Sunday School Lesson

April 7. Lesson I—The Ministry of Isaiah—Isaiah 6: 1-8; 20: 1, 2; 38: 1-5. Golden Text—Then said I, Here am I; send me.—Isaiah 6: 8.

I. THE CALL OF ISAIAH, Chap. 6: 1-13.
II. THE WAR WITH SYRIA AND ISRAEL, AND THE SIGN OF IMMANUEL, Chap. 7: 1-17.
III. CONQUEST OF EGYPT BY ASSYRIA PREDICTED, Chap. 20: 1-6.
IV. THE KING'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY, Chap. 38: 1-22.

INTRODUCTION—The series of Old Testament studies which begins with this Lesson extends from Isaiah to Malachi, from the latter part of the eighth to the latter part of the fifth century, B.C. It covers the period of the great prophets whose messages to the people of their time have come down to us in the books which bear their names.

The period of Isaiah's ministry in Judah and Jerusalem, about B.C. 740 to 700, saw the rise of the first of those great military empires which sought to rule the world by armed force. The rapid expansion and increase of power of Assyria began with the reign of Tiglath-pileser III, B.C. 745-727, who is mentioned under the name of Pul in 2 Kings 15: 19 and 29, as interfering in the affairs of Israel and carrying off many captives. From its capital city of Nineveh, on the upper waters of the Tigris River, the power of Assyria, under Tiglath-pileser and his successors, Shalmaneser IV (2 Kings 17: 3), Sargon (Isa. 20: 1), and Sennacherib (2 Kings 18: 13), rapidly spread to the westward over all the smaller countries as far as the Mediterranean Sea and the Nile, converting them into provinces, or tributary states of the empire. Against that power there was vain resistance, or equally futile and vain rebellion, which only resulted in more tragedies of war, and heavier burdens of tribute, or in more deportations of captives. In this way both Israel and Judah suffered during the lifetime of Isaiah. It was given to him and to his contemporaries, Amos and Hosea in the northern kingdom of Israel, and Micah in Judah, to interpret to the people of their time these distressing events, to show them the hand of a just and merciful God in all that happened, to call to repentance, and to promise a brighter and happier future to a repentant and purified nation. Long centuries afterward, a Jewish scholar and sage wrote of Isaiah that he "was great and faithful in his vision," and that "he saw by an excellent spirit what should come to pass at the last, and he comforted them that mourned in Zion."

I. THE CALL OF ISAIAH, Chap. 6: 1-13.

This chapter is generally, and it would seem rightly understood as telling the story of Isaiah's call to the prophetic ministry. It will be interesting and helpful to compare this story with that of the call of Moses (Ex. ch. 3, of Samuel (1 Cam. ch. 3), of Elisha (1 Kings 19: 19-21), of Amos (Amos 7: 14-15), of Jeremiah (Jer. 1: 4-10), and of Ezekiel (Ezekiel chaps. 1 to 3). It is evident, in every case, as in many others that might be cited, that there is an assurance and certainty of the divine call and commission to a great task.

The date (v. 1) may be approximately fixed, by a comparison of the Biblical chronology with that of the Assyrian monumental records, as B.C. 740, or a year or two later. The story was probably written some years later, and the vision, therefore, interpreted in the light of subsequent actual experience in the prophetic office and ministry.

The following elements in the vision are worthy of special notice: (1) The sense of the immediate presence of the Lord, enthroned in holy majesty in his heavenly temple; (2) the awakened sense of unfitness, both his own and his people's to live in that holy presence; (3) the unspoken prayer answered by an experience of cleansing as by fire from God's altar of sacrifice; and (4) the call to service and the ready response.

The seraphim (vs. 2-6) are evidently angelic beings attendant upon the divine King. They are nowhere else mentioned in the Old Testament, but the same Hebrew word is used of the fiery serpents in the wilderness (Num. 21: 6). Since the angelic figures called "cherubim" are associated in poetic imagery with clouds and wind (Psalm 18: 9-11), it may be assumed that the figure of the seraph is suggested by the flashing lightning. Here the seraphs are winged human forms, with voices, hands and feet.

The discouraging results of his preaching and teaching (vs. 9-12) are such as could hardly have been anticipated by Isaiah at the beginning of his ministry, but they become apparent as his work proceeds. Compare the experience of Jesus (Matt. 13: 14-15), and of Paul (Acts 28: 23-28).

II. THE WAR WITH SYRIA AND ISRAEL, AND THE SIGN OF IMMANUEL, Chap. 7: 1-17.

Isaiah took a keen interest in the political affairs of his time. He had very pronounced views regarding what was best for his country, and what he believed to be the mind and the will of God. He was still a young man when the kings of Syria and Israel formed a league against the advancing power of Assyria. They invited Ahaz, king of Judah to join them. When Ahaz refused, they invaded Judah, intending to take the kingdom from him and give it to one who was favorable to their designs. Ahaz, in great fear, sent ambassadors to the king of Assyria imploring his aid, Isa. 7: 1-2, and 2 Kings 16: 5-9. Assyria responded by invading Syria and Israel, 2 Kings 15: 29; 16: 9. Isaiah, knowing that this act of Ahaz involved the subjection of his country to Assyria, opposed it with all his might. In a series of messages to the king he counselled patience, strict neutrality and faith in God, vs. 3-9. The final message challenged the king with the sign of Immanuel, "God with us," which contains the first definite prediction in Hebrew prophecy of a coming Saviour, v. 14.

III. CONQUEST OF EGYPT BY ASSYRIA PREDICTED, Chap. 20: 1-6.

An inscription of Sargon (B.C. 722-705) fixes the date of the siege of Ashdod in the year B.C. 711. The fortunes of Judah were closely bound up with those of the Philstines and both were being incited by Egypt to war against Assyria. Isaiah, both then and afterward, was profoundly distrustful of Egypt, and here predicts its ultimate conquest. Wearing only the simple dress of a captive he presents in his own person, to the king and people of Jerusalem, what he declares will be the fate of Egypt.

IV. THE KING'S ILLNESS AND RECOVERY, Chap. 38: 1-22.

Hezekiah, son of Ahaz, was a good king. The historians speak well of him, 2 Kings 18: 1-7. He seems to have held Isaiah in high esteem and the prophet's influence over him throughout his reign seems to have been very great. The story here told appears also in 2 Kings 20: 1-11. It shows us Isaiah as spiritual adviser to the king, bearing to him messages from the Lord. The psalm that follows illustrates for us the simplicity and strength of Hezekiah's faith.

View of Wrecking Train Clearing the Line

Colonist car telescoped by baggage car on train No. 3 which was on this railway car that at least three railway employees of C.N.R. and a not fully known number of people were cremated. Passengers after the crash pushed the cars in the rear of this car away from the burning inferno.

Forestry Aids Palestine Hills

Large Contribution Toward Planting Work Reported Forthcoming from Tree Lover's Society—Timber Declared First Need of New Zionist Home

Jerusalem—"The future prosperity of Palestine is bound up with forestry," declared Richard St. Barbe Baker, of London, founder of "Men of the Trees" Society, visiting Jerusalem in connection with a revival of the ancient Jewish festival known as the "Trees' New Year."

"The ancient prosperity has disappeared with the hill forests," said Mr. Baker.

lime burners have been draining the resources of the forests and most of what remained was swept away during the war to supply armies and military railways.

"The barren hills of Judah are calling out for trees. Their rain-washed slopes are bared of humus. The struggling peasant in scratching a poor existence from the soil, looks up to the hills for forest and protection for his crops, but finds there no help. If those hill tops could be but planted, it would make his task the lighter. "'The Men of the Trees,'" said Mr. Baker, "are anxious to help Palestine in the work of reafforestation, and have formed a fund for this purpose.

It is learned it is possible that "The Men of the Trees," of which Sir Francis Younghusband is chairman, will make Jerusalem the centre of the world movement. In any event arrangements may soon be made to spend $250,000 of this organization's funds on tree planting in Palestine.

How to Tell a Good Egg From a Bad

"What is a bad egg? One that stinks with hydrogen sulphide, or one that contains a partially formed chick.

"What is a good egg? One that has a thick jelly-like white, an upstanding yolk, a firm membrane separating white an yoke, a sheen over the whole contents.

"What is a poor egg? One with either watery or turbid white, a yolk that flattens out or bursts because of its thinned membrane, a dull appearance throughout the contents."

This egg advice is taken from the scientific department of the current issue of "Time."

"Poor eggs are practically as edible and nourishing as good eggs, merely less pleasant to look at and hence less appetizing," continues the "Time" article.

"Cornell University has been making a study of egg deterioration and preservation. Last week Paul Francis Sharp, Cornell's professor of dairy chemistry, who has been working on the matter with other Cornell men, wrote a preliminary report to Science. Egg spoil, he stated, because: (1) they contain germs caught from the hen or absorbed through the shell pores; (2) they lose water by evaporation through the shell, a condition which helps break down the membrane between yellow and white; (3) they are kept at a temperature too high, which causes chemical reactions, if not the formation of embryos; (4) most important and only newly discovered, the alkalinity of white and yolk has increased.

"Alkalinity increases because carbon dioxide escapes through the shell from the white. Then the white absorbs carbon dioxide from the yolk, only to lose it again through the shell. Result of the loss is that the yolks get flabby, the whites watery.

"These observations suggested to Professor Sharp's group the way of preserving eggs in their newly-laid condition, a way which they have found efficacious.

"It is simple: store the eggs in a place filled with a low concentration of carbon dioxide. That keeps a carbon dioxide balance within and without the eggs. Cost is 1c per case of eggs, .03c per dozen."

Balmy Weather Seems to Predict Early Spring

City folks find themselves at a disadvantage when it comes to comparing dates from one year to another such as the early or late arrival of spring. Farmers are probably more sure of the coming and going of the seasons but on the subject of spring they are argumentative as George Godfrey points out in the April issue of "Successful Farming."

"Every spring," he says, "you hear a lot of complaint about the lateness of the season. It is mighty easy to forget from one year to another just when we do start into the field. I was township trustee for several years and annually attended a meeting as prescribed by lay, the first Monday in April. Only once did that meeting come after we had started work in the field. Often there was still much snow. Every year, however, except the one early spring, we discussed the backwardness of the season. I have decided that for us in this latitude we are about in normal time if we get into the field by the middle of April."

GLAD IT ISN'T YOU

Cock-a-doodle-do!
My dame has lost her shoe;
My master holds his pocketbook,
Looking mighty blue.
Cock-a-doodle-do!
The careless, worthless shrew!
'Twill cost my master twelve good plunks
To get another shoe.

Radio Promotes True Democracy

Radio has promoted true democracy and has served to abate partisanship in American politics, claims General J. G. Harbord, writing in the April "Forum."

"The peril of democracies in all ages has been the demagogue," his "Forum" article reads. "The devices of the orator, the mystery of personal magnetism, the gift of leadership, and the contagion of mob feeling have swayed the crowd in all times. Apparently it is one of the instincts of human beings when they came together to place themselves under the authority of a chief. The multitude always listens to the strong willed man who knows how to impose himself upon it. The audience in such cases does no reasoning; its conclusions may bear no relation whatever to the merits of the issue. Carried along by mob enthusiasm, it merely follows the leader.

"One change that has been brought about by radio is the elimination of mob feeling from political audiences The magnetism of the orator cools when transmitted through the microphone; the impassioned gesture is wasted upon it; the purple period fades before it; the flashing eye meets in it no answering glance. Though he be one of thirty millions, each individual in the audience becomes a solitary listener in the privacy of his own home."

"A persistent weakness in our American scheme of government has been the lack of popular interest in politics and the failure of a great number of citizens to vote. The last Presidential election, however, with its huge registration, gave evidence of a greatly increased interest in the affairs of government. It is not unreasonable to attribute a large part of this to the broadcasting of political speeches. Radio brought the candidates and the issues within the family circle and made them topics of discussion at every dinner table. In a word it brought our citizens into closer contact with their government and made them more alive to the part which they should play in it."

Swap Wives and Split the Expense

Two farmers who traded wives is the subject of an item in the current issue of "Time".

"The Willis Knights had been married for 17 years and had five children," reads the "Hime" story. "The Lawrence Rikansruds had been married for twelve years and had two children. The two families were friendly farm neighbors, near Minot North Dakota.

"Two divorces were granted, last fortnight, in Minot. One automobile containing four persons immediately set out for Melita, Canada, where two marriages were performed. Having re-arranged themselves, the Knights and the Rikansruds tabulated and shared expenses:

Divorces at $65 each	$130
Marriage licenses at $5 each	10
Gasoline, incidentals	10
	$150

Shorter Distance to Europe

Winnipeg, Manitoba.—The world is being made smaller not only by automobiles and aeroplanes, but by shorter routes between its chief centres. A table of distances recently compiled shows that the Hudson Bay route will effectively shorten the distance between the grain fields of Western Canada and the markets of Europe. For example, from Saskatoon to Liverpool via the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence is 4.878 miles, but from Saskatoon to Liverpool via the Hudson Bay Railway and Churchill will be 3,783 miles, a saving of 1,095 miles. From Edmonton to Liverpool via the St. Lawrence is 5,224 miles but via the Hudson Bay the ristance will be 4,182 miles, a saving of 1,042 miles. The Hudson's Bay Railway, now being built by the Canadian Government to Fort Churchill on Hudson's Bay therefore promises to be an important factor in reducing distances from the Canadian prairies to the markets of the world.

MUTT AND JEFF— —By Bud Fisher. **Jeff Impersonates a Mechanical Robot and the Deception is Perfect**