7. How shall the desert rejoice? What shall be given to it? What shall they see? Verse 2.

NOTE.—The desert "shall blossom abundantly." "Christ delights to take apparently hopeless material, those whom Satan has debased and through whom he has worked, and make them the subjects of His grace. He rejoices to deliver them from suffering, and from the wrath that is to fall upon the disobedient. He makes His children His agents in the accomplishment of this work, and in its success, even in this life, they find a precious reward."—Id., pp. 308, 309.

By "the glory of Lebanon" and "the excellency of Carmel and Sharon" are without doubt meant their fruitfulness. In the desert are no trees or grainfields. But this shall be changed. Those barren lives that have produced no fruit shall blossom abundantly. This seems to be a distinct prophecy of the times when those lands that have been unresponsive to the gospel shall be wide open.

"It was concerning the future fulfillment of this prophecy that Isaiah had heard the shining seraphim singing before the throne, 'The whole earth is full of His glory.' The prophet, confident of the certainty of these words, himself afterwards boldly declared of those who

were bowing down to images of wood and stone, 'They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.'

"To-day this prophecy is meeting rapid fulfillment. The missionary activities of the church of God on earth are bearing rich fruitage, and soon the gospel message will have been proclaimed to all nations. 'To the praise of the glory of His grace,' men and women from every kindred, tongue, and people are being made 'accepted in the Beloved,' 'that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.' "—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 313, 314.

8. What does God say should be done for the weak and feeble? Verse 3.

NOTE.—"Angels from a pure and holy heaven come to this polluted world to sympathize with the weakest, the most helpless and needy, while Christ Himself descended from His throne to help just such as these. You have no right to hold yourself aloof from these faltering ones, nor to assert your marked superiority over them. Come more in unison with Christ, pity the erring, lift up the hands that hang down, strengthen the feeble knees, and bid the fearful hearts be strong. Pity and help them, even as Christ has pitied you."—"Testimonies," Vol. 4, p. 131.

9. What encouraging word should be spoken to the fearful of heart? In view of what event is this counsel to be given? Verse 4.

NOTE.—The fearful, the faint-hearted, are not to be despised but rather encouraged. And this in view of the fact that Christ is soon coming. This is to be the keynote of every message, Christ is coming. He will come with vengeance, to punish. He will come with the recompense, to reward. He will come to serve, so be courageous. The Master is at the door.

10. What wonderful changes will take place when Christ comes? Verse 5.

11. What transformation will be wrought in the lame and dumb? Verse 6.

12. What will be done to parched ground and thirsty land? Verse 7.

NOTE.—This is another promise that the desert shall become fruitful. Nothing is much more uninviting or hopeless than a desert. Yet God has hope for it, and promises that it shall blossom. So let us not be discouraged, but rather work on in hope.

13. What name will be given to the highway of the Lord? Who shall not pass over the highway? For whom is the way? How clearly will it be marked? Verse 8.

NOTE.—The "way of holiness." What a highway that is! It begins down here and ends at the throne. "We believe without a doubt that Christ is soon coming. This is not a fable to us; it is a reality. We have no doubt, neither have we had a doubt for years, that the doctrines we hold to-day are present truth, and that we are nearing the judgment. We are preparing to meet Him, who, escorted by a retinue of holy angels, is to appear in the clouds of heaven to give the faithful and the just the finishing touch of immortality. When He comes, He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in

our characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will be accomplished before that time. When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honor, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and fifthy, will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects, and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process, and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us."—"Testimonies," Vol. 2, p. 355.

The American Revised Version of verse 8 reads: "It shall be for the redeemed," rather than, "It shall be for those."

14. What will not be found on God's highway? Who only will travel upon it? Verse 9.

15. What will the ransomed do? What will be their crown? What experience will come to them? Verse 10.

NOTE.—The picture presented in verse 10 was familiar to all Jews. At the annual feasts, the Israelites would come in groups from all parts of the land. They would bedeck themselves as well as their animals in festive adornment, and sing as they journeyed along.

It is with joy that God's redeemed people shall return to the heavenly Zion. No sorrow, no sighing, but everlasting joy shall be theirs. Lord, speed that day!

LESSON 11

INVASION OF JUDAH BY ASSYRIA; GOD DELIVERS HIS PEOPLE

September 15, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 36; 37.
MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 37: 20.
LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 349-366.

INTRODUCTION

For a long time Israel had been paying tribute to Assyria. Hezekiah continued this custom when he became king, while at the same time he did all he could to prepare himself for a possible war with Assyria. A few years after the beginning of his reign, Samaria was taken, and the ten tribes were carried into captivity, 721 B. C. As Samaria was only fifty miles from Jerusalem, Hezekiah might well expect that it would not be long before the Assyrians would be before the gates. Yet a few years intervened, and then came Sennacherib. It is at this point our lesson opens.

THE LESSON

1. Who came up to war against Judah in the days of King Hezekiah? What cities were taken? Isa. 36: 1.

2. Whom did the king of Assyria send to Jerusalem? What was the substance of his proposals? Verses 2, 16-20.

NOTE.—Rabshakeh counseled the Jews to surrender and give a present to the king of Assyria, else he would besiege Jerusalem. He warned them not to be persuaded by Hezekiah, who had told them that the Lord would deliver them. The king of Assyria had already taken several cities, and, according to the belief of the time, the gods of Assyria were therefore stronger than the gods of the cities that had been conquered. And could Jerusalem escape? Rabshakeh was sure that his gods were stronger than the God of Israel.

3. What did Hezekiah, the king, do when Rabshakeh's message came to him? Isa. 37:1.

4. What message did Hezekiah send to Isaiah? What request did he make of the prophet? What did both do? Verses 2-4; 2 Chron. 32:20.

5. What encouraging answer did Isaiah send to the king? What did he say that God would send upon the king of Assyria? What would he hear and do? What would happen to him in his own land? Isa. 37:5-7.

6. What further message did Rabshakeh send to Hezekiah? Verses 8-13.

7. What did Hezekiah do when he received the letter? Verse 14.

8. What was the substance of Hezekiah's prayer? Verses 15-20.

NOTE.—Hezekiah addresses Jehovah as the One dwelling between the cherubim, the Creator that made heaven and earth. He did not deny the power of Assyria, but says that the gods of the cities overthrown were only gods of wood and stone. He asks God to show Himself mighty,—"that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou art the Lord, even Thou only."

"Hezekiah's pleadings in behalf of Judah and of the honor of their Supreme Ruler, were in harmony with the mind of God. Solomon, in his benediction at the dedication of the temple, had prayed the Lord to maintain 'the cause of His people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require: that all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else.' Especially was the Lord to show favor when, in times of war or of oppression by an army, the chief men of Israel should enter the house of prayer and plead for deliverance."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 359.

9. What assurance did Isaiah give to Hezekiah concerning his prayer? Verse 21; 2 Kings 19:20.

10. Against whom had the king of Assyria really exalted himself? Isa. 37:23.

11. Through whom had he reproached the Lord? What boastful words did he speak? Verses 24, 25.

12. How does the Lord answer this boast? Verses 26, 27.

NOTE.—These verses contain important principles. God will use one nation to punish another. That nation then becomes "the rod of" His "anger" (Isa. 10:5), to "take the spoil, and to take the prey" (verse 6), really an executor of the vengeance of God. Assyria had

been so used, but had now lifted up itself and thought that all these things had been done through its own mighty power. "Hast thou not heard long ago," says God, "that thou shouldest be to lay waste defensed cities?" God had been using Assyria according to plans formed long ago. Now Assyria's time had come to be humbled.

13. What would God do to Assyria? Verses 28, 29.

14. Addressing Hezekiah, what sign did Isaiah say should be given? Verse 30.

NOTE.—In the third year conditions would again be normal so they could sow and reap as usual. In the meantime they would be enabled to live of that which "groweth of itself" or "springeth of the same." This would border on the miraculous, and would constitute a sign.

15. What is said of the remnant? Verses 31, 32.

NOTE.—God's own, the remnant, should again take root, become established, and bear fruit. This is not because of any inherent goodness. "The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this."

16. How would God defend Jerusalem? Verses 33, 34.

17. For whose sake would God defend the city? Verse 35.

NOTE.—God's honor was at stake. After the boasts made by the king of Assyria, had not God defended His city, the nations would draw the conclusion that after all Assyria was stronger than the God of Israel. For "David's sake." God had made promises to David. 2 Sam. 7:16; Ps. 89:29-37. These must be kept.

18. How did God's judgment come upon the Assyrian host? Verse 36.

19. What was the further history of the Assyrian king? How was Isaiah's word in verse 7 fulfilled? Verses 37, 38.

20. What lesson is there for the nations of to-day in the history of Assyria?

NOTE.—"The rise and fall of the Assyrian Empire is rich in lessons for the nations of earth to-day. Inspiration has likened the glory of Assyria at the height of her prosperity to a noble tree in the garden of God, towering above the surrounding trees."—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 362, 363. This description is given in detail in Ezekiel 31:3-9.

"But the rulers of Assyria, instead of using their unusual blessings for the benefit of mankind, became the scourge of many lands. Merciless, with no thought of God or their fellow men, they pursued the fixed policy of causing all nations to acknowledge the supremacy of the gods of Nineveh, whom they exalted above the Most High. God had sent Jonah to them with a message of warning, and for a season they humbled themselves before the Lord of hosts, and sought forgiveness. But soon they turned again to idol worship, and to the conquest of the world."—Id., p. 363.

"With unerring accuracy the Infinite One still keeps account with the nations. While His mercy is tendered, with calls to repentance, this account remains open; but when the figures reach a certain amount which God has fixed, the ministry of His wrath begins. The account is closed. Divine patience ceases. Mercy no longer pleads in their behalf."—Id., p. 364.

"The pride of Assyria and its fall are to serve as an object lesson to the end of time. Of the nations of earth to-day who in arrogance and pride array themselves against Him, God inquires: 'To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth.' "—Id., p. 366.

LESSON 12

HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER ANSWERED; HIS PRIDE REBUKED

September 22, 1928

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 38; 39.
MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 38: 19.
LESSON HELP: "Prophets and Kings," pp. 340-348.

INTRODUCTION

Hezekiah came to the throne at the time when the ten tribes were about to be carried into captivity. He determined to do all he could to save Judah from the fate about to overtake Israel. He cleansed the temple, which had long been neglected and was in a state of ruin, and reëstablished the sanctuary service. "Once more the temple courts resounded with words of praise and adoration. The songs of David and of Asaph were sung with joy, as the worshipers realized that they were being delivered from the bondage of sin and apostasy. 'Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly.' "—"Prophets and Kings," p. 333.

Hezekiah invited all Israel to the feast of the Passover. 2 Chron. 30:1, 6, 10. "But they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them." This was the last invitation the ten tribes had. They refused it, and were carried into captivity. But God still spared Jerusalem.

THE LESSON

1. After the defeat of the Assyrian foes, what befell Hezekiah, king of Judah? What message did Isaiah bring to him? Isa. 38:1.

2. In what spirit did Hezekiah receive the message? What was the substance of his prayer? Verses 2, 3.

3. What message was Isaiah commissioned to bring? Verses 4-6.

4. What did Isaiah request should be placed on the boil? Verse 21.

NOTE.—"Those who seek healing by prayer should not neglect to make use of the remedial agencies within their reach. It is not a denial of faith to use such remedies as God has provided to alleviate pain and to aid nature in her work of restoration. . . . We have the sanction of the word of God for the use of remedial agencies. Hezekiah, king of Israel, was sick, and a prophet of God brought him the message that he should die. He cried unto the Lord, and the Lord heard His servant, and sent him a message that fifteen years should be added to his life. Now one word from God would have healed Hezekiah instantly; but special directions were given, 'Let them take a

lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover.'

"On one occasion Christ anointed the eyes of a blind man with clay, and bade him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam. . . . He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.' The cure could be wrought only by the power of the Great Healer, yet Christ made use of the simple agencies of nature. While He did not give countenance to drug medication, He sanctioned the use of simple and natural remedies."—"Ministry of Healing," pp. 231-233.

5. In agreeing to Hezekiah's request for a sign, what question did Isaiah ask? How did Hezekiah answer? What change came in the sundial of Ahaz? 2 Kings 20:8-11; Isa. 38:7, 8.

6. How does Hezekiah relate his experience? Verses 9-16.

NOTE.—It is evident from Hezekiah's own record of his feelings that he was not reconciled to God's message that he should die. "I am deprived of the residue of my years," he said, as though he had a contract with God for a certain number of years, and that God was about to cut him short. He would, of course, accept God's plan for him, but it would be in bitterness of soul.

7. What experience came to Hezekiah at the time of his healing? Verse 17; James 5:15.

8. What observation is made by Hezekiah regarding the grave and death? Isa. 38:18.

9. What will the living do? What will the father teach his children? Verses 19, 20.

10. What embassage came to Hezekiah after his recovery? Isa. 39:1.

NOTE.—"In the fertile valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates there dwelt an ancient race which, though at that time subject to Assyria, was destined to rule the world. Among its people were wise men who gave much attention to the study of astronomy; and when they noticed that the shadow on the sundial had been turned back ten degrees, they marveled greatly. Their king, Merodach-baladan, upon learning that this miracle had been wrought as a sign to the king of Judah that the God of heaven had granted him a new lease of life, sent ambassadors to Hezekiah to congratulate him on his recovery, and to learn, if possible, more of the God who was able to perform so great a wonder."—"Prophets and Kings," p. 344.

11. What was God's purpose in allowing these messengers to be sent? 2 Chron. 32:31.

NOTE.—"The visit of the ambassadors to Hezekiah was a test of his gratitude and devotion. . . . Had Hezekiah improved the opportunity given him to bear witness to the power, the goodness, the compassion, of the God of Israel, the report of the ambassadors would have been as light piercing darkness. But he magnified himself above the Lord of hosts. He 'rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up.' "—Id., p. 346.

12. How did Hezekiah receive the ambassadors? What did he show them? Isa. 39:2.

NOTE.—"The visit of these messengers from the ruler of a far-away land gave Hezekiah an opportunity to extol the living God. How

easy it would have been for him to tell them of God, the upholder of all created things, through whose favor his own life had been spared when all other hope had fled! What momentous transformations might have taken place had these seekers after truth from the plains of Chaldea been led to acknowledge the supreme sovereignty of the living God!

"But pride and vanity took possession of Hezekiah's heart, and in self-exaltation he laid open to covetous eyes the treasures with which God had enriched His people. . . . Not to glorify God did he do this, but to exalt himself in the eyes of the foreign princes. He did not stop to consider that these men were representatives of a powerful nation that had not the fear nor the love of God in their hearts, and that it was imprudent to make them his confidants concerning the temporal riches of the nation."—Id., pp. 344-346.

13. What conversation between Isaiah and Hezekiah followed their visit? Verses 3, 4.

14. What message did Hezekiah receive from the Lord? Verses 5-7.

NOTE.—"How disastrous the results which were to follow! To Isaiah it was revealed that the returning ambassadors were carrying with them a report of the riches they had seen, and that the king of Babylon and his counselors would plan to enrich their own country with the treasures of Jerusalem. Hezekiah had grievously sinned; 'therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem.' "—Id., p. 346.

"The story of Hezekiah's failure to prove true to his trust at the time of the visit of the ambassadors, is fraught with an important lesson for all. Far more than we do, we need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience, of the mercy and loving-kindness of God, of the matchless depths of the Saviour's love. When mind and heart are filled with the love of God, it will not be difficult to impart that which enters into the spiritual life. Great thoughts, noble aspirations, clear perceptions of truth, unselfish purposes, yearnings for piety and holiness, will find expression in words that reveal the character of the heart treasure.

"Those with whom we associate day by day need our help, our guidance. They may be in such a condition of mind that a word spoken in season will be as a nail in a sure place. To-morrow some of these souls many be where we can never reach them again. What is our influence over these fellow travelers?"—Id., pp. 347, 348.

15. How did Hezekiah receive the message? What relief was granted to him because he humbled himself? Verse 8; 2 Chron. 32:26.

NOTE.—"Filled with remorse, 'Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.' But the evil seed had been sown, and in time was to spring up and yield a harvest of desolation and woe. During his remaining years, the king of Judah was to have much prosperity because of his steadfast purpose to redeem the past and to bring honor to the name of the God whom he served; yet his faith was to be severely tried, and he was to learn that only by putting his trust fully in Jehovah could he hope to triumph over the powers of darkness that were plotting his ruin and the utter destruction of his people."—Id., p. 347.

LESSON 13

WARNINGS AND REPROOFS; AN UNHEEDED CALL TO REPENTANCE

September 29, 1928

MEMORY VERSE: Isa. 21: 11, 12.
LESSON HELPS: "The Great Controversy," pp. 433-436, 451, 452, 631-633; "Patriarchs and Prophets," pp. 684-687 (new ed., pp. 714-718).

INTRODUCTION

In a brief survey of Isaiah such as is given in these Sabbath school lessons, it is impossible to emphasize all the texts that really demand notice. This lesson will take up scattered texts which either have not been used before, or which might justly be repeated for emphasis. While it is well that every scripture be considered in the setting in which it is found in the Bible, some texts are of such a general nature and application that no violence is done by considering them by themselves. Most of the texts in this lesson are of this character.

THE LESSON

1. What beautiful promise gives hope to all? Isa. 1:18.

2. What experience came to Isaiah when he was called to a prophet's work? Relate the circumstances. Isa. 6:1-10.

3. What is the word of the Lord in regard to associations and confederacies? Isa. 8:9-12.

NOTE.—Men may enter into confederacies and leagues, but they will not accomplish that for which they are intended. They will be broken in pieces. This phrase is thrice repeated in verse 9. (See 1 Thess. 5:3.) There is a lesson in this for the people of God.

"No confederacy should be formed with unbelievers, neither should you call together a certain chosen number who think as you do, and who will say Amen to all that you propose, while others are excluded, who you think will not be in harmony. I was shown that there was great danger of doing this."—"Testimonies to Ministers," pp. 462, 463.

"Those employed in any department of the work whereby the world may be transformed, must not enter into alliance with those who know not the truth. The world know not the Father or the Son, and they have no spiritual discernment as to the character of our work, as to what we shall do, or shall not do. We must obey the orders that come from above. We are not to hear the counsel or follow the plans suggested by unbelievers. Suggestions made by those who know not the work that God is doing for this time, will be such as to weaken the power of the instrumentalities of God. By accepting such suggestions, the counsel of Christ is set at naught."—Id., p. 463.

4. Whom are we to sanctify? What will He be to His people? What will be the experience of many? Verses 13-15.

5. What are we commanded concerning the testimony? What concerning the law? For whom will we look? Verses 16, 17.

NOTE.—"The Lord commands by the same prophet, 'Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples.' The seal of God's law

is found in the fourth commandment. This only, of all the ten, brings to view both the name and the title of the Lawgiver. It declares Him to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and thus shows His claim to reverence and worship above all others. Aside from this precept, there is nothing in the Decalogue to show by whose authority the law is given. When the Sabbath was changed by the papal power, the seal was taken from the law. The disciples of Jesus are called upon to restore it, by exalting the Sabbath of the fourth commandment to its rightful position as the Creator's memorial and the sign of His authority."—"The Great Controversy," pp. 451, 452.

6. What should be our answer to them that invite us to explore forbidden paths? Verse 19.

NOTE.—"The belief in communion with the dead is still held, even in professedly Christian lands. Under the name of Spiritualism, the practice of communicating with beings claiming to be the spirits of the departed, has become widespread. It is calculated to take hold of the sympathies of those who have laid their loved ones in the grave. Spiritual beings sometimes appear to persons in the form of their deceased friends, and relate incidents connected with their lives, and perform acts which they performed while living. In this way they lead men to believe that their dead friends are angels, hovering over them, and communicating with them. Those who thus assume to be the spirits of the departed, are regarded with a certain idolatry, and with many their word has greater weight than the word of God.

"There are many, however, who regard Spiritualism as a mere imposture. The manifestations by which it supports its claims to a supernatural character are attributed to fraud on the part of the medium. But while it is true that the results of trickery have often been palmed off as genuine manifestations, there have also been marked evidences of supernatural power. And many who reject Spiritualism as the result of human skill or cunning, will, when confronted with manifestations which they can not account for upon this ground, be led to acknowledge its claims.

"Modern Spiritualism, and the forms of ancient witchcraft and idol worship,—all having communion with the dead as their vital principle,—are founded upon that first lie by which Satan beguiled Eve in Eden."—"Patriarchs and Prophets," pp. 684, 685. (See Gen. 3:4, 5.)

7. What standard are we to uphold? Verse 20.

NOTE.—"While conflicting doctrines and theories abound, the law of God is the one unerring rule by which all opinions, doctrines, and theories are to be tested."—"The Great Controversy," p. 452.

"But however much one may advance in spiritual life, he will never come to a point where he will not need diligently to search the Scriptures; for therein are found the evidences of our faith. All points of doctrine, even though they have been accepted as truth, should be brought to the law and to the testimony; if they can not stand this test, 'there is no light in them.' "—"Testimonies," Vol. 5, p. 575.

8. To what is the remnant likened? Isa. 17:6; 24:13.

NOTE.—These texts bring to view the shaking time. Not very many will remain after the shaking is done. But those that remain will be

a Gideon's band, and for them the Lord will work. Isa. 10:26; Judges 7:19-25.

9. What statements are made with regard to Egypt? Where will the altar of the Lord be placed? Whom will God send to the Egyptians? To whom will the Lord be known? Isa. 19:18-22.

NOTE.—While this prophecy may not be clear in all details, the main outline is sufficiently clear to be understood. According to this prophecy, the time shall come when some of the Egyptians shall learn the language of Canaan, some even that are living in the city of destruction, or the city of the sun. God's worship shall be exalted, and in their distress they shall call on the Lord, "and He shall send them a Saviour, and a great one, and He shall deliver them." These Egyptians shall know the Lord, and be known of Him. They shall not only vow to the Lord, but shall keep their vow. The Lord has smitten, but He will also heal.

While all this found a literal fulfillment, and a real temple and altar of the Lord was erected at Heliopolis, the city of the sun, by Onias in the time of Ptolemy Philometer, of which the ruins have been found, may we not believe this also to have a larger and a very definite spiritual fulfillment? From the darkness and superstition of heathenism, from the spiritual Egypts of this world, souls will be rescued, setting up the altar of God in the very midst of the spiritual darkness in all parts of the earth, in the strongholds of oppression and evil. Egypt has always stood for spiritual darkness and superstition. "Among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, He sees men and women who are praying for light and knowledge. Their souls are unsatisfied: long have they fed on ashes. The enemy of all righteousness has turned them aside, and they grope as blind men. But they are honest in heart, and desire to learn a better way. Although in the depths of heathenism, with no knowledge of the written law of God nor of His Son Jesus, they have revealed in manifold ways the working of a divine power on mind and character. . . .

"In various ways God will reveal Himself to them, and will place them in touch with providences that will establish their confidence in the One who has given Himself a ransom for all."—"Prophets and Kings," pp. 376, 378.

10. What cry is heard in the night? Isa. 21:11.

11. What answer is given? Verse 12.

NOTE.—"I saw that watch after watch was in the past. Because of this, should there be a lack of vigilance? Oh, no! There is the greater necessity of unceasing watchfulness, for now the moments are fewer than before the passing of the first watch."—"Testimonies," Vol. 2, p. 193.

12. For what does the Lord call? Isa. 22: 12.

13. What is the response of the people? Verse 13.

NOTE.—God calls for repentance and weeping. Men turn from Him and continue their feasting. "Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we shall die," never had more definite fulfillment than to-day.

14. What results will follow this transgression? Verse 14.

15. What precious promise has God given to His people in this time of trouble and turmoil? Isa. 26:4.

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