

Business Directory

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Office over Marie Jack's Beauty Parlor
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Announced in Local Columns

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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Lesson for October 16
Golden Text—Look unto me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else—Isa. 45:22

Approach to the Lesson
To some extent the title for this lesson seems misleading, as the passages to be studied do not deal with God's relations to the various nations generally, but have to do with Judah in particular, and with what the Lord has in store for Egypt and Assyria in the time when the Kingdom of God is established in power over all the earth after the second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the first passages God expostulates with Judah and Jerusalem concerning the grave sins to which they had turned, apostatizing from the knowledge of Jehovah to follow after the idolatrous practices of the heathen round about them. Instead of maintaining that holy separation to which they had been called, they had become defiled by the corruption and wickedness that ever followed in the wake of idolatry. They who should have been examples of holiness and righteousness had dishonored the holy name they professed to reverence by their evil behavior.

Of old, Egypt had afforded shelter and sustenance to the Children of Israel when the famine was sore in the land, but in the centuries since had been the oppressor and enemy of God's people. Yet at times Judah had turned to Egypt for help against Assyria—only to prove she was leaning on a "bruised reed" (2 Kings 18:21). Assyria had carried the Northern Kingdom of Israel into captivity before this prophecy was uttered and was, like Egypt, a land of idols. But God declared through Isaiah that the day would come when restored Israel as a whole, together with Egypt and Assyria, should share in the blessings of Messiah's reign, and instead of being at enmity one with another should join together in a pact of peace and good will, owning the authority of Israel's God and rejoicing together in the blessings of His Kingdom. All this awaits the Millennial Age for its fulfillment.

The Historical Setting
Isaiah's ministry extended through the reigns of three kings following the death of Uzziah, namely, Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. It is not possible to give the exact date of any particular message, nor can we determine definitely the monarch under whose reign each "burden" was delivered. The dates indicated in the margins of our Bibles can only be taken as approximately correct.

Verse by Verse
Isa. 1:21—"How is the faithful city become an harlot!" Jerusalem, once the place where God's name was honored and His Temple thronged with devoted worshippers, had turned away from Him, and its citizens had given themselves to all kinds of evil and corruption.

Verse 22—"Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water." Instead of remaining true in heart to Jehovah, they had revolted from Him to such an extent that they were but as the dross of silver ore in His eyes, and like wine which had lost its strength and aroma by being diluted with water.

Verse 23—"Thy princes are rebellious, and the companions of thieves." Those who were set in authority over the people and were responsible to judge justly and without fear or favor, and become bribetakers, so that the greater the gifts offered them, the more they were swayed in their decisions. The result was that the poor and needy, the widows and the fatherless could not obtain justice in their courts, but were oppressed and trodden down, whereas they should have been the objects of the special care of those who were called upon to hear their complaints.

Verse 24—"Therefore saith..... the mighty One of Israel,..... I will..... avenge me of mine enemies." God himself, the supreme judge of all mankind, was about to deal with these corrupt rulers and to manifest His power on behalf of those who were oppressed. He would set aside the covetous and corrupt judges and give to His people those in their place who would administer in righteousness.

Verse 25—"I will..... purely purge away thy dross." Thus He

would deal with those who perverted justice for their own selfish ends and so brought dishonor upon His holy name.

Verse 26—"Afterward thou shalt be called, Thy city of righteousness, the faithful city." Only in measure has this been true of Jerusalem in all the centuries since these words were uttered, but the day is yet to come when they will be fulfilled literally, when Jerusalem shall become the centre of blessing for the whole earth.

Verse 27—"Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness." It is an unscriptural idea that Zion here represents the church of the present age. The prophecy is to be taken literally. Zion is Zion, Jerusalem is Jerusalem. When the Lord returns to judge the living nations Zion shall be brought back to God and those who turn to Him shall be redeemed and delivered from all evil by His mighty power.

Verse 28—"They that forsake in the Lord shall be consumed." In that day of Jehovah's power, sinners and transgressors shall be destroyed in unsparing judgment, and the enemies of God and His truth will disappear from the city where once they had things their own way.

Chap. 19:19—"In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord." Many have imagined that they saw the fulfillment of this in the Great Pyramid of Gizeh, but that vast monumental pile is not an altar or a pillar of memorial, but a great sepulcher. The expression "in that day" invariably carries us on to the day of the Lord, when the returning Christ will assert His authority over all the earth, Egypt then, freed from the ban of Islam, will become subject to Him whom now they reject.

Verse 20—"It shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts." Whatever form this mem-

Fresh as the day it was packed!



ITS FRAGRANCE IS SEALED IN VACUUM

Israel may take, it will be set up as a sign that Egypt, once so rebellious against the Lord, will then be in subjection to His will.

Verse 21—"The Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day." The entire nation will turn from its unbelief and fanatical adherence to the teaching of the false prophet Mahomet and do sacrificial service to the one true and living God as revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 22—"They shall return even to the Lord, and he shall be entreated of them." It will be after Egypt has been smitten in judgment and the evildoers destroyed out of the land that blessing will come to those who are left and who return to the Lord in repentance.

Verse 23—"The Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians." The highway connecting the lands of these one-time hereditary enemies will be a link between these nations when both have turned to the Lord and so will be at peace with each other, enjoying together the blessings of Messiah's reign.

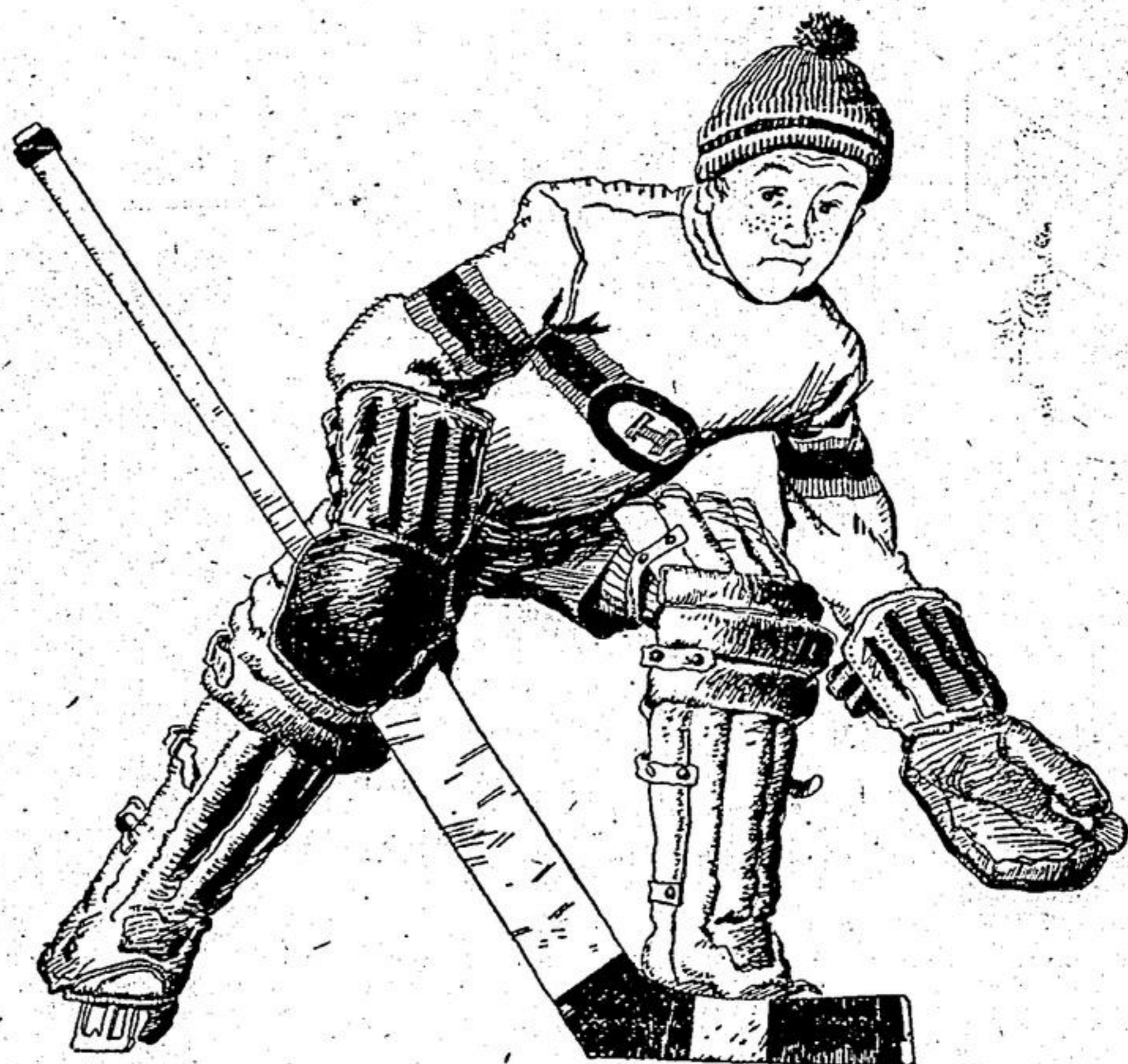
Verse 24—"In that day shall

Israel be the third with Egypt and Assyria." It is a delightful picture of peace and concord where hatred and confusion once held sway. Restored Israel will be a means of blessing to the whole earth.

Verse 25—"Whom the Lord..... shall bless." The curse will be lifted and the blessing of God will be upon these once hostile nations, whom He will then recognize as His own.

The Heart of the Lesson
Jerusalem occupies a very important place in God's counsels of blessing for the nations of the earth. Not until the Lord reigns in Zion, and Israel has returned to Him in repentance and subjection to His holy will, shall the nations of the Gentiles come into fullness of blessing. In that day of His power He will deal with those who persist to the last in open defiance of His will, and will then so deal with Egypt and Assyria that they, too, will acknowledge His authority. These two nations thus become illustrations of what will occur throughout the entire world when the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God

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