

early circumstances? Why did men hide their faces from him and esteem him not? Is Christ sometimes treated in this way in our day?

II. THE SAVIOUR BEARING OUR GRIEFS (v. 4).—How does Christ treat our griefs? In what two ways did he do this when on earth? (1) Matt. 8, 16, 17. (2) Luke 19, 41, 42; John 11, 33-36. In what ways does he still bear our griefs? (1) Rom. 8, 28; Heb. 12, 10. (2) 2 Cor. 4, 17, 18. (3) Heb. 4, 15, 16. (4) Rev. 21, 3, 4.

III. THE SAVIOUR BEARING OUR SINS (vs. 5-9).—What is said of the condition of men in v. 6? What has the Saviour done to save us? In what way did Christ bear our sins? How can the sufferings of an innocent person take away the penalty of our sins? How can they take away the sins themselves? Repeat passages of Scripture which teach us about the atonement. How was v. 7 fulfilled in Christ's life? How v. 8? v. 9?

IV. THE TRIUMPH OF THE SAVIOUR (vs. 10-12).—What will be the final result of Christ's mission on earth? Meaning of "he shall see his seed?" How has he prolonged his days? (Matt. 28, 7; Heb. 7, 25; Dan. 7, 14.) With what shall he be satisfied? Will his kingdom triumph over all the world? Why in each of these three verses is the atonement referred to?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. The Saviour foretold in the Old Testament is revealed in the New.
2. The centre of the Gospel is the atonement of Christ.
3. Christ is still ready to bear our griefs.
4. If Christ bore our sins on the cross, we should forsake our sins and love him.
5. The suffering Saviour is sure to triumph over the world.
6. The power and means of the triumph is in atoning love.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in concert.)

10. What great event was foretold by the prophet Isaiah? **ANS.** The coming of the Saviour, Jesus Christ. 11. How would he be treated at first? **ANS.** He would be despised and rejected of men. 12. What did he do for men? **ANS.** He bore our sorrows and carried our grief. 13. What more did he do? (Repeat v. 5.) 14. What would be the fruit of this suffering? **ANS.** Great numbers saved from sin, and the kingdom of God come on the earth.

B.C. 713.] LESSON XII. [Dec. 20.

THE GRACIOUS INVITATION.

Isa. 55, 1-11. Commit to mem. vs. 6-8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.—Isa. 55, 1.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God invites all men to come to him and be saved.

DAILY READINGS.

M. Isa. 54, 1-17. Th. John 6, 31-58.
Tu. Isa. 55, 1-13. F. Rev. 21, 1-8; 22, 12-17.
W. John 4, 1-15. Sa. Isa. 60, 1-22.
Su. Ps. 103, 1-22.

TIME.—Written soon after the last lesson, in the latter half of Hezekiah's reign, B.C. 713-698.

PLACE.—Written in Jerusalem, in the kingdom of Judah.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—1. *Ho*—An exclamation for calling the attention. *Every one that thirsteth*—That has longings and desires unsatisfied, especially for forgiveness, and goodness, and God, and heaven. *To the waters*—Which quench thirst. Jesus Christ satisfies all the desires and longings of the soul. *Wine and milk*—The juice of the grape, and milk, were regarded as of the best and most delicious of foods. Christ feeds the soul not only with that which is necessary to its life, but which is delightful. *Without money*—The poor here are on an equality with the rich. The best things of God cannot be bought with money,—wisdom, love, knowledge, goodness, communion with God, salvation, heaven, 3. *Everlasting covenant*—God's promises of salvation to the believing and obedient. It never ends; it never fails. *Sure mercies of David*—The promises made to David as king of the people and ancestor of the Messiah (2 Sam. 7, 12-29; Luke 20, 41-44). 4. *I have given him*—The Messiah, included in "the sure mercies of David" just mentioned. *A witness*—To testify from God about eternal things. 5.

Call a nation—The Christian Church; a redeemed nation. *Thou knowest not*—Because not then in existence. *Nations*—Gentile nations who would be converted. 10. *And the snow from heaven*—Not only rain, but snow also, is of great importance to the fruitfulness of the earth. It treasures up the waters of winter, and they slowly melt, and bring the moisture gradually to the fields of spring. The snow also protects vegetation from the too severe cold of winter. 11. *So shall my word be*—(1) It will be fruitful in holiness; (2) it will not fall of its purpose. God's word is his truth, his promises, his commands, his Gospel.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The connection of this lesson with the last.—The thirst of the soul.—How Christ satisfies them.—God's best gifts without price.—How men "spend money for that which is not bread."—The sure mercies of David.—Christ a witness and as a leader.—When is God near?—God's thoughts higher than ours.—Snow from heaven.—"So shall my word be."

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—What was the main thought of our last lesson? What is that of ch. 54? How does this lesson naturally follow?

SUBJECT: GOD'S INVITATION TO MAN.

I. THE PERSONS INVITED (vs. 1, 2).—To whom is this invitation given? What is the kind of thirst here spoken of? (See Matt. 5, 6.) Are any excluded? How free is the invitation? What best things in nature are free to all? Why is no price asked for God's spiritual blessings? What must we do in order to receive them?

II. THAT TO WHICH THEY ARE INVITED (vs. 1-3).—To what are they invited to come? What are the waters here referred to? (John 4, 13, 14.) What is symbolized by wine and milk? What further shows the excellence and delight of religion? How does Christ satisfy our hunger and thirst? Name some of the thirsts he satisfies. What is referred to by the phrase, "Let your soul delight itself in fatness?" What is meant by "living" in v. 3? What is the "everlasting covenant?" What are "the sure mercies of David?" (2 Sam. 7, 19-24; 1 Chron. 17, 7-27; Luke 20, 41-44.) How do some treat these invitations? (Luke 14, 16-21.) What reasons can you give why we should accept him?

III. THE ONE WHO GIVES THE INVITATION (vs. 4, 5).—Who is referred to in these verses? Of what is Jesus the witness? (John 3, 11-13.) Why do we need such a witness? What more is Jesus to us? What was the promise to him in v. 5? What was the "nation thou knowest not?" Why should other nations haste to him? Has this promise been fulfilled?

IV. ACCEPTING THE INVITATION (vs. 6, 7).—What is our part in regard to this invitation? When should we seek the Lord? (Prov. 8, 17.) What is it for God to be near? Is God nearer us at some times than at others? What must the wicked forsake? Why? How will the Lord receive him? How did Jesus illustrate this? (Luke 15, 1-32.)

V. REASONS FOR ACCEPTING THE INVITATION (vs. 8-11).—What is the first reason? (vs. 8, 9.) How do men usually treat those who have wronged them? What is the second reason? (vs. 10, 11.) What do rain and snow do for the earth? Do they accomplish God's will? What is meant by "my word?" What does God's word accomplish? How does the reliability of nature's forces teach us that God's spiritual word will be accomplished?

THE GOSPEL INVITATIONS.

1. Whoever has any need is invited to God.
2. The best things of God are the freest.
3. But we must receive them, or they will do us no good.
4. Jesus Christ is able to satisfy every desire and longing of the soul.
5. There are times when God is specially near us.
6. Those that come to the Lord must leave their own ways, and walk in his.
7. The certainty of nature's forces, as the seasons, the rising and setting of the sun, are a proof to us that God's word will be certainly fulfilled.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole school in concert.)

15. What invitation does God give to us all? (Repeat v. 1.) 16. What are we to do? (Repeat v. 6.) 17. What is necessary to doing this? (Repeat v. 7, first clause.) 18. What promise does God make to such? (Repeat the rest of v. 7.)

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