

Lesson VIII.

WORLD'S TEMPERANCE LESSON

November 23, 1902

Isaiah 28: 1-7. Study Isaiah 28: 1-13 - Memory Verse 7.

Golden Text—They also have erred through wine.—Isa. 28: 7.

1 Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Eph'raim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which *are* on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!

2 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, *which* as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

3 The crown of pride, the drunkards of Eph'raim, shall be trodden under feet:

4 And the glorious beauty, which *is* on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which *when* he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.

5 In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people,

6 And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle to the gate.

7 But they also have erred through wine,

and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

THE LESSON RETOLD

There was another sin besides that of idol-worship into which some of the children of Israel fell long after the death of Joshua, and that was the sin of drunkenness. Those who behaved most wickedly in this thing were the rich people of the northern tribes, especially the tribe of Ephraim.

To these people God had given a magnificent country, splendid homes and rich gardens and vineyards and fig orchards, so that there was no people in all Canaan who were so favored.

But instead of using God's gifts for the good of themselves and others, they spent their time in idleness and pleasure, drinking at one another's tables from golden bowls, sleeping upon couches of carved ivory, and feasting day and night until their bodies were worn out, and their minds grew dull and stupid. Worse than all, even the priests and teachers of God's house had followed in the same sin, so that God could no longer accept the sacrifices and

offerings they made in the temple.

But there was one man in Israel, God's faithful prophet Isaiah, who saw that, unless the men of Ephraim changed their ways, a great trouble would come upon themselves and through them to the whole nation.

So Isaiah went to Jerusalem, where the chief rulers of Israel were assembled, and warned them against allowing the sin of the Ephraimites to go on any longer.

"For," said Isaiah, speaking God's words, "Woe to the drunkards of Ephraim, and woe to the fine cities and the glorious beauty of their fields and olive-gardens. I tell you that the Lord will punish them. He will allow their great enemies, the cruel and terrible Assyrians, to come upon them like a flood and a tempest of hail and a destroying storm. And the beauty of their chief city shall be trodden under foot by the heathen, as quickly as a man would pluck and eat the first ripe fig from his orchard in the summer.