

The Lesson Digest and Teacher's Guide

The Junior Grade

[For pupils from nine to twelve years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Berean Leaf.]

Preparing the Lesson.

To get the connection it is essential that the preceding chapters, as well as the succeeding incidents to the lesson, be studied.

Illustrative Material: The picture in our Intermediate Quarterly, page 97, will help in presenting the story to the class.

Getting ready: The teacher who has succeeded in getting each of his class to read the carefully selected HOME READINGS day by day will have easy work on Sunday. A careful study of the "hard words" and phrases should be encouraged. Explain "All" (verse 11) as including everybody, official and unofficial. Two changes of the Revised Version should be noted: "message" instead of "commandment" (verse 10) and "relief" instead of "deliverance" (verse 14). The GOLDEN TEXT thoroughly memorized will be a treasure for life to the pupil. Outline: 1. Background of the story. 2. The Messages, verses 10-14. 3. The Answer, verses 15-17. 4. The Result, verses 1-3.

Teaching the Lesson.

Suggestions for Developing the Outline:

1. **Background of the Story.** God's people, the Jews, in exile, worshipping the true God in the midst of idolatry; one of them a faithful but neglected courtier; another, a loving but neglected queen. The wicked plot of Haman to destroy God's people, and Mordecai's first message to Esther.

2. **The Messages.** Esther saw difficulties in the way of carrying out Mordecai's advice that he could not see. To go unbidden into the presence of the king would probably result in Esther's death, with any consequent good to the Jews. But Mordecai saw that some one would be sure to tell Haman that Queen Esther was a Jewess, so that she would be put to death anyhow, except somehow all the Jews could be saved; he believed that God would save his people with or without Esther; but he thought that God had made her queen for this very purpose.

3. **The Answer.** Esther turns to God in prayer. She and her companions and servants will pray; and she desires Mordecai and all the Jews of Shushan to pray also. After three days of prayer she will go into the king unbidden, and ask that the lives of her people shall be saved.

4. **The Result.** Make the whole story an exemplification of the truth of the GOLDEN TEXT. Make plain the faith in God of Mordecai and

Esther, and show how we in our everyday lives may exercise a faith as complete as theirs.

Home Work for Pupils.

Advance Work: Urge the pupils to read the HOME READINGS during the coming week. Select the hard words and phrases of Lesson VII—not more than five or six—and ask the boys and girls to bring explanations next Sunday. Call attention to the pictures in the Intermediate Quarterly, page 98.

Review Work: Ask the pupils to be ready next Sunday to recite in whispers the GOLDEN TEXT of this lesson.

The Intermediate Grade

[For pupils from thirteen to sixteen years, inclusive. Each pupil, if possible, should be supplied with a copy of the Senior Quarterly, the Intermediate Quarterly, or the Lesson Leaf.]

Preparing the Lesson.

Master the entire book of Esther; get a clear understanding of every act in the drama; then omit every detail that is not required by the lesson.

Illustrative Material: On the supposition that Ahasuerus was Xerxes the cut on page 222 of the Senior Quarterly will interest the pupils. A picture of the traditional tomb of Esther and Mordecai is given on page 219; and a very informing scene (Assyrian)—"Assurbanipal feasting with his queen"—on page 222. See also pictures on pages 197 and 214.

Constructing the Lesson.

Study WORD STUDIES, LESSON EXPOSITION, and SCHOOL OF PRACTICE. Make up a Lesson Plan on the framework of the LESSON ANALYSIS, page 824. 1. The Trial of Faith (Introductory). 2. Reasonings of Faith. 3. Plans of Faith. 4. The Triumph of Faith.

Teaching the Lesson.

Suggestions for Developing the Lesson Plan:

1. **The Trial of Faith.** By a rapid survey of the story of this book show the terrible plight in which Mordecai suddenly found himself and all his kin, a knowledge of which had just come to Esther at the beginning of our lesson. In the ordinary secular business of Christendom there is many a plot as nefarious as that of Haman. In the life of youth as really as in maturity come emergencies when there is no possible remedy except in God.

2. **Reasonings of Faith.** Esther was neither cowardly nor unfaithful in her words of verse 11; nor are Mordecai's words (verses 13, 14) to be understood as a reflection on her. We must understand and feel our own helplessness before we can take help from God.