

The Sunday School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XIX.

May 11, 1879. } THE SAVIOUR'S CALL. { Isa. lv. 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."—John vii. 37.

HOME STUDIES.

M. Prov. ix. 1-12.....Wisdom's feast.
T. Isa. xxv. 1-12.....A feast of fat things.
W. Luke xiv. 15-24.....The gospel feast.
Th. Matt. xxii. 1-14.....The wedding feast.
F. Isa. lv. 1-13.....The Saviour's call.
S. John vi. 47-59.....The bread of life.
S. John vii. 32-43.....Living waters.

HELPS TO STUDY.

The passage which has been taken as the subject of this lesson may be emphatically called "the Gospel in Isaiah," although the whole book is evangelical. Though highly figurative, there can be no doubt as to its meaning and application. Immediately following the prophet's details of the sufferings of the "Servant of God," given in language which is utterly inapplicable to any historical character except the Lord Jesus Christ, what else can this passage be but a most free and gracious invitation to sinners to come and partake of the great salvation that these sufferings procured? The following would be one good way of dividing the lesson: (1) Who those are that are addressed—every one that thirsteth; (2) What they are called upon to do—Come ye to the waters; (3) What they are to get by coming—I will make an everlasting covenant with you.

I. Who are addressed? Every one that thirsteth. Most commentators restrict this invitation to those who desire salvation and long for God. The text necessitates no such restriction. The invitation is wide. Every one that thirsteth is invited—no matter what he thirsts for. All thirst for something. Ever since the fall, there is a want in the human soul which nothing but the realization and the enjoyment of the love of God can satisfy. All feel this want, and the majority are vainly endeavouring to satisfy it in the pursuit of pleasure, spending their money for that which is not bread and their labour for that which satisfieth not. The invitation is to these as well as to those who have been brought under conviction.

II. What are they to do? Come ye to the waters. (Note.) The water are God's life-giving truth and gracious promises—especially the promise of the Holy Spirit. For these gifts we are to come penniless, "Nothing in my hand I bring." To buy without money and without price is "not after the manner of men," but God has His own way of doing business, and it is His way that we must take. It is not a merchant that we have to deal with but a "Prince." And still there may be a reason for the use of the word "buy" here. In conversion we part with something, though it is something that is not of any value—we have to part with our sins. And these, in a sense, the Saviour takes, takes upon Himself. "Oh blessed exchange!" says John Brown of Haddington.

III. What do they get? Your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you. And what this everlasting covenant means is plainly set forth in the words "the sure mercies of David." The promise made to David was that his race should reign forever and ever; this promise, he says, shall be fulfilled, and you shall again have a son of David (i.e. the Messiah) for your king, and be blessed under His rule (Acts xiii. 34). For my thoughts are not as your thoughts—while you are spiteful and revengeful, I am infinitely compassionate and gracious.

EXPLANATORY NOTE.

For several months in the summer there is no rain in Palestine, hence the people appreciate the blessings of fountains and cisterns of water, as we cannot because of our abundant supply.

Children's Corner.

THE PICNIC ON THE COMMON.

ONE Sunday afternoon, when Lena was going home from the church with the weather-cock on its steeple, she met Hattie Rot'ins going home from the old meeting-house on the hill.

"O, Hattie!" said Lena, giving a little jump off both her feet, and letting go her mamma's hand: "my papa came up from 'Mantic last night, and he brought Pearly a picture-book, and me a little 'stension table and a little new camp-chair; and Miss Emma Ames has given me the sweetest little Red-riding-hood dolly, and—"

"And to-morrow you must come over and make Lena a visit, and play with the new toys," said Lena's grandpa, who was the minister at the white church, as he took hold of his little granddaughter's chubby hand, and led her along between him and her grandmother to the parsonage, where she, and her papa and mamma, and brother and Pearly, were visiting.

"I'm 'specting company to-morrow," said Lena, as her mother was taking off her hat, after they arrived at their home.

But just then it began to rain, and it kept up all night and all day Monday, and all Tuesday forenoon. Lena got pretty tired of staying in the house. She set her extension table over and over with her little China tea-set, making it large and small, and inviting company to dinner and tea. And she folded up her camp-chair, and played make journeys on foot to the White Mountains, going through the kitchen, up the back stairs to the study, down the front stairs, through the hall, parlour, and dining-room, unfolding her chair and sitting down to rest in each room. And she played that the dog Jack was a wolf that ate up Red-riding-hood when she was going to see her grandmother, and Pearly showed her pictures in his new book. But for all she was so busy she was very glad on Tuesday afternoon when her grandpa called from the garden,—

"You can come out, Lena; the clouds have broken away, showing two little glimpses of blue sky, about as big as a doll's bed-quilt, up over the church spire."

Lena ran down the gravel walk, and climbing up on the front gate, she called in a voice as clear as a robin's note,—

"Hattie! Hattie! you and George come over now, and we'll have a picnic. I've got some little tookies that grandma let me bake this morning, and you stop and ask Helen Brown to come wif you; and if you go in the road all the way round the common, you won't get wet in the grass."

Pretty soon the children came with their dollies. Hattie said, "I don't know as 'twill be much of a picnic. I've got two baked apples, and that's all I've got."

"Oh, well! said Helen; "never mind, we can all taste of the apples, and I've got a whole lot of popped corn in my basket, and that's splendid to carry to picnics."

Just as her guests arrived, Lena went out to a large flat rock on the common with her table, and Pearly brought out the new chair. Then they both ran back for the cookies and the dolls, and that time the old cat, Wonder, and the little kitty, Daisy, came with them.

The children looked at the new things with great delight. The table was of black-walnut, and was made just like your mamma's table in your dining-room.

"Oh, dear me!" said Helen, "I need a 'stension table dreffly with my large family

and all my comp'ny; I fwequently have to put two tables together."

"Yes," said Lena, "they are very 'venient. When there ain't anybody to eat but me and my husband we have it like this,—just a little round stand, you see; but when comp'ny comes we make it larger, so:" and Pearly pulled it out, and put in extra leaves, and made it as large as he could for the picnic. Then he folded and unfolded the chair, and they all admired it, and little Georgie smelt of the roses on the camp-chair cushion, and said, "They look as if you could pick them." Then they took turns in sitting down to try it; and Lena told them to lean back and fold their arms, and see how "wested" they felt after their walk. Then they placed the chair at the head of the table, and put Wonder in it with the dolls all around her, and she sat as still and looked as dignified as any lady, and seemed rather ashamed of Daisy, who would frisk around, and who, Lena said, "didn't play comp'ny worth a snap."

Just as they had got the table all ready and were going to begin to eat, Lena jumped up and said very fast, as she always talks: "I'm going to 'vite Mrs. Curtis, 'cause she's blind and she can't see, and she loves little children, and she hain't got any at her house, and she and I are neighbours, cause we like each other, and I 'sume she's tired of staying at home all these rainy days; and she 'vited me to her picnic and it was splendid," and away Lena skipped.

It was only a few steps, but while she was gone, Helen and Hattie and George thought they would find some flowers so that they could tell Mrs. Curtis there were flowers on the table, and Pearly went into the parsonage for a chair for her to sit in; and when they all got back, Daisy was on the table, and was eating the last of the little cookies. Lena said she was "kinder 'shamed, after she had 'vited Mrs. Curtis, not to have anything she could eat, for she had custard-pie at her picnic and it was 'drefful' good." But Hattie said she should have both the baked apples; so she ate them, and said they were nice, and the children ate little Helen's popped corn, and they were having a lovely time, when all at once it began to rain as hard as it could pour, and Lena's grandpa ran with an umbrella for Mrs. Curtis, and Uncle Lester carried in the chairs, and Pearly the wonderful table; and the little girls took their dollies in their aprons and scampered for home; and Wonder walked demurely, close to Mrs. Curtis, as much as to say, "We are the old ladies, and should have the rheumatism if we took cold." But Daisy frisked around and got as wet as her little mistress, but, unlike her, didn't have to have her clothes changed; and when Lena came down stairs in her clean dress, she found Daisy nice and dry, all curled up fast asleep on the little extension table. "We chilrens have done some good to-day," said Lena, wisely; "we've made Mrs. Curtis laugh; and she was looking drefful sorry when I went after her."—A. A. P. in S. S. Times.