

THE COMING SAVIOUR.

April 27th.]

[Isaiah xlii: 1-10.]

GOLDEN TEXT:—*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*—Matt. 3: 17.

HOME READINGS:—M. Isa. 40: 1-11. T. Isa. 35: 1-10. W. Isa. 61: 1-11. Th. Isa. 42: 1-10. F. Matt. 12: 10-21. S. Isa. 42: 11-25. S. Matt. 3: 1-17.

ISAIAH the son of Amos, (not Amos the prophet), called Esaias in the N. T., the most celebrated of the Jewish prophets, distinguished for the distinctness, sublimity, and freshness of his writings. No other is so frequently quoted by our Lord and his apostles. Matt. 5: 3. Acts 28: 25. Rom. 9: 29, &c. He prophesied in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, ch. 1: 1, 753-698 B. C. He is supposed to have suffered martyrdom by being sawn asunder, in the 9th year of his age. His wife was a prophetess. He had two sons with prophetic, curious names, chs. 7: 3 and 8: 4. The kingdoms of Israel and Judah were at the height of their prosperity when he began to prophesy, but soon after began to degenerate. The book consists of two sections. The first, to the end of ch. 39, relates chiefly to the deliverance of the Jews: the second, to their wonderful deliverance through Cyrus, and the yet greater deliverance of both Jew and Gentile through Christ. Some of his references to the Saviour are very remarkable, as in ch. 7: 14. 9: 6-7 and chs. 11, 42. 53. 61, 63.

VERSES 1-2. The quotation of these words in Matt. 12: 18-20 shows the reference to be to the *Messiah*. *Behold my servant*—Christ was in the highest sense the servant of Jehovah. Ps. 40: 7-8. Heb. 2: 16. Uphold, sustain: how often was Jesus upheld by the Father!—in the temptation, in the garden, on the cross. *Elected*—chosen. *My soul delighteth*—God could have delighted in no created being as a mediator. *My spirit upon him*—Upon Christ the Holy Spirit was shed in fullest measure, John 3: 34. Col. 2: 9. *He shall not cry*—The life of our Lord answers this description,—so gentle, unassuming, reticent, unfond of popularity, Matt. 9: 30. 12: 14-16. V. 3. *A bruised reed*—the fragile reed, emblem of weakness, Matt. 11: 7. It pleased the Lord to bruise Him, ch. 53: 3-10. So he can feel for others, Heb. 4: 15. Those who are crushed under a sense of sin he will not distrust but give them space to repent. *The smoking flax*—the lamp-wick when the oil is almost spent gives a dim flickering light. Faith, however weak, is acceptable to God. V. 4. *Shall not fail*—Christ shall go on with his mediatorial work until it is finished. *Judgment*—He who now shows mercy will hereafter judge the world with truth—perfect rectitude. *The isles shall wait*—the remote parts of the earth shall be ready to receive the Gospel. The Sandwich Islanders had abolished idolatry of their own accord before missionaries were sent to them and were waiting for a better religion. V. 5. The Almighty Creator who had spoken of Messiah, now speaks to Him. *In righteousness*—to vindicate God's honour and justice and in fulfilment of His promises, Rom. 3: 25-26. *Give thee for a Covenant*—a guarantee that the plan of Redemption shall be carried out. *A light to the Gentiles*, see Luke 3: 22. Acts 13: 47. *Blind*—spiritually. When the Gospel came, light came. Matt. 4: 16. John 1: 9. V. 7. *I am the Lord*—the name of Jehovah, enough for Abraham, enough for us, Heb. 6: 13. V. 9. *The former things* promised by the mouths of the prophets had been fulfilled: these predictions concerning Messiah are as certain to be accomplished. *Before they spring forth*—germinate—before there is the slightest indication of them, *God foretells*. V. 10. *A new song*—called for by a new manifestation of God's grace—ono in which Jew and Gentile shall join. None of the songs of earth will do for heaven. The new song will be that of the redeemed, Rev. 1: 5-6. 5: 9. *That go down to the sea*—missionaries to distant lands, and all peoples, even in the remotest islands shall join in the universal PRAISE—“*Salvation and immortal praise.*”

THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR.

May 4th.]

[Isaiah liii: 1-12.]

GOLDEN TEXT:—*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.*—1 Peter 2: 24.

HOME READINGS:—M. Isa. 50: 4-11. T. Isa. 52: 1-15. W. Dan. 9: 20-27. Th. Isa. 53: 1-12. F. Matt. 27: 11-26. S. Matt. 27: 27-50. S. Acts 8: 26-40.

Who hath believed—The unbelief of the Jews is expressly said to be the fulfilment of this, John 12: 38. Rom. 10: 16. It is still receiving fulfilment in the comparatively small number of sincere believers, because the arm of the Lord is not revealed to them. Vs. 2-3. *A root out of a dry ground*—alludes to our Lord's humble parentage. *Shall grow up*—in obscurity; scarce anything was heard of Jesus till He was 30 years of age. *No beauty*—no external glory such as the Jews expected, therefore they despised and rejected Him. *A man of sorrows*—though freed from bodily disease, the Saviour endured the pangs of hunger, thirst, poverty, and acutest mental agony caused by the scorn of men and the hidings of his Father's face. He was never seen to laugh, though He often wept. *He hid our faces*—scornfully disdaining to notice Him. V. 4, 5. Surely it cannot be denied. Even the Jews, ancient and modern, admit that this chapter refers to Messiah. *Borne our griefs and carried our sorrows*—hath taken away By his various sufferings did away with sin the source of both. *Yet we did esteem him stricken*, as if it were for His sins and not ours! *Wounds, bruises, chastisements, stripes*—all were endured for us. Even Pilate found no fault in Him. V. 6. *All we like sheep*—the whole race corrupted by sin, has left its rightful owner. *We have turned aside*—from God's way to our own way. *Truth laid on Him*—as the sins of the offerer were laid on the sacrifice, and those of all Israel on the scape-goat, Lev. 16: 21, so our sins are made to meet upon Him—the sins of all he was to save from every age and place. *The Lord hath laid*—this was by divine appointment, that men might be delivered from the curse of sin. Nor was He unwilling to bear it—He made a voluntary sacrifice of Himself, John 10: 18—for all, John 3: 16. V. 7. *He was oppressed*—The penalty was strictly exacted, Deut. 15: 2. *Afflicted*, rather, He submitted Himself to affliction. *As a lamb*—“Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,” John 1: 29. So far from offering resistance, He rebuked those who would have rescued Him. Matt. 26: 51-52. *Dumb*—when accused of the chief priests, Jesus answered nothing, Matt. 27: 12. V. 8. *From prison*—rather, from justice, for Christ was never imprisoned, though he was bound, John 18: 24. *Who shall declare his generation?* This may either mean, who shall describe the wickedness of His generation? His contemporaries, or who will care to bestow thought on a career so prematurely cut short? V. 9. contains a distant reference to His humiliating death, along with malefactors, John 19: 18; and to His burial in the tomb of a rich man, contrary to the usual course of events, John 19: 38-42. *Because He had done no violence*—should be although he had done, &c. V. 10. *Yet it pleased the Lord*—His sufferings were endured that He might do Jehovah's will, John 6: 38; to bruise him—fulfilling Gen. 3: 15; put him to grief—fulfilled in Gethsemane. *When thou shalt seek*—rather, when He. He substituted Himself as a sacrifice for sinners, Matt. 20: 28. *Shall see his seed*—His spiritual children. *The pleasure of the Lord*—Isaiah 53: 23. V. 11. *Shall be satisfied*—the blessed results from His sufferings shall amply repay Him for them, Rev. 7: 9, 10. *By his knowledge*—i.e., the knowledge of Him. V. 12. Christ attains His glory by conquest, therefore He has the right to divide the spoil—His willing followers—in accordance with the Hebrew idea of triumph. Ps. 68: 18. Ephes. 4: 8.