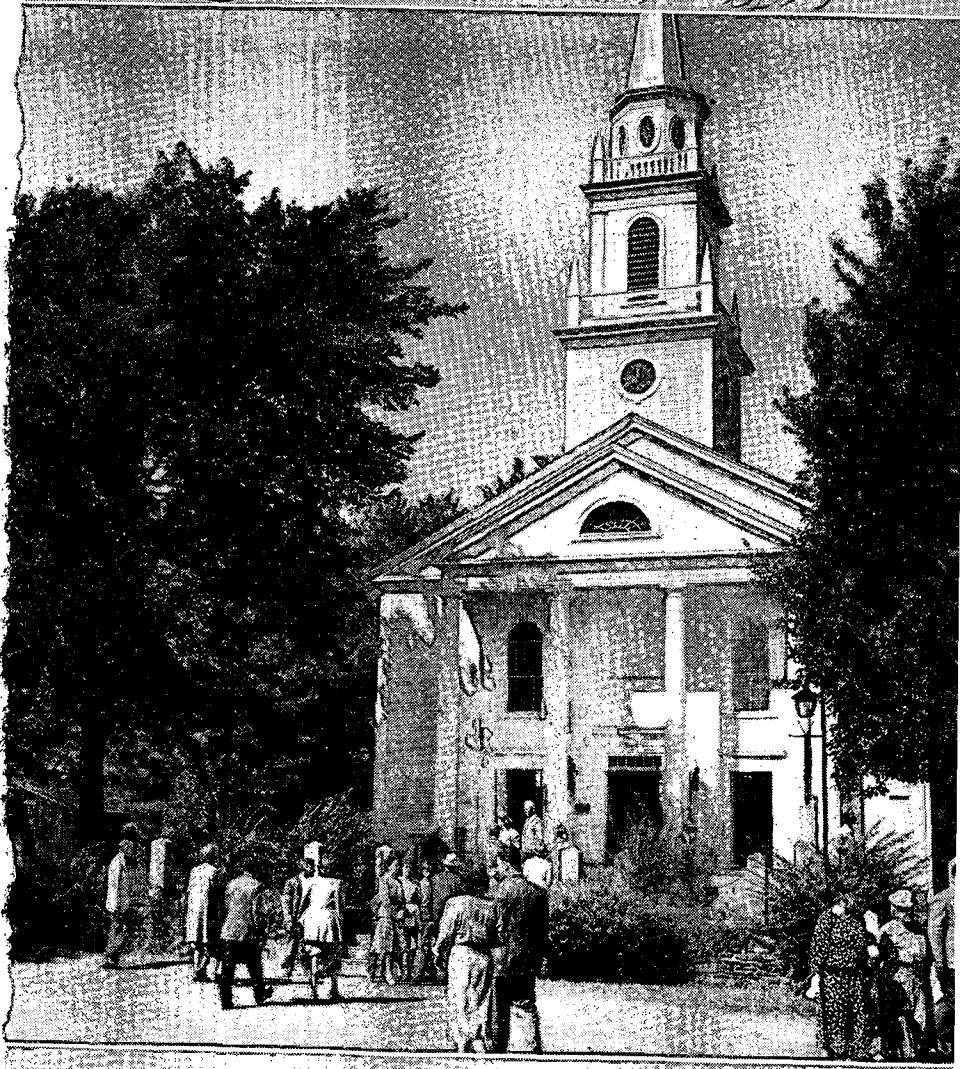
SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON QUARTERLY



LESSONS FROM THE GOSPEL PROPHET

SENIOR DIVISION, No. 243, FIRST QUARTER, 1956

INDIVIDUAL SABBATH-SCHOOL OFFERING GOAL

"As God hath prospered him."

MY WEEKLY GOAL (Check Amount)

		RECORD		
$5.00		1._____	7._____	13._____
2.00		2._____	8._____	Birthday
1.50	"God loveth a cheerful giver."	3._____	9._____	_____
1.00		4._____	10._____	Investment
.50		5._____	11._____	_____
.40		6._____	12._____	TOTAL

DAILY LESSON STUDY PLEDGE

As one who greatly desires to improve his knowledge of the Scriptures, I pledge myself to the careful and prayerful study of some portion of my Sabbath school lesson each day of the week.

Name _____

Place a check mark in each space below for the days you have studied.

STUDY RECORD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1st Day's Study													
2d Day's Study													
3d Day's Study													
4th Day's Study													
5th Day's Study													
6th Day's Study													
7th Day's Study													

"Let the Sabbath-school lesson be learned, not by a hasty glance at the lesson scripture on Sabbath morning, but by careful study for the next week on Sabbath afternoon, with daily review or illustration during the week. Thus the lesson will become fixed in the memory, a treasure never to be wholly lost."—"Education," pages 251, 252.

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Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly

LESSONS FROM THE GOSPEL PROPHET

FOREWORD

While the entire Bible is the word of God and replete with sound counsel of abiding value, there are certain books that stand out above the rest with special messages for specific time and conditions.

Among the most important of these is the book of Isaiah. The prophet stresses the eternal truths of sin and salvation, repentance and conversion, righteousness and holiness, as do the other writers. But in these subjects he excels. Rarely are found such moving passages as his portrayal of the suffering and death of the Servant of God. Nowhere else do we find a sweeter or more touching picture of Him who was despised and rejected of men, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief; who willingly bared His back to the smiters and His cheek to them that plucked off the hair; who hid not His face from shame and spitting, but steadfastly set His heart not to fail or be discouraged. Nowhere else is God's love for sinners more beautifully portrayed than in the promise that though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Nowhere else is found a more tender description of God's abounding compassion and loving-kindness than in the Shepherd passage, where Christ is presented as One who shall feed His flock like a shepherd, gather the lambs with His arm and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

There are explicit reasons why Isaiah is of special importance to those living at the present time. Problems, controversies, issues, greater and more complicated than those of previous ages, are facing men today. The principles underlying these are more comprehensively treated in Isaiah than in any other book of Holy Writ.

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning," that through them we "might have hope." Rom. 15:4. We should not forget, however, that though "these things" were indeed "written for our admonition," they also "happened unto them [literal Israel] for ensamples." 1 Cor. 10:11. The inspired messages of the prophets of old were addressed to Israel of their own day, to prepare them as individuals and as a nation for the proclamation of the gospel, for the coming of the Messiah, and for the establishment of His eternal kingdom.

But as a nation Israel failed to live up to the high privileges of her calling, and as a result many of the predictions and promises, particularly those relating to the proclamation of the gospel and the establishment of the Messianic kingdom, could not be fulfilled to her. Accordingly "that which God purposed to do for the world through Israel, the chosen nation, He will finally accomplish through His church on earth today" (*Prophets and Kings,* pages 713, 714), and the messages of Isaiah and other prophets are replete with lessons of profound value for God's people today. In studying these messages, it is our privilege to find guidance for personal Christian living and for a more intelligent co-operation with divine agencies in the task of proclaiming heaven's last message of mercy to the world.

In the study of any passage of Isaiah, then, we do well first to examine its context and become familiar with the historical circumstances that called forth the counsel there given. Second, our only safe course in applying Old Testament prophecy to spiritual Israel is to rely for guidance on what later inspired writers have written. This approach is fundamental to a correct understanding of what any of the prophets have written. Discovering thus the mind of the Spirit speaking to the people of that earlier time, we are better prepared to understand the lessons these messages have for us today and to apply them to our own lives.

Lesson 1, for January 7, 1956

God's Arraignment of Israel

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 1.

MEMORY VERSE: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isa. 1:18.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "Patriarchs and Prophets," pages 634, 635 (new ed., pp. 661, 662); "Steps to Christ," pages 26-33, 40, 41; "Prophets and Kings," pages 599, 600, 605, 606; "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapter 1.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1-3.
Monday: Questions 4-7.
Tuesday: Questions 8-10.
Wednesday: Questions 11-14.
Thursday: Read from Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Rebellion of Israel

1. God's complaint against Israel. Isa. 1:2.
2. Israel's attitude compared with the domestic animals. Isa. 1:3.
3. A seven-point indictment. Isa. 1:4.

II. Israel's Lamentable Condition

4. Futility of further punishment. Isa. 1:5, first part.
5. Likened to a loathsome body. Isa. 1:5 (last part), 6.
6. Their desolated country. Isa. 1:7, 8.
7. Doom averted only because of a remnant. Isa. 1:9.

III. The Divine Challenge

8. Repudiation of meaningless services. Isa. 1:10-12.
9. Vanity of Israel's worship. Isa. 1:13-15.
10. Radical reform called for. Isa. 1:16, 17.
11. Invitation to repentance. Isa. 1:18.

IV. The Basis of Hope

12. Promises based on obedience. Isa. 1:19, 20.
13. Dross may be purged. Isa. 1:21-25.
14. Restoration and redemption promised. Isa. 1:26, 27.

THE LESSON

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, not to be confused with Amos the prophet, to whom he was not related. Isaiah lived in Jerusalem, was of the "royal line," and had easy access to the king. He had two sons. Isa. 7:3; 8:3.

Various authorities state that Isaiah began to prophesy between the years 745 and 739 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. Tradition records that he was placed inside a hollow log and sawn asunder. There may be a reference to this in Hebrews 11:36-38.

The first chapter of Isaiah has aptly been named the "Great Arraignment," as it is cast in the aspect of a court scene, with God as accuser and the people as defenders. God has a controversy with Israel, and calls heaven and earth to witness the awful fact that rebellion has sprung up in His family. As plaintiff He details seven charges against the people, all having to do with apostasy and rebellion. The scene 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 merely a matter of form. The Lord is displeased. He is weary of empty ceremonies, which He hates. But instead of pronouncing sentence upon the transgressors, as He might justly do, He invites them to come "and let us reason together."

Rebellion of Israel

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

NOTE.—Surely it must be a serious situation when God Himself makes the charge of rebellion against His people. "In every age . . . because of His infinite love for the erring, God has borne long with the rebellious, and has urged them to forsake their course of evil, and return to Him."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 324, 325.

2. What impressive illustration does God use to show how low Israel had fallen? Isa. 1:3.

3. How is the complete depravity of the people contrasted with God's holy character? Isa. 1:4.

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."

"The term ["the Holy One"] occurs fourteen times in the first part of Isaiah, and sixteen times in the second. A corrupt people needed to be reminded ever more and more of the truth which the name asserted." —*Ellicott's Commentary* on Isa. 1:4.

Israel's Lamentable Condition

4. How did God express the certainty of further punishment if the people continued to revolt? Isa: 1:5, first part.

5. How completely had the body been afflicted because of their transgression? Isa. 1:5 (last part), 6.

6. What had befallen their country? Isa. 1:7, 8.

7. What would have taken place had there not been "a very small remnant"? Isa. 1:9.

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,* page 306.

The Divine Challenge

8. Addressing the rulers and the people, by what questions does God attempt to have them consider the real meaning and purpose of sacrifices? How does God regard their offerings? Isa. 1:10-12.

9. How is the uselessness of the worship Israel was then offering set forth? Isa. 1:13-15.

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.

10. What radical reform does God call for? Isa. 1:16, 17.

11. What invitation does God extend? What happy condition follows the acceptance of the invitation? Isa. 1:18.

NOTE.—"The government of God is not, as Satan would make it appear, founded upon a blind submission, an unreasoning control. It appeals to the intellect and the conscience. 'Come now, and let us reason together,' is the Creator's invitation to the beings He has made. God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given. A mere forced submission would prevent all real development of mind or character; it would make man a mere automaton. Such is not the purpose of the Creator. He desires that man, the crowning work of His creative power, shall reach the highest possible development. . . . It remains for us to choose whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God."

"You cannot atone for your past sins, you cannot change your heart, and make yourself holy. But God promises to do all this for you through Christ. You *believe* that promise. You confess your sins, and give yourself to God. You *will* to serve Him. Just as surely as you do this, God will fulfill His word to you. If you believe the promise,—believe that you are forgiven and cleansed,—God supplies the fact; you are made whole, just as Christ gave the paralytic power to walk when the man believed that he was healed. It *is* so if you believe it."—*Steps to Christ,* pages 47, 48, 55.

The Basis of Hope

12. On what conditions does God promise His people the good of the land? What attitude on the part of the people will lead to their destruction? Isa. 1:19, 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.

13. While the once "faithful city" goes further and further into evil, what will God do for His own? What will God purge away? Isa. 1:21-25.

14. What promise of restoration and redemption is made? Isa. 1:26, 27.

Lesson 2, for January 14, 1956

Rebuke and Triumph of Zion

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 3:14-26; 4.

MEMORY VERSE: "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel." Isa. 4:2.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "Prophets and Kings," pages 323, 324; "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapters 3, 4.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1-4.
Monday: Questions 5-7.
Tuesday: Questions 8-10.
Wednesday: Questions 11-14.
Thursday: Read from Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Daughters of Zion Rebuked

1. Haughtiness and display. Isa. 3:16.
2. The smiting of the Lord. Isa. 3:17-26.
3. Paul's instruction about dress. 1 Tim. 2:9, 10.
4. Women seek to remove their reproach. Isa. 4:1.

II. Deliverance Through the Branch

5. A glorious Branch. Isa. 4:2.
6. A holy remnant. Isa. 4:3, first part.
7. Written among the living. Isa. 4:3, last part.

III. A Cleansed People

8. Washing away the filth of Zion. Isa. 4:4.
9. The refiner's fire. Mal. 3:1-3.
10. Enduring the devouring fire. Isa. 33:14-17.

IV. The Protecting Pillar

11. Israel led by pillar of fire and cloud. Ex. 13:21.
12. God's people find refuge. Isa. 4:5, 6.
13. God is a present help in trouble. Ps. 46:1-7.
14. Safety under the shadow of the Almighty. Ps. 91:1-7.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The lesson deals with two classes in Zion under the figure of daughters. The one is the light, frivolous, clothes-conscious kind, who, on the eve of destruction, are more interested in what they should wear than in what they should be. The third chapter of Isaiah deals with these.

The other daughters are those who are getting ready to meet their Lord. These God will cleanse and purge. When the destruction comes, as it will to all the world, they have a sure refuge.

The emphasis of the lesson should be on the fourth chapter and the preparation needed to meet the approval of God.

The Daughters of Zion Rebuked

1. What controversy does God have with the daughters of Zion? Isa. 3:16.

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.

2. What does the Lord say will become of the artificialities of the daughters of Zion? Isa. 3:17-26.

NOTE.—"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,* page 324.

Conditions in the world today are not unlike those in the time of Isaiah. We are standing before the event of the ages, and we, the sons of Zion as well as the daughters of Zion, should be deeply concerned. The rebuke which God administered then is applicable today. We are not to think that the women are sinners above the men. All are guilty before God and should take warning.

3. What instruction does Paul in the New Testament give about dress? 1 Tim. 2:9, 10.

4. From the practice of some women what spiritual and prophetic lessons may be drawn? Isa. 4:1.

NOTE.—In view of the setting of the text and in the light of what follows, we believe that there is a spiritual and prophetic application of this text apart from the literal one. "Woman" in the Bible is used as a symbol of a church. Rev. 12:1, 2; 17:3; 19:7-9; 21:9. By parity of reason, a good woman would symbolize the church of God; a bad woman, the apostate church. The seven women here are not above reproach. They are willing to enter into an unholy alliance, being desirous of having a name presumably for their expected offspring.

Deliverance Through the Branch

5. How does the prophet speak of the Branch of the Lord? Isa. 4:2.

NOTE.—Christ is called the Branch in several places in the Scriptures. See Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8; 6:12, 13.

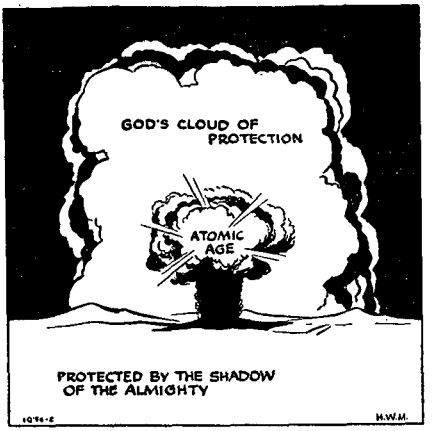
Christ said: "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." John 15:5. As Isaiah is about to discuss the children of God and their experiences, he refers to them as "the branch of the Lord." They are presented in contrast to the women mentioned in chapter 3, and also the women spoken of in chapter 4:1. They are the remnant, the chosen of God who will pass through the trials of the last days, including the seven last plagues, and will come forth victorious.

6. What is said of those who are left in Zion and who remain in Jerusalem? Isaiah 4:3, first part.

NOTE.—In the shaking time many will be shaken out. These, with others who have apostatized, will have no part in the cleansing when God begins His work in the church. It is not those who are outside the church that come into the reckoning at this time, but those that are left, those that remain in the church. Let all have this in mind. Yet, strange to say, there are among those outside the church such as would gladly reform the church. But God will not use apostates or critics. God has means within the church for its purification.

Everyone that remains "shall be called holy." They are called holy because they are holy. For those that remain, the remnant, God will do a special work of grace. When He has finished His work with them, they will be holy.

7. How are those who are left in Zion further described? Isa. 4:3, last part.



NOTE.—There may be a special significance to the phrase, "written among the living."

When God set out to cleanse the apostolic church of dishonest and untruthful members, some who refused to repent were carried out dead. (Read the story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5.) This experience brought great fear "upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things. . . . And of the rest durst no man join himself to them." Acts 5:11, 13.

When God shall cleanse His church at this time, getting His people ready for translation, the story of Ananias and Sapphira may give point to the expression that those who remain "among the living in Jerusalem" will be called holy.

A Cleansed People

8. How will God accomplish the cleansing? Isa. 4:4.

NOTE.—God will wash away all filth. That which cannot be removed by washing, He will remove by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning. God will have a clean people and will use whatever means are necessary to effect the cleansing.

9. How does Malachi describe the process of cleaning? Mal. 3:1-3.

NOTE.—Refiner's fire is hot fire. This is needed to clear away the dross. Fuller's soap was used in washing the wool to remove impurities.

10. Who shall be able to endure the devouring fire and the everlasting burnings? What will be the reward of such? Isa. 33:14-17.

The Protecting Pillar

11. When God brought Israel out of Egypt, how did He lead them? Ex. 13:21.

12. What will the Lord do for His remnant people? Isa. 4:5, 6.

NOTE.—This will find its fulfillment in the last crisis. "In one of the most beautiful and comforting passages of Isaiah's prophecy, 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,* page 283.

13. What assurance is given God's people in the time of trouble? Ps. 46:1-7.

14. What further does the psalmist say about the security afforded by the protecting "shadow of the Almighty"? Ps. 91:1-7.

NOTE.—"The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them. Like the captive exile, they will be in fear of death by starvation or by violence. But the Holy One who divided the Red Sea before Israel, will manifest His mighty power and turn their captivity. 'They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.' 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. . . . [See Ps. 27:5; Isa. 26:20, 21.] 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*, page 634.

Lesson 3, for January 21, 1956

The Vineyard of the Lord; A Vision of God

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 5 and 6.

MEMORY VERSE: "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us? Then said I, Here am I; send me." Isa. 6:8.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "Prophets and Kings," introductory chapter, pages 303-310; "Christ's Object Lessons," pages 284-306 (new ed., pp. 287-311); "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapters 5, 6.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1-3.
Monday: Questions 4, 5.
Tuesday: Questions 6-9.
Wednesday: Questions 10-15.
Thursday: Read from Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Lord's Vineyard

1. The care and fruit of the vineyard. Isa. 5:1, 2.
2. God's appeal for judgment. Isa. 5:3, 4.
3. The desolated vineyard. Isa. 5:5-7.
4. Christ's parable of the vineyard. Matt. 21:33-40.
5. Condemnation of the Jews. Matt. 21:41.

II. Visions of God

6. Isaiah's vision. Isa. 6:1.
7. Description of seraphim. Isa. 6:2.
8. The holy chorus. Isa. 6:3. Compare Rev. 4:8.
9. The effect. Isa. 6:4. Compare Acts 2:1-4.

III. The Prophet's Reaction

10. "Woe is me." Isa. 6:5.
11. The live coal—sin purged. Isa. 6:6, 7.
12. The call and the response. Isa. 6:8.
13. The commission and the message. Isa. 6:9, 10.
14. How long? Isa. 6:11, 12.
15. The promised remnant. Isa. 6:13.

THE LESSON

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 in the latter

part of chapter 5 under the six woes there discussed.

The second part of the lesson deals with the vision which Isaiah had of Jehovah. This was the great decisive event in Isaiah's life. It settled his career, his destiny. He had seen the Lord; his lips had been touched with coals from off the altar. From now on they were to be dedicated wholly to the Lord.

He now offered himself willingly for service, and the Lord instructed him what to say to the people and also told him that they would not understand nor accept the message. Yet his work was not to be fruitless. There would be left a tenth, a "holy seed," which should be as the stump of a sturdy oak that still retains its life and will survive. This thought of a remnant buoyed him in days of discouragement. Isaiah refers to a remnant again and again. God's work would not be a failure. A remnant should be saved.

The Lord's Vineyard

1. What disappointing results are expressed in the song of the vineyard? 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.' Exodus 33:18, 19. '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.' Exodus 34:6, 7. 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,* pages 285, 286. Compare Christ's parable, Matt. 21:33-44. See also Isa. 27:2, 3.

2. How does God appeal to the people? Isa. 5:3, 4.

3. Because of Israel's failure, what does God say He will do to His vineyard? Isa. 5:5-7.

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."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 215.

4. In Christ's parable of the vineyard how did the husbandmen treat the messengers and the son who were sent to them? Matt. 21:33-40.

5. What judgment did the Jews pronounce upon themselves? Matt. 21:41.

Visions of God

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

7. What description is given of the seraphim? Isa. 6:2.

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,* page 307.

8. What was their exalted refrain? Isa. 6:3. 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 apostles' experience on the Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:1-4.

The Prophet's Reaction

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

NOTE.—"As Isaiah beheld this revelation of the glory and majesty of his Lord, he was overwhelmed with a sense of the purity and holiness of God. How sharp the contrast between the matchless perfection of his Creator, and the sinful course of those who, with himself, had long been numbered among the chosen people of Israel and Judah! 'Woe is me!' he cried; 'for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.' "—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 307, 308.

11. How did the Lord bring cleansing to the prophet in the midst of his vision? Isa. 6:6, 7.

NOTE.—"Standing, as it were, in the full light of the divine presence within the inner sanctuary, he realized that if left to his own imperfection and inefficiency, he would be utterly unable to accomplish the mission to which he had been called. But a seraph was sent to relieve him of his distress, and to fit him for his great mission. A living coal from the altar was laid upon his lips, with the words, 'Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.' Then the voice of God was heard saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?' and Isaiah responded, 'Here am I; send me.' "—*Prophets and Kings,* page 308.

12. To what call was Isaiah now ready to respond? Isa. 6:8.

13. What shows the obstinacy of the people to whom Isaiah was sent? Isa. 6:9, 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,* page 322.

14. As the prophet asks, "How long?" what answer is given? Isa. 6:11, 12.

15. What hope is given the prophet? Isa. 6:13.

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. . . .

"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."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 309, 310.

Lesson 4, for January 28, 1956

The Government of God Established in Righteousness, Peace, and Joy

LESSON SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 9:6, 7; 11; 12.

MEMORY VERSE: "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation." Isa. 12:2.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapters 9, 11, 12.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1, 2.
Monday: Questions 3-6.
Tuesday: Questions 7-10.
Wednesday: Questions 11-15.
Thursday: Read from Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Pre-eminent Son

1. "Unto us a child is born." Isa. 9:6, first part.
2. His significant names. Isa. 9:6, last part.
3. His kingdom established. Isa. 9:7, first part.
4. Foundation principles of His kingdom. Isa. 9:7, last part.

II. The Branch

5. The rod from the stem of Jesse. Isa. 11:1.
6. The spirit of discernment. Isa. 11:2.
7. Jeremiah's reference to the Righteous Branch. Jer. 23:5, 6.
8. Judging in righteousness. Isa. 11:3-5.

III. The Coming Kingdom

9. Peaceful conditions. Isa. 11:6-9.
10. An Ensign for the people. Isa. 11:10.
11. Gathering of the remnant. Isa. 11: 11, 12.
12. Deliverance from the enemy. Isa. 11:13-16.

IV. In That Day

13. Praise for anger turned away. Isa. 12:1, 2.
14. Water from wells of salvation. Isa. 12:3.
15. Songs of praise. Isa. 12:4-6.

Introduction

"Darkness, distress, anguish, and gloom will be dispelled and God's glorious light will take its place in the world, *for* the gift of heaven to earth is to come in the person of a holy Child. What a transformation His coming is to make! Even Isaiah at the distance of seven hundred years is able to describe something of the glory of it. Divine wisdom, divine might, divine fatherhood, and divine peace are to come as a result of His reign on the earth. These four pairs of names for the Messiah emphasize His divinity. The coming King is wise, is mighty, is to be a guardian of His people, and will bring into the world a heavenly peace."—Kyle M. Yates, *Preaching From the Prophets,* page 93.

The Pre-eminent Son

1. In what words was the hope of the Messiah set forth? Isa. 9:6, first part. Compare Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-28.

NOTE.—"It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. . . . To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature. This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. 'Unto *us* a child is born, unto *us* a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder.' God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, and has carried the same into the highest heaven."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 25.

2. By what significant names is He called? Isa. 9:6, last part.

NOTE.—*Wonderful Counselor.* The Authorized Version separates these two words, others place them together. As there is nothing in the original to settle this question, we may feel free to follow our choice. Christ is wonderful, however considered. He is also a wonderful counselor. "He of whom it is written, 'The government shall be upon His shoulder,' is the Wonderful Counselor."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 363.

"Christ, the Word, the Only Begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,—one in nature, in character, in purpose,—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. . . . And the Son of God declares concerning Himself: 'The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting. . . . When He appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 34.

In the counsels of eternity Christ was present, and even at that time He was a Wonderful Counselor. He is the same today.

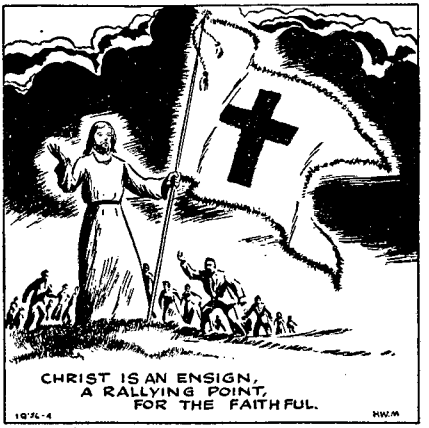
Mighty God. There are some who would belittle Christ and make Him a created being. Such have no conception of the dishonor they thus heap upon Him. Christ is God, He is "mighty God."

The Everlasting Father. To make even more sure that Christ is accorded the honor of Godhood, He is here called the Everlasting Father. This gives Christ the honor of equality with the Father Himself. The two are one, in honor, in character, in purpose, but not in person. Christ Himself says, "All men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." John 5:23. If Christ were not God, and God in the highest sense, this would be the highest blasphemy.

The Prince of Peace. At the birth of Christ the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:14. Christ came to bring peace to earth among men and nations, but mostly to bring peace to troubled souls. "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27.

3. What was indicated as to the nature of His reign? Isa. 9:7, first part.

NOTE.—When Satan's rule is over, God's government will be infinitely extended, not only throughout the earth but also to the illimitable reaches of the universe.



4. Upon what principles were the throne and the kingdom to be founded? Verse 7, last part.

NOTE.—"Order," the word here used, is not found, in the original Hebrew, elsewhere in the Old Testament. It signifies to set up, erect, "stand perpendicular," confirm, fasten, set right. "Established" here means to strengthen, to support, to hold up.

These words reveal the plan which God had in mind from the beginning, but which has been "kept in silence through times eternal." Rom. 16:25, R.V. The government shall rest on the shoulders of Christ, and He will establish and order that which is to be.

The Branch

5. What was to issue from the stem of Jesse? Isa. 11:1.

NOTE.—Jesse was the name of David's father. 1 Sam. 17:12. Christ, therefore, was of the house of David. Luke 1:32.

6. What spiritual discernment would He possess? Isa. 11:2.

7. How does Jeremiah refer to this Righteous Branch? Jer. 23:5, 6.

8. In what words does Isaiah further describe the principles of the Lord's government? Isa. 11:3-5.

NOTE.—"Quick understanding" does not merely mean a ready grasp of a problem, but rather an understanding of the underlying causes. We may freely come to God. He understands. He is not led astray by appearances or by words. He can see through a situation, and He is ready with the counsel and help.

The Coming Kingdom

9. What is said of conditions in the coming kingdom? Isa. 11:6-9.

10. What shall the root of Jesse be in "that day"? Isa. 11:10.

11. What closing work is to be accomplished in all the earth? Isa. 11:11, 12.

NOTE.—The "first" deliverance of His people was from Egypt at the Exodus. The "second" deliverance of His people referred to here in Isaiah 11 is their restoration from captivity in Assyria, Media, and Babylonia. This we may see as a "type and assurance" of the final deliverance at the second coming.

12. At that time what will become of envy and jealousy? Against whom will they use their united strength? Isa. 11:13-16.

NOTE.—There should never at any time be envy or jealousy among God's people. Such not only causes dissension among the brethren, but it also effectively hinders the outpouring of the Spirit. It was when the disciples "were all with one accord in one place" that Pentecost came. Acts 2:1. We must be a united people or we shall fail.

In That Day

13. What will God's people say in "that day"? Isa. 12:1, 2.

NOTE.—"That day" is the same day as is referred to in the latter part of chapter 11. It is a day of praise and thanksgiving when the people of God experience the joy and peace that come with harmony and love among the brethren, and the assurance that the day of deliverance is at hand. God has been angry with them because of their lukewarmness and indifference, but His anger is now turned away, and He has become their strength and salvation.

14. What will the people do joyfully? Isa. 12:3.

NOTE.—"Let him that heareth say, Come; and whosoever will, let him come. Let every soul, women as well as men, sound this message. Then the work will be carried to the waste places of the earth. The scripture will be fulfilled: In that day the Lord shall open fountains in the valleys, and 'rivers in the desert,' and 'with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.' Isa. 41:18; 43:19, 20; 12:3."—*Testimonies,* vol. 6, p. 86.

15. In what words will the saints express their praise? Isa. 12:4-6.

NOTE.—"At the time of Hezekiah's accession to the throne of Judah, the Assyrians had already carried captive a large number of the children of Israel from the northern kingdom; and a few years after he had begun to reign, and while he was still strengthening the defenses of Jerusalem, the Assyrians besieged and captured Samaria, and scattered the ten tribes among the many provinces of the Assyrian realm. The borders of Judah were only a few miles distant, with Jerusalem less than fifty miles away; and the rich spoils to be found within the temple would tempt the enemy to return.

"But the king of Judah had determined to do his part in preparing to resist the enemy; and having accomplished all that human ingenuity and energy could do, he had assembled his forces, and had exhorted them to be of good courage. 'Great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee,' had been the message of the prophet Isaiah to Judah; and the king with unwavering faith now declared, 'With us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles.' "—*Prophets and Kings,* page 351.

Lesson 5, for February 4, 1956

The Day of the Lord; The Refuge of the Remnant

LESSON SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 13; 24; 25.

MEMORY VERSE: "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. 25:9.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapters 13, 14, 25.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1-3.
Monday: Questions 4, 5.
Tuesday: Questions 6-10.
Wednesday: Questions 11-16.
Thursday: Read Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. A Time of Destruction

1. The day of the Lord described. Isa. 13:6-9.
2. Testimony of Zephaniah. Zeph. 1:14-18.
3. Signs in the heavens. Isa. 13:10. Compare Matt. 24:29.
4. The earth laid waste. Isa. 13:11, 13; 24:1, 3, 4. Compare Jer. 4:23-28.
5. Reasons for judgments of God. Isa. 24:5, 6.
6. Results in the "cities of confusion." Isa. 24:7-12.

II. The Remnant

7. Gleaned from among the peoples. Isa. 24:13, 14.
8. Glorifying the Lord in the midst of trouble. Isa. 24:15, 16.

III. The Wicked

9. The despair of the wicked. Isa. 24:17, 18.
10. The end of this world. Isaiah 24:19, 20.
11. The wicked during the millennium. Isa. 24:21, 22.
12. The new earth and New Jerusalem. Isa. 24:23.

IV. God a Refuge and Strength

13. A refuge from the storm. Isa. 25:1-4.
14. A feast of fat things. Isa. 25:6, 7.
15. Death swallowed up in victory. Isa. 25:8.
16. Rejoicing in His salvation. Isa. 25:9.

THE LESSON

Introduction

Amos says: "Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?" Amos 5:20. Joel calls it "a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness." Joel 2:2. Isaiah agrees with this, but he knows that a remnant will be saved.

A Time of Destruction

1. What description is given by Isaiah of the day of the Lord? What will be the effect upon mankind? Isa. 13:6-9.

2. How is the day of the Lord spoken of by Zephaniah? Zeph. 1:14-18.

NOTE.—The day of the Lord will come as a day of deliverance to the people of God, but to the wicked it will be a day of wrath and fierce anger.

3. What is said of the stars, the sun, and the moon? Isa. 13:10. See also Matt. 24:29.

NOTE.—The signs in the sun, moon, and stars are the same as those mentioned by the Lord in Matthew 24. The sun was darkened in accord with this prophecy May 19, 1780; the moon the following night; and the great sign of the falling of the stars took place November 13, 1833.

4. What terrible destruction will God bring upon the world? What punishment will come to the wicked? Isa. 13:11, 13; 24:1, 3, 4. Compare Jer. 4:23-28.

NOTE.—"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,* page 657.

5. 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 charge is true today. The laws of God and of men are lightly regarded, crime and violence are alarmingly increasing, and the everlasting covenant is broken.

6. What is the result of this destruction? Isa. 24:7-12.

NOTE.—God will speak in ways that cannot be misunderstood. When the earth shall be given over to desolation, the merry-hearted will sigh, the harp and the song will cease, all joy will be darkened, and there will be no mirth. Men are now 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"!

The Remnant

7. What will be the experience of the remnant? Isa. 24:13, 14.

NOTE.—In the midst of these calamities, as when an olive tree is shaken, or as when grapes are gathered, there are a few still left, so a remnant will remain. But many will be shaken out. It is vitally important to be so rooted and grounded in the truth, so firmly anchored to eternal verities, that nothing can shake us. All that can be shaken will be shaken.

8. Whence will come a song of praise? Isa. 24:15, 16.

NOTE.—While all things earthly are passing away, God's people will remain calm and composed. Mountains may be cast into the sea, the earth may shake, but they are firmly anchored to the Rock of Ages. But let no one be deceived. Only those who are prepared will stand. And it will be too late to attempt to get ready when the world is collapsing. Now is the accepted time.

The Wicked

9. What is revealed concerning the hopeless condition of the wicked? Isa. 24:17, 18.

NOTE.—Fear and panic shall seize the wicked. As they flee, some will be caught in the snare, some in the pit. And should they escape from one, they will fall into another. "For the windows from on high are open." This is an expression similar to the one in Malachi where God is said to open the windows of heaven to pour out a blessing. Here He pours out the vials of His wrath.

10. What happens to this old earth? Isa. 24:19, 20.

11. What is done with the wicked? Isa. 24:21, 22.

NOTE.—"The high ones that are on high," as contrasted with the kings of earth, are the angels that fell, including Satan. The pit and the prison into which they will be shut up is the devastated earth. Rev. 20:1. "Many days" has reference to the 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 gath-

ered 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,* page 661.

12. What new-earth conditions are brought to view? Isa. 24:23.

NOTE.—When the new kingdom is established, the glory will be so great that the sun and the moon will pale in comparison, or, as the text expresses it, "be confounded" and "ashamed." See Rev. 22:5.

God a Refuge and Strength

13. During this time of distress and destruction what has God been to His people? Isa. 25:1-4.

NOTE.—Notice particularly verse 4. During the raging of the elements, during the time of persecution, God has been near and protected His own.

14. What will God do "in this mountain"? What will He destroy? Isa. 25:6, 7.

NOTE.—"A feast of fat things." We take this to be a spiritual experience. And what a wonderful thing it will be when Christ Himself shall open to us the things that formerly seemed dark!

Then the veil that has been over all nations shall be removed, and the covering cast off, and we shall see, in all things, God's purpose that before was dark and hidden.

15. What threefold assurance does God give to His people? Isa. 25:8.

NOTE.—" 'They shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord.' He hath appointed 'to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.' Isa. 62:12; 61:3. They are no longer feeble, afflicted, scattered, and oppressed. Henceforth they are to be ever with the Lord. They stand before the throne clad in richer robes than the most honored of the earth have ever worn. They are crowned with diadems more glorious than were ever placed upon the brow of earthly monarchs. The days of pain and weeping are forever ended. The King of glory has wiped the tears from all faces; every cause of grief has been removed."—*The Great Controversy,* page 650.

16. What shall be said 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,* page 644.

FOREIGN-LANGUAGE SABBATH-SCHOOL LESSON QUARTERLIES

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The Trials and Triumph of God's People; The New Earth

LESSON SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 26 and 35.

MEMORY VERSE: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee." Isa. 26:3.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "The Acts of the Apostles," pages 593-602; "The Great Controversy," pages 635-642, 672-678 (new ed. pp. 717-724, 755-762); "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapters 26, 35.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1-3.
Monday: Questions 4-7.
Tuesday: Questions 8-10.
Wednesday: Questions 11-13.
Thursday: Read Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Confidence and Trust

1. A song of assurance. Isa. 26:1, 2.
2. Peace of mind. Isa. 26:3, 4.
3. Waiting on the Lord. Isa. 26:8, 9, first part.
4. Purpose of God's judgments. Isa. 26:9 (last part), 10-12; Eph. 2:10.

II. Triumphant in Trouble

5. The Lord wrought for us against the wicked. Isa. 26:12-14.
6. "Thy dead men shall live." Isa. 26:19.
7. Blessed invitation to God's people. Isa. 26:20, 21.

III. The Joyous Reward of the Redeemed

8. The desert blossoms as the rose. Isa. 35:1.
9. Rejoicing with joy and singing. Isa. 35:2.
10. Assurance of recompense. Isa. 35:3, 4.
11. Changed conditions. Isa. 35:5-7.
12. The way of holiness. Isa. 35:8, 9.
13. The ransomed of the Lord. Isa. 35:10.

THE LESSON

Introduction

In the midst of all the destruction of the last days, God's people will have a song of trust and confidence. All things earthly will fail, the world itself will reel and be dissolved, but with faith God's people exclaim: "We have a strong city." They have not been perfect, but they have made God their trust, and all is well.

Confidence and Trust

1. What song will be sung "in that day"? To whom will the gates be opened? Isa. 26:1, 2. See Rev. 22:14.

2. Through all the struggles and turmoils of the last days, what may God's people possess? Isa. 26:3, 4.

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,* page 331.

3. What will characterize those who are waiting for the Lord? Isa. 26:8, 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 judgments, O Jehovah, have we waited for Thee; to Thy name, even to Thy memorial name, is the desire of our soul." The name of God is His character. And the remnant people will have the name of God in their foreheads. Rev. 14:1.

4. What is the effect of God's judgment upon mankind? What does God ordain for His own? What has He done for them? Isa. 26:9 (last part), 10-12; Eph. 2:10.

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 will forget all their good intentions. Verse 10.

Triumphant in Trouble

5. What confession do God's people make? What becomes of the wicked? Isa. 26:12-14.

NOTE.—The American Revised Version reads, "Thou hast also wrought all our works for us." Verse 12. 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 for anything through Him who gives me power." Phil. 4:13, Weymouth.

6. What joyful news is proclaimed concerning those who have died in the Lord? Isa. 26:19.

7. When God comes forth to punish the world, what gracious invitation is given to God's people? Isa. 26:20, 21.

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.' Ps. 27:5. 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.' Isa. 26:20, 21. 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,* page 634.

The Joyous Reward of the Redeemed

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

NOTE.—This text has reference primarily to new-earth conditions. However, it may also have a spiritual application to the present as in the following quotation: "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 daystar has risen upon us, and we are to flash its light upon the pathway of those in darkness."—*Testimonies,* vol. 6, p. 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.' "—*Ibid.,* p. 308.

9. In the desert wastes, what changes are foretold? Isa. 35:2.

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 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."—*Testimonies,* vol. 6, 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 afterward 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.'

"Today 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,* pages 313, 314.

10. What encouraging message is given to the weak and fearful? Isa. 35:3, 4.

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 into 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.

The fearful, the fainthearted, 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

save; so be courageous. The Master is at the door.

11. What wonderful changes will take place when the Lord comes? Isa. 35:5-7.

12. How is the highway of the Lord and its travelers described? Isa. 35:8, 9.

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

13. What thrilling experience awaits the ransomed of the Lord? Isa. 35:10.

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 and 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 7, for February 18, 1956

Behold Your God

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 40.

MEMORY VERSE: "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Isa. 40:11.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "The Desire of Ages," pages 132-135; "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapter 40.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1-3.
Monday: Questions 4-6.
Tuesday: Questions 7-9.
Wednesday: Questions 10-14.
Thursday: Read Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. A Voice in the Wilderness

1. A message of comfort. Isa. 40:1, 2.
2. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Isa. 40:3-5; Matt. 3:1-3.
3. Frailty of man—the strength of God's word. Isa. 40:6-8.

II. Good Tidings

4. Zion, bearer of good tidings. Isa. 40:9.
5. The vital message. Isa. 40:10.
6. The gentle shepherd. Isa. 40:11. Compare John 10:1-16.
7. The incomprehensible ways of God. Isa. 40:12-14.

III. God Incomparable

8. Insignificance of the nations. Isa. 40:15-17.
9. God contrasted with idols. Isa. 40: 18-20.
10. Sovereign greatness of God. Isa. 40:21-24.
11. The Creator's power. Isa. 40:25, 26.

IV. The Creator's Watchcare

12. Israel reproved for doubting God's care. Isa. 40:27.
13. God assures His people. Isa. 40: 28, 29.
14. Promise of strength renewed. Isa. 40:30, 31.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The section in Isaiah beginning with chapter 40 is of special interest to God's people at this time. The believer in the Bible has no difficulty in seeing Christ portrayed before his eyes as the suffering Servant of God.

The angel of Revelation 14 calls upon men to "worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Revelation 14:7. This message is due to the world today, and it constitutes a direct challenge to modernism and the destructive theory of evolution, which is God-denying in its effect. When we are told to worship Him that made heaven and earth, the attention by these words is drawn to the first chapter of the Bible, where the account of creation is recorded. The angel calls upon men to worship the God of the first chapter of Genesis, the God who created.

While the entire Bible is filled with references to God as Creator, Isaiah is the only one who presents a sustained argument for creation as opposed to theories which would dethrone God and deprive Him of His due glory. When He, therefore, in the chapters we are about to study, repeatedly calls attention to God as Creator, He is presenting present truth.

More than a third of the chapters that remain are concerned with God as the great Creator. The other two thirds contain some of the most beautiful and helpful passages in the entire book of God. They are all of special interest to God's people at this time.

A Voice in the Wilderness

1. What comforting message does God send to His people? Isa. 40:1, 2.

NOTE.—Sin, wherever found, is abhorrent to God, but doubly so in the case of those who know the truth. Light brings responsibility. Those who know the truth and still persist in sin are more guilty than those who do not have a knowledge of God's message for this time. For this reason God's people had received double punishment. But God does not hate his people any more than the gardener hates the vine which he prunes. God loves His people and sends them a message of comfort and love.

2. What message is proclaimed by the voice crying in the wilderness? Who fulfilled this scripture? Isa. 40:3-5; Matt. 3:1-3.

NOTE.—"In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, such a work as that of John is to be done. God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord. The message preceding the public ministry of Christ was: 'Repent, publicans and sinners; repent, Pharisees and Sadducees; "repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."' . . .

"In order to give such a message as John gave, we must have a spiritual experience like his. The same work must be wrought in us. We must behold God, and in beholding Him lose sight of self."—*Testimonies,* vol. 8, pp. 332, 333.

3. In what language does Isaiah contrast the temporal with the eternal? Isa. 40:6-8.

NOTE.—Man and his wisdom shall perish, but "the word of our God shall stand forever." Men's theories will go down. Their ideas of future peace and of a millennium will not bear the test of "the word." It is well to build on something that will "stand" when everything else is shaken.

Good Tidings

4. How is the proclamation of good tidings made effective? Isa. 40:9.

NOTE.—"The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them. The light of the Sun of Righteousness is to shine forth in good works—in words of truth and deeds of holiness."—*Christ's Object Lessons,* pages 415, 416.

5. What is a vital part of the message to be given? Isa. 40:10.

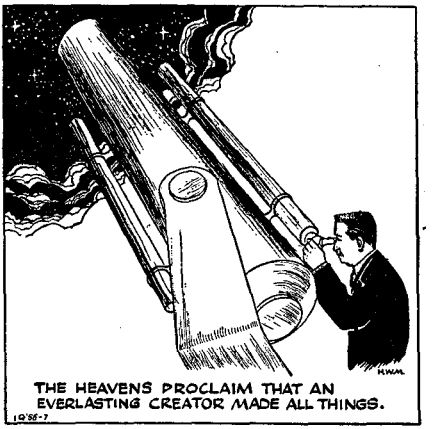
NOTE.—"The Lord God will come." This is the advent proclamation, and should be the keynote of every message. The Lord will come "with strong hand." He will "rule." See Ps. 2:8, 9. He will also bring the "reward" with Him. See Rev. 22:12. The Lord will come to punish and to reward.

6. Under what beautiful symbol is Christ presented? How are His love and care revealed? Isa. 40:11. See also John 10:1-16.

NOTE.—"Christ, the Chief Shepherd, has entrusted the care of His flock to His ministers as undershepherds; and He bids them have the same interest that He has manifested, and feel the sacred responsibility of the charge He has entrusted to them. He has solemnly commanded them to be faithful, to feed the flock, to strengthen the weak, to revive the fainting, and to shield them from devouring wolves."—*Patriarchs and Prophets,* page 191.

7. How does the prophet illustrate the mighty power of God? What further questions are asked? Isa. 40:12-14.

NOTE.—These questions are so put as to require the negative answer,—No one,—the strongest way in which such statements can be placed. The positive would be, God has not been taught by anyone; no one has shown Him "the way of understanding." That is, God is the Original One, the Ultimate One, the Source of all things. There was none before Him. No one "instructed" or "taught" Him.



God Incomparable

8. In comparison to God's omnipotence, what is said of the nations? Isa. 40:15-17.

NOTE.—The dripping of a bucket or a little dust blown from the scales is not regarded as great or important. Yet if whole nations are so counted, how much smaller must the individual be! But puny man sets himself up against God and attempts to teach Him! Such indeed must be counted by Heaven less than nothing, and vanity.

9. What shows that it is impossible to make any comparison to the great God of heaven? How are idols made? Isa. 40:18-20.

NOTE.—The inference is plain. God is the Creator. He has made all things. Idols cannot create. They themselves must be made.

10. How is the majesty of God contrasted with the rulers of earth? Isa. 40:21-24.

NOTE.—Verse 22 in the American Revised Version reads, "above the circle of the earth," and the same version in the margin

renders verse 24: "Scarce are they planted, scarce are they sown, scarce hath their stock taken root in the earth, when He bloweth upon them." That is, men hardly begin to live ere they are taken away.

11. What are we counseled to do? How are God's wisdom and power shown? Isa. 40:25, 26.

NOTE.—"God calls upon His creatures to turn their attention from the confusion and perplexity around them, and admire His handiwork. As we study His works, angels from heaven will be by our side, to enlighten our minds, and guard them from Satan's deceptions. As you look at the wonderful things that God's hand has made, let your proud, foolish heart feel its dependence and inferiority. How terrible it is when the acknowledgment of God is not made when it should be made! How sad to humble one's self when it is too late!"—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students,* page 457.

The Creator's Watchcare

12. What do Jacob and Israel say? Isa. 40:27.

NOTE.—The complaint of Jacob and Israel seems to be that "my way," that is, their course and condition of life, is hidden from the Lord, and that "my judgment" or, rather, "my right," escapes His notice. It is really a complaint from the people that God does not pay enough attention to them, that He passes them by.

13. How does God meet the complaint of the people and assure them of His knowledge and care? Isa. 40:28, 29.

NOTE.—"There is no searching of His understanding." That is, God knows. You may think He does not know your perplexities, or, even worse, that He does not care. Be assured, dear soul, God knows and He cares. Your God not only understands, but He will give you the needed power and will increase your strength.

"God's workers will meet with turmoil, discomfort, and weariness. At times, uncertain and distracted, they are almost in despair. When this restless nervousness comes, let them remember Christ's invitation: 'Come ye yourselves apart, . . . and rest awhile.' The Saviour 'giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.' Isa. 40:29."—*Testimonies,* vol. 7, p. 244.

14. What may be the experience of the youth? What is noted of them "that wait upon the Lord"? Isa. 40:30, 31.

NOTE.—"Remember that prayer is the source of your strength. A worker cannot gain success while he hurries through his prayers and rushes away to look after something that he fears may be neglected or forgotten. He gives only a few hurried thoughts to God; he does not take time to think, to pray, to wait upon the Lord for a renewal of physical and spiritual strength. He soon becomes weary. He does not feel the uplifting, inspiring influence of God's Spirit. He is not quickened by fresh life. His jaded frame and tired brain are not soothed by personal contact with Christ."—*Testimonies,* vol. 7, p. 243. Read Psalm 27:14.

LESSON QUARTERLIES FOR THE BLIND

The senior Sabbath-school lessons, slightly condensed, are published each quarter in Braille and supplied free to the blind upon request. Address: The Christian Record Benevolent Association, Box 66, Lincoln 6, Nebraska.

Jehovah's Challenge to False Gods

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 41.

MEMORY VERSE: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." Isa. 41:10.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "Prophets and Kings," pages 143-154; "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapter 41.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1-3.
Monday: Questions 4-6.
Tuesday: Questions 7-9.
Wednesday: Questions 10-14.
Thursday: Read Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Man From the East

1. God's challenge to the people. Isa. 41:1-3.
2. God propounds and answers a question. Isa. 41:4.
3. Mutual encouragement. Isa. 41:5-7.

II. God Assures His People

4. Fear not, I am with thee. Isa. 41: 8-10.
5. Their enemies confounded. Isa. 41: 11, 12.
6. Promise of help renewed. Isa. 41: 13, 14.
7. Victory over enemies promised. Isa. 41:15, 16.
8. Promise to poor and needy. Isa. 41:17, 18.
9. Evidence of the hand of the Lord. Isa. 41:19, 20.

III. Challenge to the Idols

10. A test proposed. Isa. 41:21.
11. Challenged to reveal the future. Isa. 41:22-24.
12. Cyrus is raised up. Isa. 41:25.
13. God scorns the futility of false gods. Isa. 41:26, 28, 29.
14. Good tidings to Jerusalem. Isa. 41:27.

THE LESSON

Introduction

"Study the forty-first chapter of Isaiah, and strive to understand it in all its significance."—*Testimonies,* vol. 8, p. 39.

In Isaiah 40 God is presented as the Creator. In this chapter the nations are challenged to appear as witnesses to God's foreknowledge. The Lord will tell them about the future, concerning one who hath been "raised up . . . from the east, whom He calleth in righteousness to His foot." Isa. 41:2, R.V. God will give this man "the nations." He will give him rule over kings. Though this man is not named as yet, he is without doubt Cyrus, mentioned by name first in Isaiah 44:28, many years before he was born.

God gives every man ample ground for faith. In this chapter He says, in substance, to Israel, "I will foretell the future. By that you may know that I am God. I challenge the idols to tell what shall come to pass. They cannot do this. When I tell you concerning the man I will raise up and you see it come to pass, you may know that I am

indeed the true God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth."

"Islands," literally "coastlands," or lands bordering on the sea. When the people of Isaiah's time spoke of "islands" they referred to "foreign lands."

The Man From the East

1. How does God address the islands and the people? What questions does God ask? What would the "man from the east" do? Isa. 41:1-3.

NOTE.—God calls the nations before Him. He is about to speak to them, so He asks them to keep silence. After God has spoken, "then let them speak."

The sense of these verses may perhaps best be presented by this paraphrase: "Who hath raised up one from the east who is always victorious? Who hath given him authority over the nations, and made him rule over kings? His sword drives them like dust, his bow like chaff before the wind. He pursues them and marches forward safely and that so swiftly that he does not tread the path with his feet."

Cyrus is the "man from the east." See Introduction.

2. What question does God propound? How is God spoken of? Isa. 41:4.

NOTE.—This verse does not say that God is the first and the last. That indeed is true. Rev. 1:11. But here it states that God is with the last. Even as God was in the beginning, so He will be with His people to the end, with the last.

3. How did the people encourage one another? Isa. 41:5-7.

NOTE.—The prophet is here describing the condition which would accompany the conquests of Cyrus. The islands and the nations would be afraid; they "drew near," but not to God. This drawing near probably has reference to the league between Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt against Cyrus. Instead of trusting God, they appeal to their idols, and decide to make a particularly good and strong set of gods.

"Well might the words written of the idol builders of old be, with worthier aim, adopted as a motto by character builders of today:—'They helped everyone his neighbor; and everyone said to his brother, Be of good courage.' "—*Education,* page 286.

God Assures His People

4. What comforting assurance does God give to His people? Isa. 41:8-10.

NOTE.—"Abraham My friend"! What a wonderful designation! And we are the children of Abraham, God's friend. God's people will come from the ends of the earth. They may not be perfect, but God has not cast them away.

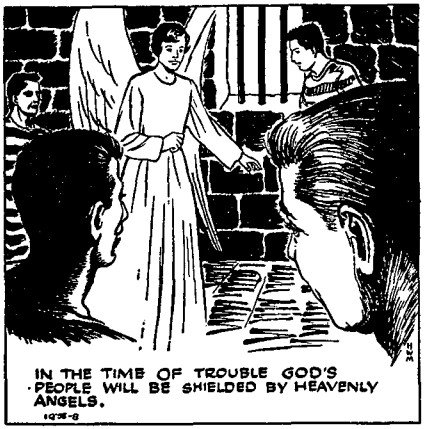
5. What will be the experience of those who are incensed against God's people? Isaiah 41:11, 12.

6. How does the Holy One of Israel encourage His people? Isa. 41:13, 14.

NOTE.—"The heart of Infinite Love yearns after those who feel powerless to free themselves from the snares of Satan; and He graciously offers to strengthen them to live for Him. 'Fear thou not,' He bids them; 'for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.' 'I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.' "—*Prophets and Kings,* page 316.

7. In what words does the Lord indicate the triumph of His people over their enemies? Isa. 41:15, 16.

NOTE.—The time was to come when Israel should again reign. As the instrument of the



Almighty they would thresh the nations (mountains). A day also lies just ahead when the Israel of God will no longer be a savor of life to a rebellious world. No more will God spare a world in rebellion because of the righteous remnant. Instead, because of their rebellion and their oppression of His people, the vials of His wrath will be poured upon them. The land will be emptied and desolate (Rev. 6:14-17; Jer. 4:23-28) like Babylon of old (Jer. 51:2). But in that day God's people shall rejoice in Him and "glory in the Holy One of Israel." See Isa. 25:8, 9.

8. What precious promise does God give to the poor and the needy? Isa. 41:17, 18.

NOTE.—This text has a literal application as well as a spiritual one. Speaking of the time of trouble, we read in *The Great Controversy,* page 629:

"The people of God will not be free from suffering; but while persecuted and distressed, while they endure privation, and suffer for want of food, they will not be left to perish. That God who cared for Elijah, will not pass by one of His self-sacrificing children. He who numbers the hairs of their head, will care for them; and in time of famine they shall be satisfied. While the wicked are dying from hunger and pestilence, angels will shield the righteous, and supply their wants. To him that 'walketh righteously' is the promise, 'Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.' 'When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.' "

9. What will God plant in the wilderness and in the desert? Why does God do this? Isa. 41:19, 20.

NOTE.—These trees are of the choicest. The desert itself shall be transformed into a grove of stately, beautiful trees. And the object is that men may see in this a demonstration of the creative power of God.

Challenge to the Idols

10. What does the Lord call upon the idols of the nations to do? Isa. 41:21.

11. What does God challenge the idols to reveal? What does God declare them to be? Isa. 41:22-24.

NOTE.—God's challenge is definite, "Show us the future. Prove your power to predict, or give any proof of life and activity." See Jer. 10:5. God's idea of these idols is well expressed in the margin, "worse than nothing," "worse than of a viper."

12. Whom does God say He has raised up? What shall He do to princes? Isa. 41:25.

NOTE.—Cyrus is here again introduced. He is said to have come from the north, also from the east. In fact, he came from the east, though all armies from the east came around the Arabian Desert, and hence attacked Palestine from the north.

"Call upon My name." The Cambridge Bible, page 23, makes the following comment: "It is true that in Isaiah 45:4 it is said that Cyrus had not known Jehovah; but it is also said (verse 3) that the effect of his remarkable successes will be 'that thou mayest know that I am Jehovah that calleth thee by thy name, the God of Israel.' There

is therefore no difficulty in the idea that Cyrus, who was at first the unconscious instrument of Jehovah's purpose, shall at length recognize that Jehovah was the true author of his success."

13. In what words does God deride false gods? Isa. 41:26, 28, 29.

14. How is the promise of good tidings to Jerusalem reiterated? Isa. 41:27.

Lesson 9, for March 3, 1956

The Elect of God, a Light to the Gentiles

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 42.

MEMORY VERSE: "A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment unto truth." Isa. 42:3.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "Prophets and Kings," pages 692-694; "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapter 42.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1-4.
Monday: Questions 5-7.
Tuesday: Questions 8-10.
Wednesday: Questions 11-14.
Thursday: Read Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Lord's Servant

1. God's chosen servant. Isa. 42:1.
2. His quiet ways. Isa. 42:2.
3. His gentle dealing. Isa. 42:3.
4. His resolute purpose. Isa. 42:4.

II. A Light to the Gentiles

5. The Creator and Sustainer. Isa. 42:5.
6. Commission to His servant. Isa. 42:6, 7.
7. His name and glory. Isa. 42:8, 9.

III. Triumph Over Enemies

8. A new song. Isa. 42:10-12.
9. Release from long restraint. Isa. 42:13-15.
10. The shame of worshipers of images. Isa. 42:17.
11. Promises to the blind. Isa. 42:16, 18.
12. Commendable blindness. Isa. 42:19, 20.

IV. The Law Magnified

13. Reason for the Lord's pleasure. Isa. 42:21.
14. The law made effective. Heb. 8:10-13.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The work of Christ is definitely set forth in this chapter. He is the elect of God, a term which occurs six times in this portion of Isaiah. He is gentle, quiet, compassionate. He does not come to crush life, but to develop it; not to despise the weak, but to help them. If there is but a dimly burning wick, He does not give up hope. He will not stop

until the work is accomplished. Many of the blind shall see the light, and the whole earth shall praise the Lord.

The Lord's Servant

1. What description is given of God's servant? Isa. 42:1.

NOTE.—Christ is the Servant (John 6:38), sent to do the Father's will. He is the elect whom the Father has chosen, and whom He upholds.

"Bring forth judgment." The word "judgment" occurs three times in these first verses, and may be translated "law;" but commentators agree that the word is used here in a larger sense, some rendering the sentence thus: "He shall carry the true religion to the Gentiles."

2. What will be the manner of Christ's working? Isa. 42:2.

NOTE.—"In marked contrast to all this [the manner of the Pharisees] was the life of Jesus. In that life no noisy disputation, no ostentatious worship, no act to gain applause, was ever witnessed. Christ was hid in God, and God was revealed in the character of His Son. To this revelation Jesus desired the minds of the people to be directed, and their homage to be given."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 261.

3. What two figures are used to show Christ's love and tenderness for the weak? Isa. 42:3, margin.

NOTE.—There are few more beautiful passages in the Bible. The reed may be bruised, but Christ will not break it. The candle may burn dimly, but He will not blow it out. There may not be much strength, the life may be bruised and broken; there may not be much light, rather smoke and darkness. But Christ does not give up hope. His own light does not burn dimly. By gentle measures the smoking flax may be fanned into a flame. His purpose shall not be broken, and the true religion shall be extended to all the earth.

4. What is Christ's attitude toward His work? For what do the isles wait? Isa. 42:4.

NOTE.—Christ will not fail, He will not give up, He will not give way to discouragement nor break under the strain. The margin of the American Revised Version gives "burn dimly" instead of "fail," and "bruised" instead of "discouraged."

A Light to the Gentiles

5. How is the true God revealed? Isa. 42:5.

NOTE.—Again and again the true God is mentioned as the Creator. Here the reading really is, Thus saith the God who alone is truly God.

"That which cometh out of it" probably refers to all that the earth produces—gold, silver, and vegetation.

6. How does God speak of Christ's appointment and of His work? Isa. 42:6, 7.

7. What does God set forth as a reason for His superiority to idols? Isa. 42:8, 9.

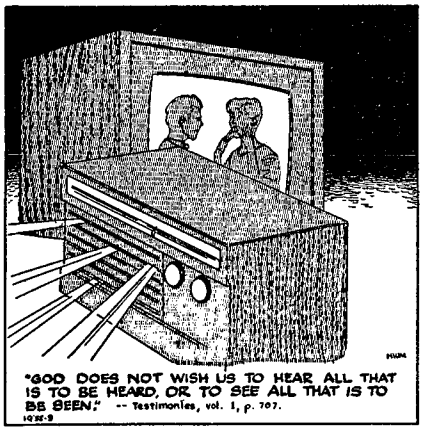
NOTE.—The "former things" had all been fulfilled. The "new things" will as surely come to pass.

Triumph Over Enemies

8. What are we exhorted to do? Who are to sing this song? Isa. 42:10-12.

9. What is the Lord about to do? Isa. 42:13-15.

NOTE.—The reason for singing the new song is given in these verses. God is about



to manifest Himself. The second coming of Christ is here brought to view. For a long time God has restrained Himself and kept still when iniquity raised its ugly head, but now God will restrain Himself no more. He will go forth. He will prevail against His enemies.

10. What will happen to the worshipers of graven images? Isa. 42:17.

11. What is God's promise to the blind? Isa. 42:16, 18.

NOTE.—The blind here must have reference to the spiritually blind. In *Prophets and Kings,* page 378, this text is applied to "all the honest in heart in heathen lands." There are many who are blind, but honest. That which seems to them to be darkness will then be made light, and the crooked things will be made straight. This should give us hope for many who apparently are rejecting light.

12. How is the attitude of God's servant to his surroundings revealed? Isa. 42:19, 20.

NOTE.—"The work outlined in these scriptures [Isa. 42:16-21] is the work before us. The terms 'My servant,' 'Israel,' 'The Lord's servant,' mean anyone that the Lord may select and appoint to do a certain work. He makes them ministers of His will, though some who are selected may be as ignorant of His will as was Nebuchadnezzar."—*Testimonies,* vol. 9, p. 138.

"God does not wish us to hear all that is to be heard, or to see all that is to be seen. It is a great blessing to close the ears, that we hear not, and the eyes, that we see not. The greatest anxiety should be to have clear eyesight to discern our own shortcomings, and a quick ear to catch all needed reproof and instruction, lest by our inattention and carelessness we let them slip and become forgetful hearers and not doers of the work." —*Testimonies,* vol. 1, pp. 707, 708.

The Law Magnified

13. What is the Lord well pleased to do? Isa. 42:21. Compare Matt. 5:18, 19.

NOTE.—"The beloved disciple, who listened to the words of Jesus on the mount, writing long afterward under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, speaks of the law as of perpetual obligation. He says that 'sin is the transgression of the law,' and that 'whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law.' He makes it plain that the law to which he refers is 'an old commandment which ye had from the beginning.' He is speaking of the law that existed at the creation, and was reiterated upon Mount Sinai."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* page 78.

"It was further prophesied of the Messiah: 'He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He hath set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for His law.' The Son of God was to 'magnify the law, and make it honorable.' He was not to lessen its importance and binding claims; He was rather to exalt it. At the same time, He was to free the divine precepts from those burdensome exactions placed upon them by man, whereby many were brought to discouragement in their efforts to serve God acceptably."—*Prophets and Kings,* page 693.

"The third angel's message, embracing the messages of the first and second angels, is the message for this time. We are to raise aloft the banner on which is inscribed: 'The

commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' The world is soon to meet the great Lawgiver over His broken law. This is not the time to put out of sight the great issues before us. God calls upon His people to magnify the law and make it honorable."—*Testimonies,* vol. 8, p. 197.

14. How does God propose to make the law effective in the life of the Christian? Heb. 8:10-13.

NOTE.—"So long as heaven and earth continue, the holy principles of God's law will remain. His righteousness, 'like the great mountains,' will continue, a source of blessing, sending forth streams to refresh the earth.

"Because the law of the Lord is perfect, and therefore changeless, it is impossible for sinful men, in themselves, to meet the standard of its requirement. This was why Jesus came as our Redeemer. It was His mission, by making men partakers of the divine nature, to bring them into harmony with the principles of the law of heaven. . . .

"The new-covenant promise is, 'I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.' While the system of types which pointed to Christ as the Lamb of God that should take away the sin of the world, was to pass away at His death, the principles of righteousness embodied in the Decalogue are as immutable as the eternal throne. Not one command has been annulled, not a jot or tittle has been changed. Those principles that were made known to man in Paradise as the great law of life, will exist unchanged in Paradise restored. When Eden shall bloom on earth again, God's law of love will be obeyed by all beneath the sun."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* pages 80, 81.

Lesson 10, for March 10, 1956

Gathering of Israel; Witnesses for God

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 43.

MEMORY VERSE: "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Isaiah 43:25.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapter 43.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1-4.
Monday: Questions 5-7.
Tuesday: Questions 8, 9.
Wednesday: Questions 10-13.
Thursday: Read from Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. God's Love for His People

1. "Fear not: . . . thou art Mine." Isa. 43:1.
2. Promised protection. Isa. 43:2.
3. Value God places on His people. Isa. 43:3, 4.
4. Gathers them from all places. Isa. 43:5-7.

II. The Divine Summons

5. God's call to the nations. Isa. 43:8, 9.
6. Called to be His witnesses. Isa. 43:10.

7. Responsibility of His witnesses. Isa. 43:11-13.

III. God Intervenes for His People

8. Foretells the overthrow of Babylon. Isa. 43:14-17.
9. Makes a way in the wilderness. Isa. 43:18-21.

IV. God Reproves His People

10. His complaint. Isa. 43:22-24.
11. His willingness to blot out their sins. Isa. 43:25.
12. "Let us plead together." Isa. 43:26.
13. Sin brings a curse. Isa. 43:27, 28.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The lesson of this chapter centers around two main topics. The first seven verses tell of God's great love for His people, His willingness to make any sacrifices to ensure their salvation, to make certain that no honest heart should be lost. He then makes the promise that every member of His family, those called by His name, should be gathered to Himself.

The second topic deals with the weighing of men in the balances, a testing of their loyalty. God depends upon the witness of His children. We are to testify of what He has done for us, of what we know by personal experience. A witness is allowed to tell only that which he personally knows to be true. Now, what has God done for you? God is looking for witnesses to testify to what He has done for them.

God's Love for His People

1. What comforting statement is made by the Lord to His people? Isa. 43:1.

NOTE.—"Fear not." This blessed assurance that we need not fear is especially comforting in view of the last verses of the preceding chapter, where it is stated that God will pour out His fury against them that walk not in His ways nor keep His law.

"Called thee by thy name." "Jesus knows us individually, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He knows us all by name. He knows the very house in which we live, the name of each occupant. He has at times given directions to His servants to go to a certain street in a certain city, to such a house, to find one of His sheep. Every soul is as fully known to Jesus as if he were the only one for whom the Saviour died."—*The Desire of Ages,* pages 479, 480.

2. What promises are given to God's people when in trial? Isa. 43:2.

NOTE.—God's promise to help His people has been wonderfully fulfilled in the past. For example, see Daniel 3:27 and Exodus 14:21, 22. When the trials of the last days shall come, these promises will become very precious indeed.

"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,* page 723.

3. How much does God think of His people? Isa. 43:3, 4.

NOTE.—God loves His people. He loves them so much that their worth cannot be expressed in terms of money. He would gladly give Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba for them. "I will give men for thee." That which is of immeasurably greater value than silver or gold, than property of any kind—men, human lives—God would give for His people. He spared not His own Son, but freely gave Him. He has permitted some of His own to give their lives for those "other sheep" who have not known Him.

4. With what promise does God allay the fears of His people? Isa. 43:5-7.

NOTE.—These encouraging words should have been fulfilled under the decree of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes when (*a*) the people scattered throughout the Persian Empire from Ethiopia to India (see Esther 1:1 and 3:8) returned to Palestine, and (*b*) in a great world-wide missionary movement carried out by a holy people thus restored to their land. Because they failed to do their part, this scripture is now being fulfilled. The message is sounding in all parts of the earth, and God is calling men from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

"Called by My name." Of a certain company it is written that they will have the Father's name written in their foreheads. Rev. 14:1. God's name is what He is. Ex. 3:14. Hence to be called by the name of God means to have His character.

The Divine Summons

5. What call does God now issue to all the nations? What challenge does He make? Isa. 43:8, 9.

NOTE.—God is calling all nations together as to a judgment scene. "Let them bring forth their witnesses," He says. The question is, Who is the true God? He challenges them to "show us former things," that is, things that they have predicted and which have come to pass. If they profess to do this, let them bring forth their witnesses to support their contention. If they cannot do this, let them hear God's side of the case and say, "It is truth."

6. To what exalted privilege and task are God's people called? Isa. 43:10.

NOTE.—"Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is the testimony of our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs. God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked with our own individuality. These precious acknowledgments to the praise of the glory of His grace, when supported by a Christlike life, have an irresistible power that works for the salvation of souls."—*The Ministry of Healing,* page 100.

7. Of what are God's people to bear witness? Isa. 43:11-13.

NOTE.—"The people of the world are worshiping false gods. They are to be turned from their false worship, not by hearing denunciation of their idols, but by beholding something better. God's goodness is to be made known. 'Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.' "—*Christ's Object Lessons,* page 299.

As to being a witness, "This also we shall be in eternity."—*Education,* page 308.

"The redeemed only, of all created beings, have in their own experience known the actual conflict with sin; they have wrought with Christ, and, as even the angels could not do, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings; will they have no testimony as to the science of redemption,—nothing that will be of worth to unfallen beings?"—*Ibid.*

The first statement, "Before the day was I am He," is variously translated. The sense seems to be, "I am ever the same." Before the day was, that is, before time began, "I am He." "From this day forth I am He." (American Revised Version, margin.)

God Intervenes for His People

8. How is the fall of Babylon announced? Isa. 43:14-17.

NOTE.—In these verses the fall of Babylon is announced, but in very general terms. We are told that the chariot and horse, the army and the power, shall lie down together and not rise again, that they shall become extinct. When this calamity should come, His people were to know that the Holy One, the Creator of Israel, is their King, and that He will make a way for them in the sea and a path in the mighty waters.

9. What figures are used to indicate the way the people of God will show forth His praise? Isa. 43:18-21.

NOTE.—These verses seem to have also a prophetic meaning, referring to the time when the Lord shall gather His sons and daughters from the ends of the earth. Then He will do a new thing. He will make ways of travel in the wildernesses of the world and along the rivers of the desert so that His witness may reach His children in the east and gather them from the west.

God Reproves His People

10. What complaint does God bring against His people? Isa. 43: 22-24.

NOTE.—God's people have neglected prayers; they have become weary of Him. What an indictment! Against this charge God defends Himself. He has not required much of His people. He has not wearied them either with offerings or with incense.

God now speaks of His weariness with His people. "I have not caused thee to serve," He says, "but thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins." I have not "wearied thee with incense," but "thou hast wearied Me with thine iniquities." All power is of God. When we sin, we use for a base purpose the power God has given us. We make Him to serve with our sins. What a fearful condition!

11. What wonderful service will God perform for His people? Isa. 43:25.

NOTE.—It would be natural to expect God to be so weary with our sins that He would turn us away. On the contrary, God blots out our sins, not for our sakes, not because we deserve it, but for His own sake.

12. What does God say we are to do, and for what purpose? Isa. 43:26.

13. What are the results of Israel's following in the transgressions of their leaders? Isa. 43:27, 28.

ATTENTION, SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS!

Are you using the Teacher's Edition of the "Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly"? If not, you should ask your Sabbath-school secretary to secure it for you. You will find it a great help in the preparation of your lesson as well as in teaching, for every other page in the quarterly is blank, thus giving space on which to write out answers to questions, notes, or special comments to use in class. It has been provided in response to requests from many teachers. It is designed to help you, but it cannot help you if you do not use it. Try it!

Lesson 11, for March 17, 1956

Worship of the True God

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 44; 45:1-4.

MEMORY VERSE: "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee." Isa. 44:22.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapters 44, 45.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1-4.
Monday: Questions 5-7.
Tuesday: Questions 8-10.
Wednesday: Questions 11-14.
Thursday: Read from Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. God's Message to Israel

1. God is Creator. Isa. 44:1, 2.
2. Outpouring of the Spirit. Isa. 44:3, 4.
3. Called by the name of the Lord. Isa. 44:5.
4. Attested by the God of Israel. Isa. 44:6-8.

II. Vanity of Graven images

5. Profitable for nothing. Isa. 44:9-11.
6. Description of image making. Isa. 44:12-17.
7. Foolishness of idolatry. Isa. 44:18-20.

III. Israel My Servant

8. A precious reminder. Isa. 44:21, 22.
9. Rejoicing over redemption of Jacob. Isa. 44:23.
10. Redeemer and Creator confirms the word of His servant. Isa. 44:24-27.

IV. Cyrus—The Lord's Anointed

11. Commission to rebuild Jerusalem. Isa. 44:28.
12. An instrument in God's hand to subdue nations. Isa. 45:1.
13. God goes before him. Isa. 45:2, 3.
14. Named for the sake of God's people. Isa. 45:4.

THE LESSON

Introduction

God will pour out His Spirit, but only upon them that are thirsty. Many will be converted also among the Gentiles. These shall all acknowledge the true God and keep themselves from idols.

Two things distinguish the true God from false gods. God is the Creator. God is the God of prophecy. He can tell the future.

We may not worship idols of wood and stone. But if we do not acknowledge God as Creator, if we accept evolution as a substitute for creation, we have formed another god and rejected the true One.

God may use nations and kings to fulfill His word. So He did in the case of Cyrus. Our faith should be strengthened as we see prophecy fulfilled.

God's Message to Israel

1. In addressing His chosen people, how does God again call attention to the fact that He is the Creator? Isa. 44:1, 2.

NOTE.—It is interesting to note how God uses every opportunity to emphasize the fact of creation. Here He announces Himself as the One who made and formed man.

Jeshurun means the "upright one." It may here be used to show the change from "Jacob, the supplanter."

2. What will be the result of the outpouring of God's Spirit? Isa. 44:3, 4.

NOTE.—"There are certain conditions upon which we may expect that God will hear and answer our prayers. One of the first of these is that we feel our need of help from Him. He has promised, 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.' Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, who long after God, may be sure that they will be filled. The heart must be open to the Spirit's influence, or God's blessing cannot be received."—*Steps to Christ,* page 99.

The result of the outpouring of the Spirit is the springing up here and there of life—new believers.

3. What will be the response of different people? Isa. 44:5.

NOTE.—This verse tells of the ingathering of Gentiles as a result of the outpouring of the Spirit.

4. What proof does God present to show that beside Him there is no god? Isa. 44:6-8.

NOTE.—God is here King, Redeemer, the First and the Last, the only One.

A paraphrase of verse 7 would read: "Who is like Me? For since the beginning, I have prophesied and declared and set in order. Now let them—the false gods—tell us the future."

God repeatedly calls attention to prophecy as incontestable proof of divinity. We may do the same. We need not fear. God stands by His predictions.

Vanity of Graven Images

5. How does God again emphasize the vanity of graven images? Isa. 44:9-11.

NOTE.—"Their delectable things." Another name for their idols which are "pets, favorites, treasures." They are their own witnesses. They witness against themselves, for they can neither see nor know. How, then, can they help others? Verse 10 is a rhetorical question, "Who is so foolish as to make an image?"

"His fellows," that is, worshipers.

The workmen are men. And how can men make a god?

6. How is the fashioning of an idol described? Isa. 44:12-17.

7. In what striking language does God expose the stupidity of those who make and worship idols? Isa. 44:18-20.

NOTE.—"He hath shut their eyes." Rather, their eyes are plastered over.

"None considereth." They do not think, they do not reflect. If they did, they would see the folly of their action.

"Feedeth on ashes." See Proverbs 15:14; Hosea 12:1.

"A deceived heart." We need to ask God to help us not to deceive ourselves.

"Cannot deliver his soul." Help must come from some outside source. We cannot save ourselves. An idol is a lie. Men believe an idol can help, but this is a vain hope.

Israel My Servant

8. What vital facts are Jacob and Israel told to remember? What invitation is given? Isa. 44:21, 22.

NOTE.—God tells His people to remember these things of which He has just been speaking. And if they do, God will remember them. They shall not be forgotten. God does not merely promise to forgive, but in this text it is spoken of as already done. "I have blotted out." It is as though a father were speaking to a wayward son or daughter who had caused the parents much sorrow and grief: I have forgiven the past. All is well. Come home. Return to me. I have redeemed you.

9. Why are heaven and earth called upon to break forth into singing? Isa. 44:23.

NOTE.—Rejoice, for the Lord hath done it! The Lord hath redeemed Jacob.

10. How does the Lord again mention His creative power? What other references does He make to His power? Isa. 44:24-27.

Cyrus—The Lord's Anointed

11. As the Lord's servant, what important proclamation was Cyrus to make? Isa. 44:28.

NOTE.—The mention of Cyrus by name, one hundred fifty years before his appearance, has been one of the chief factors in causing critics to believe that Isaiah did not write this part of his prophecies. It seems impossible to them that God could give a man's name even before his birth. Such an attitude shows a great lack of faith, and, indeed, most of the work of the critics is founded in unbelief. Josiah's name was announced three centuries before his birth. 1 Kings 13:2. And why should it be thought a thing incredible that God should do this? These very chapters in Isaiah emphasize again and again that God is different from idols. He can foretell the future. They cannot. For anyone to hold the view that God cannot tell what is to come, is to put Him on a level with idols.

12. How is Cyrus and his work further spoken of? Isa. 45:1.

NOTE.—"His anointed." The only place in the Scriptures where this is spoken of a Gentile.

"The advent of the army of Cyrus before the walls of Babylon was to the Jews a sign that their deliverance from captivity was drawing nigh. More than a century before the birth of Cyrus, Inspiration had mentioned him by name, and had caused a record to be made of the actual work he should do in taking the city of Babylon unawares, and in preparing the way for the release of the children of the captivity. Through Isaiah the word had been spoken. . . .

"In the unexpected entry of the army of the Persian conqueror into the heart of the Babylonian capital by way of the channel of the river whose waters had been turned aside, and through the inner gates that in careless security had been left open and unprotected, the Jews had abundant evidence of the literal fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy concerning the sudden overthrow of their oppressors."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 551, 552.

13. What did God promise to do for Cyrus, and for what reason? Isa. 45:2, 3.

NOTE.—God would go before and help Cyrus. He is the One who would cause the gates to open. God would so work

that Cyrus could not fail to know that some supernatural power was helping him. Babylon, according to Herodotus, had one hundred gates, all of brass. The city could not be taken in any ordinary manner.

14. For whose sake was Cyrus called by name? Isa. 45:4.

NOTE.—To establish the faith of His people, God called Cyrus by name. When we see prophecy fulfilled, our faith should become stronger. The fulfillment of prophecy in the signs of the times occurring all about us should have the same effect. Now is no time for discouragement. We are about to see the consummation of our hope.

Lesson 12, for March 24, 1956

Only One Saviour

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 45:5-25; 46.

MEMORY VERSE: "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Isa. 45:22.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapters 45, 46.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1-4.
Monday: Questions 5-7.
Tuesday: Questions 8-11.
Wednesday: Questions 12-15.
Thursday: Read Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. No God but the Lord.

1. The one true God girded Cyrus. Isa. 45:5, 6.
2. His power over light and darkness, peace and evil. Isa. 45:7.
3. Promised blessings. Isa. 45:8.
4. Woe for those who strive against God. Isa. 45:9, 10.

II. God Is the Creator

5. God makes known His creative power and foreknowledge. Isa. 45: 11-14.
6. Idolators confounded; worshipers of Creator vindicated. Isa. 45:15-17.
7. Earth created not in vain. Isa. 45: 18, 19.
8. God, the Creator, calls to the ends of the earth. Isa. 45:20-22.
9. Every knee shall bow. Isa. 45:23.
10. In Him is righteousness and justification. Isa. 45:24, 25.

III. There Is None Else

11. Downfall of Babylonian gods. Isa. 46:1, 2.
12. Sustaining power of God. Isa. 46:3, 4.
13. God not to be compared to idols. Isa. 46:5-9.
14. Immutability of His counsel. Isa. 46:10, 11.
15. Salvation in Zion. Isa. 46:13.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The warnings against idolatry have meaning for more people than those of Isaiah's time. Anything that comes between us and our God is a false god, an idol. The lusts of the flesh or the eye, worldly wisdom, the follies and fashions of the hour, position or honor, any attempt to purchase or earn our salvation by our own merits—anything or anyone besides Christ which we trust to make us worthy to obtain God's favor, becomes a vain hope, a false god. No works of our own can take the place of Christ. There is only one Saviour. Isaiah 45:21. He saves to the uttermost. Remember the admonition, "Keep yourselves from idols." 1 John 5:21.

No God but the Lord

1. What was the ultimate purpose of God in the call and girding of Cyrus for his work? Isa. 45:5, 6.

NOTE.—"I girded thee." As God loosed the loins of the adversaries (verse 1), to weaken them, so He "girded" those of Cyrus, to strengthen him.

2. What does God form, create, make? Isa. 45:7.

NOTE.—"Create evil." The "evil" here mentioned is not moral evil but physical, and could well be translated "calamity." God punishes for sin, and it is these calamities to which the prophet refers. See Amos 3:6.

3. What blessings are promised to God's people? Isa. 45:8.

NOTE.—These words indicate in figurative language the blessed consequences of opening the heart to God's righteousness. Reference is here made to the creative power of God manifested in the new life.

4. What warning is given concerning our strife against our Maker? Isa. 45:9, 10.

God Is the Creator

5. How does God here make known His creative power and foreknowledge? Isa. 45:11-14.

NOTE.—God had raised up Cyrus and would direct his ways. He was to conquer Egypt and Ethiopia, and they were to acknowledge God's dealings.

6. What is God said to do? What contrast is shown in the experience of Israel? Isa. 45:15-17.

NOTE.—God sometimes hides Himself. He "moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." See Romans 11:33.

"An everlasting salvation." Not saved today and lost tomorrow. Not a wonderful mountaintop experience one year at some great meeting, and then an intermediate lapse into the valley.

"World without end." Literally, to all eternity.

7. For what purpose did God form the earth? How has God spoken to mankind? Isa. 45:18, 19.

NOTE.—God does not ask men to seek Him in vain, literally, in chaos, that is, without definite guidance and without hope of result.

8. What invitation and assurance does the one true God give to all mankind? Isa. 45:20-22.

NOTE.—"Ye that are escaped of the nations." As Cyrus issued a call to the Jews throughout his kingdom to return to Jerusalem and restore the temple, so God is calling us today to return to Him.

"Tell ye." Announce, or, as in the American Revised Version, "declare," His message of mercy to the nations.

9. What has God sworn concerning the people of the earth? Isa. 45:23.

NOTE.—Referring to events to take place at the close of the millennium, the following description is given: "Now Christ again appears to the view of His enemies. Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this throne sits the Son of God, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. The power and majesty of Christ no language can describe, no pen portray."—*The Great Controversy,* page 665.

"As if entranced, the wicked have looked upon the coronation of the Son of God. They see in His hands the tables of the divine law, the statutes which they have despised and transgressed. They witness the outburst of wonder, rapture, and adoration from the saved; and as the wave of melody sweeps over the multitudes without the city, all with one voice exclaim, 'Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints;' and falling prostrate, they worship the Prince of life."—*Ibid.,* pp. 668, 669.

10. In whom do we have righteousness, strength, and justification? Isa. 45:24, 25.

There Is None Else

11. What is said of the downfall of the Babylonian gods? Isa. 46:1, 2.

NOTE.—Bel and Nebo were Babylonian gods, answering to Jupiter and Mercury. See Acts 14:12. Bel is much the same as Baal, mentioned elsewhere in the Bible.

The picture here is of Babylonians trying to save their gods. They put them on beasts, and they make a load. "They could not deliver." Their gods cannot save them. The gods themselves are "gone into captivity."

12. What beautiful promises are given those who are growing old in Israel? Isa. 46:3, 4.

NOTE.—The contrast here is striking. While the Babylonians must carry their idols to save them, God carries and delivers. God will not forsake. "Even to your old age I am He."

13. What points are emphasized as God again calls the people to distinguish between His power and that of useless idols? Isa. 46:5-9.

NOTE.—Remember this, and show yourselves men! In a time of idolatry, when the whole current of life is downward, it takes courage to stand against popular superstitions and customs. God calls for men.

"The greatest want of the world is the want of men,—men who will not be bought or sold; men who in their inmost souls are true and honest; men who do not fear to call sin by its right name; men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole; men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall."—*Education,* page 57.

14. What does God declare from the beginning? What example does He cite? Isa. 46:10, 11.

NOTE.—God again calls attention to the prophetic word, saying He has declared "the

end from the beginning." Even in the first chapter of the Bible the heavenly bodies are mentioned as being signs.

"My counsel shall stand." See Isa. 14:24.

"My pleasure," rather, My purpose.

Cyrus is here likened to a ravenous bird, as Nebuchadnezzar was likened to an eagle. Ezek. 17:3. The royal Persian ensign was an eagle.

15. Where has God placed salvation? Isa. 46:13.

NOTE.—" 'I bring near My righteousness; it shall not be far off, and My salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel My glory.'

"In word and in deed the Messiah, during His earthly ministry, was to reveal to mankind the glory of God the Father. Every act of His life, every word spoken, every miracle wrought, was to make known to fallen humanity the infinite love of God. . . .

"Through patriarchs and prophets, as well as through types and symbols, God spoke to the world concerning the coming of a Deliverer from sin. A long line of inspired prophecy pointed to the advent of 'the Desire of all nations.' Even the very place of His birth, and the time of His appearance, were minutely specified."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 696, 697.

Lesson 13, for March 31, 1956

God's Care for His People

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 47; 48; 49:1-23.

MEMORY VERSE: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands; thy walls are continually before Me." Isa. 49:15, 16.

STUDY HELPS: Lesson Helps in "Review and Herald;" "Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary," Isaiah, chapters 47, 48, and 49.

DAILY STUDY ASSIGNMENT

Sabbath afternoon: general survey of the lesson.
Sunday: Questions 1, 2.
Monday: Questions 3-8.
Tuesday: Questions 9-11.
Wednesday: Questions 12-16.
Thursday: Read from Study Helps assignment.
Friday: Review the entire lesson.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. Babylon and the House of Jacob

1. Reasons for fall of Babylon. Isa. 47:6, 8, 10.
2. Plea to house of Jacob. Isa. 48: 17-20.

II. The Lord's Servant

3. Isles called to listen to His servant. Isa. 49:1-3. Compare Rev. 18:1-3.
4. "Labored in vain." Isa. 49:4. Compare Rev. 18:4.
5. Purpose of the call. Isa. 49:5.

III. A Light to the Gentiles

6. God's purpose. Isa. 49:6.
7. The Holy One of Israel. Isa. 49:7.
8. A covenant to the people. Isa. 49:8.
9. A Liberator. Isa. 49:9, first part.
10. A Protector. Isa. 49:9 (last part), 10. Compare Ps. 121:2-8.

IV. God's Purpose for His Church

11. Way prepared for the peoples. Isa. 49:11, 12.
12. Heaven's rejoicing, Zion's complaint. Isa. 49:13, 14.
13. God's remembrance of His people. Isa. 49:15-17.

V. Enlargement Promised

14. Gathering of the peoples. Isa. 49:18.
15. Need for expansion. Isa. 49:19, 20.
16. Enlargement from the Gentiles. Isa. 49:21-23.

THE LESSON

Introduction

The judgments against ancient Babylon, and God's summons to His people to depart from her, find their modern counterpart in His judgments against spiritual Babylon and His call, "Come out of her, My people." In the present lesson we touch briefly on chapters 47 and 48 before going on to a more detailed study of chapter 49. Those who have the time to do so will be greatly benefited by reading and studying all three chapters embraced in this lesson.

Babylon and the House of Jacob

1. Enumerate the reasons given in Isaiah 47 for the fall of Babylon. Isa. 47:6, 8, 10.

NOTE.—In the three verses cited, three reasons are given:

a. Unmercifulness. Babylon showed no mercy to the captives. Even the aged, "the ancient," were made to do hard labor. Verse 6.

b. Pride. Verse 8. "I am, and none else beside Me."

c. Wisdom and knowledge of the wrong kind. The education of Babylon "caused thee to turn away," caused the students thereof to turn from God. Verse 10, margin.

2. What plea does God make to the house of Jacob? What are they to do? Isa. 48:17-20.

NOTE.—The message in Isaiah 48 is directed to the house of Jacob, "which are called by the name of Israel" but "not in truth, nor in righteousness." Isaiah 48:1. That is, while they are called Israel, they are in reality only Jacobs, such as have not as yet wrestled with God and obtained the victory. Yet "they call themselves of the Holy City, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel." Verse 2. To them the message comes, "Go ye forth of Babylon." Verse 20. They are members of the church of God, but they live in Babylon. If such would only hearken to God's commandments, their peace would be like a river.

The Lord's Servant

3. In the beginning of chapter 49 who are called upon to listen? What does God say of His people? Isa. 49:1-3. Compare Rev. 18:1-3.

NOTE.—"Isles," literally, "coastland," that is, distant countries; "people," literally, peoples. The whole world is called upon to hear the announcement, for it concerns the whole world.

"The Lord hath called Me." See Luke 1:31-33.

"Mention of My name." See Matthew 1:21.

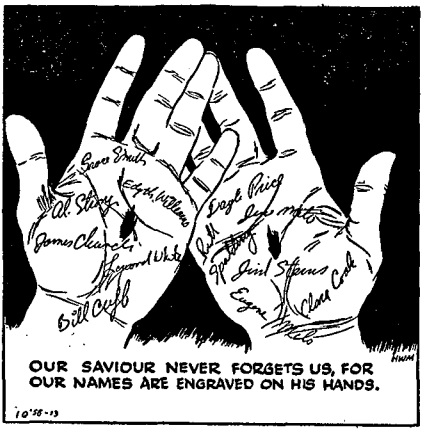
"Sharp sword." See Hebrews 4:12.

"A polished shaft," or arrow, even sharper than a sword.

The description of "My Servant" is that of Christ.

In *The Desire of Ages,* pages 678 and 679, where Isaiah 49:4, 5, 7-10 is quoted, this scripture is applied to Christ. In *Testimonies,* volume 7, pages 191, 192, it is applied to the people of God. Hence we accept these references as having a double application, first to Christ, then to Israel, old and new.

4. What brought discouragement to God's "Servant"? By what words did He show that He left the matter with God? Isa. 49:4. Compare Rev. 18:4.



NOTE.—"As the world's Redeemer, Christ was constantly confronted with apparent failure. He, the messenger of mercy to our world, seemed to do little of the work He longed to do in uplifting and saving. Satanic influences were constantly working to oppose His way. But He would not be discouraged. Through the prophecy of Isaiah He declares, 'I have labored in vain, I have spent My strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely My judgment is with the Lord, and My work with My God.' "—*The Desire of Ages,* page 678.

If Christ could feel a sense of discouragement, is it surprising that we sometimes feel the same way? Let us follow His example: Leave ourselves with the Lord, and take courage.

The American Revised Version translates the latter part of the verse: "Yet surely the justice due to Me is with Jehovah, and My recompense with My God."

5. For what purpose was "My Servant" called? Isa. 49:5.

NOTE.—This verse seems to have definite reference to Christ. He was called to bring "Jacob" back to God, and also, as the American Revised Version has it, "that Israel be gathered unto Him."

Christ was glorious, or honorable, in the sight of God. Yet He did not take glory to Himself. He said, "I can of Mine own self do nothing." John 5:30.

A Light to the Gentiles

6. What twofold responsibility did God place upon His Servant? Isa. 49:6.

NOTE.—"This prophecy was generally understood as spoken of the Messiah, and when Jesus said, 'I am the Light of the world,' the people could not fail to recognize His claim to be the Promised One."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 465.

"It was generally understood that the coming of the Messiah was referred to in the prophecy [Isaiah 49:6]."—*Prophets and Kings,* pages 688, 689.

This prophecy, however, also has an application to the people of God.

"This is the word of the Lord to all who are in any way connected with His appointed institutions. They are favored of God, for they are brought into channels where the light shines. They are in His special service, and they should not esteem this a light thing."—*Testimonies,* vol. 7, p. 192.

A paraphrase of Isaiah 49:6 would read: "It is too small a work for you to labor only among those who already know the truth. I will send you for a light to the heathen, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."

7. How is Christ spoken of? What prophecy is made concerning Him? Isa. 49:7.

NOTE.—This verse refers definitely to Christ. "It is to Christ that the promise is given."—*The Desire of Ages,* page 678. He was despised of men. Isaiah 53:3. It is not the Jews only who cry, "Away with Him." John 19:15. "A servant of rulers," taunted and scourged by such rulers as Herod and Pontius Pilate. Luke 23:11; John 19:1, 16. Nevertheless, the time will come when kings and rulers shall "see and arise." Wonderful change!

8. What assurance does God give to His Servant? Isa. 49:8.

NOTE.—Christ is here again spoken of as "a covenant of the people." Compare chap-

ter 42:6. He has become the mediator of a new covenant (Hebrews 8:6), and hence may be spoken of in the terms of our text.

"Establish the earth," rather, raise up the earth, that is, lift it out of its present degraded, sin-cursed condition. Christ came to seek and to save that which is lost, and this includes the earth.

9. What proclamation is to be made to the prisoners? Isa. 49:9, first part.

NOTE.—Compare Isaiah 61:1. Moffatt translates the latter part of Isaiah 49:9 thus: "On the road home, food shall never fail them, they shall find pasture even upon bare hills."

10. What promise is made to them? Isa. 49:9 (last part), 10. Compare Ps. 121:2-8.

God's Purpose for His Church

11. How shall the way of the people be prepared? Whence do these prisoners come? Isa. 49:11, 12.

NOTE.—By many commentators Sinim is thought to refer to China. Other possible interpretations of this verse are made in the *Commentary*.

12. Why are the heavens and the earth to rejoice? But what does Zion, or God's people, say? Isa. 49:13, 14.

13. What illustrations are used to show forth God's remembrance of His people? Who shall be separated from God's people? Isa. 49:15-17.

NOTE.—"Not a single soul who puts his trust in Him will be forgotten. God thinks of His children with the tenderest solicitude and keeps a book of remembrance before Him, that He may never forget the children of His care."—*Testimonies,* vol. 4, pp. 329, 330.

Verse 17 contains an interesting statement. "Thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee." While God's people are to go out of Babylon, when it comes to the church, it is not the church that leaves and goes out, but the destroyers, the wasters. It is not those that "go forth" that constitute the church. The church remains.

Enlargement Promised

14. After the wasters and destroyers have gone forth from the church, who shall come to take their place? What solemn statement does the Lord make? Isa. 49:18.

15. How is the enlargement of God's people indicated? Isa. 49:19, 20.

16. What questions shall Zion ask? What answer does the Lord give? Isa. 49:21-23.

NOTE.—These latter verses without doubt found their first fulfillment in the coming in of the Gentiles in the Christian Era. May we not believe they will find another and even more complete fulfillment, and that they that wait for the Lord's second advent shall not be ashamed?

It is not possible in one quarter's lessons to do justice to the wealth of material found in the book of Isaiah. Therefore we will continue the study during next quarter, and even then it will be necessary to omit or greatly abbreviate certain portions of the book.

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING

March 31, 1956

The overflow of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering on March 31 goes to the Australasian Division to help to establish a medical unit in the New Hebrides at Aore and to help in enlarging the Coral Sea Union Training School at Kabiufa, New Guinea. The work in these heathen South Pacific Islands has gone slowly during the years, but now within the last few years there is a much greater turning to the light.

Now is our time of opportunity to come to the aid of these poor people. Through the medical ministry, doors are opened for the gospel ministry, and through our training schools young people are trained to work for their own people. This is the only way the work can be finished in these islands, for the foreign missionaries can never do it alone. Won't you pray and give for the advancement of the work in these needy fields at this time?

Lessons for the Second Quarter, 1956

Sabbath-school members who have failed to receive a senior *Lesson Quarterly* for the second quarter of 1956 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first lesson. The subject of the quarter's lessons is "Lessons From the Gospel Prophet, II." The title of the first lesson is, "Thy Saviour and Thy Redeemer." The Memory Verse is Isaiah 50:10. The texts to be studied are:

Ques. 1. Isa. 49:24.
Ques. 2. Isa. 49:25.
Ques. 3. Isa. 49:26.
Ques. 4. Isa. 50:1.
Ques. 5. Isa. 50:2, 3.
Ques. 6. Isa. 50:4.
Ques. 7. Isa. 50:5.
Ques. 8. Isa. 50:6.
Ques. 9. Isa. 50:7.
Ques. 10. Isa. 50:8.
Ques. 11. Isa. 50:9.
Ques. 12. Isa. 50:11.
Ques. 13. Isa. 50:10.

AUSTRALASIAN DIVISION

CORAL SEA UNION MISSION

NEW GUINEA

SEPIK RIVER
KANGANAMAN
N. W. NEW GUINEA
TRAINING SCHOOL
KABIUFA
GOROKA
KAINANTU
LAE
N.E. NEW GUINEA
PAPUA
WAU
KEREMA
KOKODA
PORT MORESBY
OWEN STANLEY RANGE
AUSTRALIA

CENTRAL PACIFIC UNION MISSION

NEW HEBRIDES

BANKS IS.
ESPIRITU SANTO I.
OBA I.
MAEWO I.
AORE
MALO I.
PENTECOST I.
HOSPITAL
AMBRIM I.
MALEKULA I.
EPI I.
EFATE I.
EROMANGA I.

Union Mission	Population	Churches	Ch. Memb.	S.S. Memb.
BISMARCK-SOLOMONS	271,608	102	5,588	12,791
CENTRAL PACIFIC	712,120	84	3,785	6,052
CORAL SEA	1,329,570	32	3,198	25,893
TRANS-COMMONWEALTH U.C.	4,659,187	131	9,208	10,938
TRANS-TASMAN U.C.	6,058,538	167	14,636	16,438
DIVISION TOTALS	13,031,023	516	36,415	72,112