

THE LESSON GRADED

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of Bible Classes

Briefly review the history with special reference to Moses' Song (ch. 15 : 1-21), Marah (ch. 15 : 22-25) and Elim, ch. 15 : 27. Let the class discussion gather round :

1. *The murmuring of the people*, vs. 1-3. The points to elicit are : (a) That this was the third offence of the kind. (See Ex. 14 : 10-12, and 15 : 23, 24.) (b) It was an emphasis upon material things which completely overshadowed their recent blessings. Show how they exaggerated their enjoyments in Egypt and minimized the possibilities of their new life. (c) It was a lamentable exhibition of unbelief following a very remarkable deliverance. Try and get at the real reasons of this murmuring. There was, especially, the fact that they were away from home, dissatisfied with their surroundings, weary with the long journey. It was a case of letting present ills blind to greater blessings. Discuss this comment, "A good traveler must have two eyes. One eye must be blind to discomforts near at hand and have a clear vision of beauties at a distance. The other eye must be blind to dangers and difficulties in the distance and see everything of interest and charm in the immediate foreground." Apply this to the journey of daily life, and consider Jesus' counsel. (See Matt. 6 : 24-34.)

2. *God's method of meeting man's need*, vs. 4-15. He met grumbling with gracious promises. First deal with the fact that the method sought to discipline the people in obedience to God, to teach them that when God guides He also provides. Discuss Dr. Taylor's remark, "It is usually not so much the greatness of our troubles as the littleness of our faith which makes us complain." Elicit how God met Israel's need by : (a) giving a daily supply ; (b) a double supply for the Sabbath ; (c) by emphasizing that it was God's providence which was in their daily portion. See ch. 16 : 27-30 as to the importance of the test, also Deut. 8 : 3.

Turn now to the spiritual teachings of the Lesson. First the manna was a symbol of

Christ, the true bread from heaven (see John 6 : 27-58). Second, it illustrates the necessity of each one's making a personal appropriation in order to benefit by it (see Matt. 6 : 11 ; Deut. 8 : 2, 3). Now press home the lesson that God's resources are sufficient when faith claims the promises.

For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

Question the class about Moses' Song (ch. 15 : 1-21) ; Marah and the tree of healing (ch. 15 : 23-25), and what these things mean for us ; and Elim. In our Lesson to-day we learn what happened after leaving Elim. Consider :

1. *The Murmuring of the People*, vs. 2, 3. Note how hunger often brings out the worst side of human nature, how it reveals a kind of wild animal side. This is not true in the highest types of human kind. (See Matt. 4 : 2-4.) Remind the class that the Israelites at this time were degraded by the life they had lived, that they had the slave look of centuries of oppression in their faces, that they had the slave spirit in their souls. Discuss the question raised by their complaint as to whether it is better to die as slaves who have all that they can eat, or as hungry freemen. Was Moore right when he sang :

"'Tis sweeter to bleed for an age at freedom's shrine

Than to sleep but a moment in chains."

A great religious teacher has said that almost everybody is a grumbler. Is this true ? There is less excuse for us when we feel inclined to indulge in an exercise of this kind than for the Israelites. Think about the multitude of things we have to be thankful for and we shall have neither time nor spirit for murmuring.

2. *An Interpretation of Their Murmuring*, vs. 7, 8. Bring out that there was more in their murmuring than they thought for. They could not vent their spleen upon Moses and Aaron without despising God. Lead the class to see that this is characteristic of our murmuring. (See Luke 10 : 16.) Let us remember when we feel like grumbling about our health or our circumstances or anything else, that we are murmuring against God, and we shall be restrained.