



LESSON IV.—OCTOBER 23.

Isaiah Called To Service.

Isa. vi., 1-13. Memory verses 5-8. Read Ezekiel ii. and iii.

Golden Text.

'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. vi., 8.

Home Readings.

- M. Isa. i., 1-31.—Isaiah's arraignment of Judah.
- T. Isa. ii., 1-22.—'Thou hast forsaken thy people.'
- W. Isa. v., 1-30.—God's judgment foretold.
- T. Isa. vi., 1-13.—Isaiah called to service.
- F. Ezek. ii., 1-13: 3.—Ezekiel's divine commission.
- S. Ezek. iii., 4-27.—'A watchman unto the house of Israel.'
- S. Rom. ii., 1-36.—'A remnant according to grace.'

Lesson Story.

Isaiah, a man in young middle life, a prophet who had already been the messenger of the Lord to his people, received a definite call to devote his life to their service, by a vision of the holiness of God.

One afternoon as Isaiah was attending the temple service, he suddenly lost sight of the priests and worshippers and his soul caught the vision of God in his temple. The glorious majesty sitting upon the throne was indescribable in its burning purity and holiness. The seraphim hid their faces from the glory, and with loving voices praised the holiness of God: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory,' 'his glory is the fulness of the whole earth,' chanted the seraphic choir, and the temple was filled with the smoke of the incense of praise.

Isaiah, who previously had probably thought himself a very good man, saw himself now in awful contrast with the holiness of God. He saw himself so unclean that he cried out in his fearful agony of mind, 'Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.'

Then one of the seraphim, God's messengers, took with the tongs a live coal from the altar and laid it upon Isaiah's lips, saying, 'Lo, this hath touched thy lips: and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged.'

Jehovah spoke, saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And the newly consecrated Isaiah answered with glad willingness, 'Here am I; send me.' Then God gave Isaiah his message to the people, warning him that the people would not listen or care about the message. 'How long?' asked Isaiah, and God told him this would last until the people had to be carried away captive. But after that a remnant of the people should return to the land and their God, and they should prosper as a tree that had been cut down only to make the after-growth more abundant.

Lesson Hints.

'Isaiah,' — means 'salvation of Jehovah.' He began his work at about the same time as the founding of Rome, 753 B.C. Isaiah prophesied over sixty years, and his writings are full of the gospel, containing many of the best-known prophecies of the Messiah.

'Uzziah' — the grandson of Joash. (II. Chron. xxvi.)

'The Lord sitting upon a throne' — the King of kings and Lord of Lords who is alive forevermore. Daniel also had a vision of God's glory, (Dan. vii., 9, 10.)

'Seraphim'—'burning ones.' This is the only place in which these wonderful beings are mentioned, they are a part of the angelic host of heaven.

'Six wings'—two covered his face in humiliation before the dazzling brightness of God's glory. Two covered his feet in reverent modesty, that he might be entirely hidden from view, that nothing might be seen of him but the wings which were constantly hovering ready to start on an errand at any instant. We should hide ourselves from the gaze of the world, and spend our time praising God by our lives as well as our lips, ready every moment to do his errands.

'The whole earth'—not heaven only, but the whole earth is full of the glory of God. The blind of heart can not see it any more than blind eyes can see the light. But God is here, and your life can be made a powerful reflector of his glory, if you will let him cleanse your heart as he did Isaiah's.

'Woe is me! for I am undone'—Isaiah was convicted of his own sinfulness by the vision of God's burning purity. He had thought himself a good man in comparison with his neighbors, but when he saw how even the sinless seraphs hid their faces before the holiness of God he saw himself in that burning vision as never before. He was an excellent man in the sight of the world, but when he saw himself in the sight of God, words could not express his agony of shame and distress. 'I am lost,' he cried, and with this confession he received forgiveness.

'A live coal'—from the altar of sacrifice, a coal of forgiveness and cleansing. Typifying the fire of the Holy Spirit by whom our hearts must be cleansed.

'Mouth'—that from henceforth he should speak only the words of God, and continually show forth his praise.

'I heard'—he was listening. Let us listen for the voice of God and instantly answer and obey.

'Understand not'—if we pay no attention to God's messages, and do not attempt to understand or obey them, we are in the position of the people to whom this message was sent. But unbelief cannot hinder the fulfillment of prophecy.

'Until the cities be washed'—referring to the captivity into which the people of Judah should be taken one hundred and fifty years later.

'A teal-tree' — a turpentine tree, which, when cut down, had an extraordinary facility for springing up again from the root, often growing larger than ever after such cutting down.

Questions.

1. What did Isaiah see in a vision?
2. What effect did the vision of God's holiness have upon the prophet?
3. What did the seraphim do?
4. What was Isaiah's answer to God's call?
5. What was Isaiah called to do?

Suggested Hymns.

'Holy, Holy, Holy!' 'Oh, worship the King,' 'My faith looks up to Thee,' 'We would see Jesus,' 'I hear Thy welcome voice,' 'My brother, the Master is calling for thee,' 'Go, work in my vineyard.'

Your Call.

Hark! the voice of Jesus crying,—
'Who will go and work to-day?
Fields are white, and harvest waiting;
Who will bear the sheaves away?'

Loud and strong the Master calleth,
Rich reward he offers thee;
Who will answer gladly saying,
'Here am I; send me, send me!'

If you cannot cross the ocean,
And the heathen lands explore,
You can find the heathen nearer,
You can help them at your door.

If you cannot give your thousands,
You can give the widow's mite;
And the least you do for Jesus,
Will be precious in his sight.

If you cannot speak like angels,
If you cannot preach like Paul,
You can tell the love of Jesus,
You can say he died for all.

If you cannot rouse the wicked,
With the judgment's dread alarms,
You can lead the little children,
To the Saviour's waiting arms.

If among the older people,
You may not be apt to teach,
'Feed my lambs,' said Christ our Shepherd,
Place the food within their reach.

And it may be that the children,
You have led with trembling hand,
Will be found among your jewels,
When you reach the better land.

Let none hear you idly saying,
'There is nothing I can do.'
While the souls of men are dying,
And the Master calls for you.

Take the task He gives you gladly,
Let His work your pleasure be;
Answer quickly when he calleth,
'Here am I; send me, send me!'
—D. March.

Practical Points.

ISAIAH CALLED TO SERVICE—Isa. vi., 1-13

Kings come and go, but the King of all kingdoms remaineth evermore. Verse 1.

If angels, who never needed a Redeemer, proclaim the holiness and majesty of God, much more should men, for whom the Saviour died publish the glad news. Verses 2-4.

The clearer our view of the holiness of Christ, the more we see our own sinfulness. Verse 5.

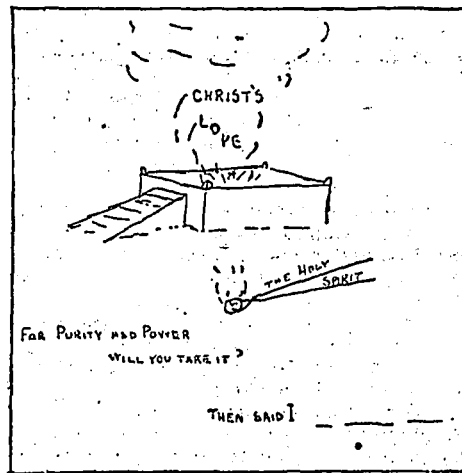
When our hearts are touched with fire from God's altar, we are ready to follow our Master anywhere, everywhere. Verses 6-8.

What will deafen the ears, and blind the eyes, and harden the heart, and ruin the soul? Let the giant Unbelief answer. Verses 9, 10.

From the days of Adam to the end of the world sin always has been, and will be punished. Many and varied are the instruments God chooses and uses to punish his erring people. Verses 11-13: Joel i., 4.

Lesson Illustrated.

The altar of heavenly fire, symbol of cleansing and power. The coal applied to his unclean lips, purifies his life and gives him a message of power. How much we would have lost had he been unwilling to be cleansed and used. His wonderful book would not



have been written. We would have lost that, and so would our Master, for Isaiah was one of his favorite books.

You do not know what amount of blessing God can work through you, if wholly consecrated and sanctified. Don't keep it back. You may not be able to hold much, but you can overflow a great deal.

Christian Endeavor Topics.

Oct. 23.—Go or send.—Acts xvi., 1-10.

One of the greatest needs of the Junior Society is repeated prayer drill. Begin with prayer in concert and teach the children short prayers on different subjects, so that the youngest and weakest may become used to hearing their own voices in prayer. Then have them bring to the meeting and use sentence prayers from the bible. In this way the language of prayer is learned. The step from this to the formation of their own needs and desires into sentence prayers is but a short one. Children may be easily interested in missionary work, and should be taught to pray for and contribute to missions, that their outlook on duty will not be narrowed down to self, but that they may be early impressed with the responsibility for the spreading of the gospel of Christ.—Lizzie Malven.