

# Sunday School Lesson

November 29. Lesson IX—Paul's Letter to Philemon—Philemon 4:20. Golden Text—There is neither bond nor free... for ye all are one in Christ Jesus.—Galatians 3:28.

**ANALYSIS.**  
I. APPRECIATING GOODNESS, Phil. 4:7.  
II. BOSS OR BROTHER? 8-16.  
III. PAYING OTHERS' DEBTS, 17-20.

**INTRODUCTION.**—Paul must have written a great many private letters—he had formed so many intimate friendships everywhere. This letter to Philemon is the only complete letter which we now possess. It is one of the most beautiful letters ever written. Sabatier said of it, "Only a few familiar lines, but so full of grace, of serious and trustful affection, that this short epistle gleams like a pearl of the most exquisite purity in the rich treasure of the New Testament."

**I. APPRECIATING GOODNESS, Phil. 4:7.**  
Philemon, apparently, lived in Colossae. We are not told this definitely, but Onesimus is referred to as "one of yourselves," Col. 4:9. A member of his household is a leader in the Colossian church, Col. 4:17. Paul came to know him, probably in Ephesus. He was well-to-do, able to keep servants, entertain in his own house (v. 2), and act as a public benefactor, vs. 5, 7. The Christian communities were as yet small and had no buildings of their own. Some wealthier members gave the use of their homes for their gatherings. Philemon was greatly loved for his work among the poor. It is evident from v. 7 that the whole church at Colossae had benefited by some particularly needed and welcomed gift.

Paul rejoices, not because Philemon is well, and prospering in business, but because he is a true Christian and is devoting himself to a life of practical helpfulness. How this warm-hearted brother who evidently preferred to remain in the background (Col. 4:17) must have been gladdened and encouraged at having his labors thus recognized and appreciated by the great apostle!

**II. BOSS OR BROTHER? 8-16.**  
Paul writes to intercede for a runaway slave, Onesimus. He had been a worthless fellow and had finally run away, after robbing his master, as Paul hints, of a considerable sum of money. He made his way to Rome, as fugitive slaves usually did. Eventually, destitute and homeless, he met the only man in that great city whom he could trust to befriend him. Through Paul he was converted and attached himself to his benefactor as a most devoted and valuable personal attendant, v. 13. When an opportunity came, Paul sent him back to his owner. The letter is an appeal for forgiveness, and also to have Onesimus received, not merely as a slave, but as a brother in the Lord.

Paul's letter suggests the Christian way of dealing with our fellows. He could have commanded Philemon, Philemon owed Paul a great deal, including his spiritual life. Paul, as an apostle also, had great powers. But he preferred to use persuasion, and rely on the affection of his friends and spiritual children. He would win by love rather than by law. The "I command you" method will win mechanical obedience; it cannot create a helpful and happy relationship. Paul, therefore, did not make his demand from the position of a master. He appeals on the level of ordinary human brotherhood. He is just an "old man," old before his time, it is true. He is in jail. He is Philemon's fellow-worker. A response to that kind of an appeal will mean blessing for all three.

Paul's letter also suggests the Christian relationship in business and industry. Onesimus had been a worthless slave. Now he is coming back as his own free will. Only one thing would make that possible—love. Love will make of Onesimus a better slave than he has ever been. On the other hand, it will make of Philemon a new kind of master. Once, probably, he looked upon Onesimus as an instrument of profit. Now he will see in him a brother.

When Paul asserted the principle of brotherhood (v. 16) he struck a blow at the system of slavery. The application of that principle has been the destruction of slavery in every Christian society. When a man recognizes in another a member of his own family, he will no longer treat him as a bit of machinery. He will then cease utilizing every opportunity to make money out of his brother's need. He

**III. PAYING OTHERS' DEBTS, 17-20.**  
Paul offered to pay back whatever Onesimus had stolen. It must have been a good sum, for it took him all the way to Rome. Paul used to be a poor man, working his way with his hands. In later life, however, he gave indications that he had funds at his disposal. Possibly he may have inherited some wealth from his family.

**Leniency.**  
Leniency in dealing with erring children! Yes, one cannot be too kind or forgiving, provided there is a method and efficiency of supervision—harshness or imprisonment only creates a stubborn determination to resist and get even by increased violence and wrongdoing.  
A boy ran away from a Reform school. The police were notified—his escape, name and history were broadcasted through the newspapers. He was captured in due time, of course, but this publicity ruined his chances and prospects in life—resentment at injustice embittered him to such an extent that reform became impossible.  
Does a policy of forgiveness and kindness pay? Yes, a thousand times over, as we have often demonstrated.—J. J. Kelso.

**Record Flights.**  
Donald Rose in the North American Review (New York). Only in insignificant degree have the record flights been converted to real usefulness. Some have served for laboratory tests, as automobile racing once stimulated the building of better cars. But most of them have been seven-day sensations for a thrill-thirsty public and not much more. Some of the most elaborate and expensive have proved nearly nothing except, for example, that there is ice at the Pole in superfluous quantities. Many have ended in disaster and dark tragedy. And some have ended exactly where we wisher not better nor happier for an incredible effort and a daring challenge to chance and danger.

**Gold Hoarding.**  
Manchester Guardian: That the flow of gold across the Atlantic should stop is really just as important to the French as to American bankers. French investors are already beginning to lose their nerve and to withdraw their money from the banks and hoard it; and if that internal drain got going in earnest all the bullion which is now crossing the Atlantic would be poured into a bottomless pit.

**Planes to be Carried By Akron Being Tested.**  
Lakewood, N.J.—The first of the small fighting airplanes which are to be carried on the new Navy airship Akron have been received here and are undergoing testing. These planes, designed by the Curtiss-Wright engineering firm, have been constructed with two main objectives—the highest possible speed and the greatest practical lightness. A special hangar is being constructed in the interior of the airship to house four planes.

**Large Italian Families Get 5-Room Bungalow.**  
Rome.—Each of the 10 families in Italy with the largest number of children will be given a five-room bungalow by the Governor of Rome, beginning on Christmas, 1932. It was announced recently.  
Similar prizes will be given each year for five years. With the prize goes a proviso that the houses cannot be sold, leased or mortgaged within 30 years.

**Peace of Mind.**  
Efficiency in business methods will enable us to make money and thus enjoy added luxuries but only religion can give us peace of mind. Joy in service, courage in time of trouble and hopefulness concerning the future.—J. J. Kelso.

# Farm Relief By Chemistry

(From Review of Reviews, August, 1931)

A generation ago Sir William Crookes startled the world by predicting famine because of lack of nitrogen for fertilizers. During the war military authorities of the United States were gravely concerned about possible shortage of nitrogen for explosives, as well as for the increased food production to supply the demands of war. Even five years ago the production of fertilizer nitrogen in the United States was less than half of the country's consumption, hindering more efficient farming through shortage of domestic supplies and by the high price of imported products.

Within these five years the situation has been reversed. The use of fertilizer nitrogen has increased about 50 per cent, while production has increased 100 per cent. With production of synthetic nitrogen from the air increased about 50 per cent, a reduction of about 50 per cent in price, and further large increases in sight, it is certain that the United States will soon produce much more nitrogen than it consumes.

Either she must become a nitrogen-exporting nation, the industry must find new uses for its products, or she must persuade the American farmer of what seems an unquestionable fact, that he can use much more nitrogen on his fields to make much more money. From the prospect of a world-famine in nitrogen to a surplus in less than forty years is perhaps the most rapid revolution of a major industry ever worked in scientific history.

Since no living plant or animal can use air nitrogen directly, essential as it is for the growth of living protoplasm, before the days of man or of synthetic chemistry, life on earth had to depend for its nitrogen on lightning and on gorms. Every lightning flash shatters a tiny percentage of the oxygen and nitrogen atoms in its path. Compounds like nitric acid are formed and blown down by the rain. They are then in a form that plants can utilize them freely. Bacteria, too, especially those that live on the roots of clover and alfalfa and relate plants, have imposed upon them the duty of replenishing the nitrogen of the soil, and furnish the reason why the wise farmer includes these plants in his crop rotation.

Sir William Crookes' prediction of world-disaster went wrong for two reasons. In the first place two sources of combined nitrogen had already been discovered. One of them was coal, from which by heating we now make coke or gas and in so doing liberate the nitrogen which lightning and gorms combined in the Coal Age. The other is the natural nitrate of Chile, where millions of tons of combined nitrogen, probably formed by lightning on the stormy crest of the Andes, have accumulated in a rainless desert whence none of the precious material has washed away. Sir William underestimated both these sources. New methods, such as the Guggenheim process, have been devised, to work the Chilean deposits more efficiently, thus saving thousands of tons of nitrogen that formerly went to waste.

The second reason his prediction failed was because of the marvellous advance in synthetic chemistry. This enables us now to imitate lightning—that is, to accomplish the artificial fixation of the inexhaustible but useless nitrogen of the air. At first, powerful electric arcs played in air to force some of the atoms to combine. This has been almost discarded. Another early process, still in use, is to heat the calcium carbide otherwise used to yield a chemical compound called cyanamide, used directly as a fertilizer or convertible to other compounds.

But the most efficient method of producing this nitrogen in usable form is the direct synthesis of ammonia gas from its two chemical elements, nitrogen and hydrogen. During the war, Germany's desperate need of nitrogen for explosives—the Chilean supply being cut off by the blockade—stimulated the practical development of the first steps in this direction taken by the distinguished German chemist, Professor Fritz Haber. British,

# One of Eleven



Mrs. H. R. Tate, elected from Central Willesden West district, one of the eleven women winning parliamentary seats in recent British general elections.

French and American chemists each contributed ideas and experiments, until last year this method presented the world with about as much fertilizer as the entire production of Chile, and about a quarter of all the nitrogen consumed on farms and in the factories of the world.

We might call the process atomic torture. A nitrogen atom has a central nucleus composed of fourteen particles of positive electricity and seven of negative electricity tightly clumped together, with seven more negative particles revolving loosely about this central point like planets about a sun. The hydrogen atoms consist of a central nucleus of only one positive electric particle, with a single negative one revolving about it. To produce ammonia the chemist must make each nitrogen atom accept union with three hydrogen ones. This is done by compressing nitrogen gas from the air and hydrogen gas from natural gas or from water by thousands of pounds to the square inch, and passing it over a fine dust of iron, nickel, or some other catalyst. It is believed that the outside particles of nitrogen are distorted so that they lose their hold on the nucleus and combine with the hydrogen.

Phosphorus and potash have become important fertilizers as a result of chemical research.

# \$1,000,000 Edison Memorial Planned Ever-burning Light to be Feature

West Orange, N.J.—Mrs. Thomas A. Edison has given her approval to a plan sponsored by the chamber of commerce and citizens of Orange and Mapewood for erection of a \$1,000,000 memorial to her late husband on a promontory overlooking the home and laboratories of the dead inventor.

Plans for the memorial have not been decided upon, but it is expected that its central feature will be a huge tower, surmounted by an ever-burning light to serve the entire metropolitan area as an aviator beacon.

A nation-wide committee, with President Hoover as honorary chairman, will be organized under present plans. It is hoped that Secretary Andrew W. Mellon will serve as honorary treasurer. The committee in charge plans to form organizations throughout the world for the purpose of raising funds for the memorial.

**Youths Work Without Pay.**  
Berlin.—The Germans have a proverb: "Large makes existence sweet," and a large number of youth under twenty-one years of age, who have banded themselves together as the "Young German Order," are endeavoring to prove this. So weary are many of these boys of being without a job that they are demanding work of any kind without pay. Some six miles out of the busy town of Bautzen in Saxony flows a rivulet known as Albrechts Brook which, picturesque though it is, does great damage to the surrounding country every spring by the overflowing of its banks. For the last twelve years it has been intended to regulate the undisciplined stream and drain the land, but the necessary funds were lacking. The first experiment is now being made with 120 volunteers, who go singing to their work every morning, glad to be about and doing again. They are provided with food and lodging, simple, but ad uate, also with workman's clothing to save their own, and—though this is not considered payment—with 50 pfennigs (about 13 cents) daily as pocket money.

**Bicycle Comes Back.**  
The bicycle is returning to favor in England. Cycle manufacturers are finding the demand for bicycles higher than it has been for the last seven or eight years. Although the bicycle has not been seen so much in the larger cities during the last few years, there are certain places which have always been known as Bicycle Towns.

Bedford is the most famous "bicycle town" in England, and has the highest proportion of bicycles to its population. This is probably due to the flatness of the surrounding country. In Bedford the preponderance of bicycles is so great that shopkeepers make special arrangements for parking them. On the continent the bicycle is very popular. Copenhagen, for instance, moves almost entirely on the bicycle, so does the Hague. In Berlin the streets are crowded with bicycles at the hours when people are going or coming from work. Factories on the outskirts of the city have accommodations for thousands of bicycles, as most of the workers find this the cheapest and easiest way of travelling.

**Tomato Popular in Germany.**  
Berlin.—Perhaps no vegetable has become so popular in Germany as the tomato, and yet some thirty years ago it was hardly known. When it did appear, it was regarded with suspicion on account of its brilliant color and considered harmful. For a long time, under the name of Liebesapfel (love apple) it was only cultivated in a few gardens for decoration. Today the tomato is eaten and enjoyed in every form by rich and poor alike. Now that it has been proved that this useful fruit or vegetable—opinions differ as to its rightful cognomen—will keep good for over six weeks in ice storage, the growing grounds throughout the country have been enormously increased, but foreign importers, with Holland at their head, do a very great trade with Germany.

**Alberta Leads.**  
Ottawa.—Alberta replaced Saskatchewan as the greatest wheat-producing Province of the Dominion this year, with a total estimated yield of 135,000,000 bushels, the report of the Bureau of Statistics shows. In 1930 the Alberta wheat yield was 132,900,000 bushels. Saskatchewan this year has an estimated yield of 117,000,000 bushels, as compared with the 196,322,000 of a year ago. Manitoba shows a drop from 45,278,000 bushels to an even 27,000,000 this year.

**Museum Gets Petrified Lizard.**  
Montreal.—Salamanders or no salamanders, the Peace River district is going to have its lizards. Scarcely had the claims to antiquity of salamanders found at Hudson's Hope been officially denied, when a genuine, petrified, section of an Ichthyosaurus was placed in the hands of Francis Kermode, director of the Provincial Museum, Vancouver, B.C. Several ounces in weight and six inches in length, the stone fragment reached Mr. Kermode from a police post at Hudson's Hope, and is now a fully accredited exhibit in the museum.

**High Finance Hits Stratosphere.**  
The house of laughter makes a house of woe.—Young.

# Amusing Anecdotes

In the Customs shed on the pier in New York a plant quarantine inspector saw some green foliage in a pile of trunks and found it to be that of potted box shrubs, relates Dr. L. O. Howard, formerly Chief Entomologist of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (in "The Insect Menace"). He explained to the lady to whom the shrubs belonged that they must be destroyed or returned to Europe. She was greatly distressed, and finally burst into tears, sobbing out:

"Please, please let me have them, I brought them from my husband's grave."

The inspector told her that he had no authority to pass them and that they would have to be destroyed. As he turned to speak to a Customs inspector, there was an interruption. An angry man approached, demanding, "Are you the fellow that took that lady's plants?" The inspector said, "I denied the entry, but is that any of your business?" The retort was, "Yes, it is; I am her husband, and I will report this to the authorities!" The inspector who had an abundant sense of humor, replied, "How can you report it? You are dead; you are buried in France!"

Small town theatre orchestras in days gone by were often made up of men who were engaged in other businesses during the day and in the evening picked up a little money at the theatre by their ability to "produce some kind of a noise on musical instruments," chuckles Harry B. Smith, author of more than three hundred musical comedies and operettas, and whose hobby is collecting rare books—in his most amusing reminiscences "First Nights and First Editions."

One such orchestra was rehearsing "The Fencing Master"—by Mr. Smith and Reginald de Koven—and the musical director, Antonio de Novellis, a well known musician who spoke English with a unique accent was sorely tried by a double bass player who was persistently discordant. As the player kept on making the same mistake, Novellis asked the unfortunate man with expensive Italian and French.

"I can't help it, Mr. Novellis," protested the offender. "I'm not a regular professional musician."  
"You do?" inquired Novellis.  
"I'm a shoemaker."  
"You are a shoemaker? I forgive you," said the leader. "Come, we try again."

The passage was played over with distressing results and Novellis sat down in the orchestra chair, the power of speech being unequal to the occasion. Presently he was observed to be taking off his shoes. Then he called to the erring double bass:

"Come here, my boy! Measure me for a pair of shoes and for goodness sake go home and make them."

At another town the local musical director gave Novellis a kindly warning to be careful what he said to the trombone player. Novellis gave thanks for the information and he started his orchestra rehearsal with a wary eye on the trombone player, whose appearance indicated a fighting weight of about two hundred pounds.

He not only was not a good trombone player but he was an excruciatingly bad one, and trombone blasts in the wrong places are particularly annoying. Novellis sinfully corrected these untimely yawns and indolent tones made friendly suggestions. Finally his patience departed, and after one particularly vile discord, he took off his coat and said:

"Py Heaven, I think I fight."

By way of contrast, Mr. Smith tells a story about Edward E. Rice, composer of "Evangeline"—one of the first American musical pieces—who couldn't read a note of music. At one rehearsal, in order to impress influential friends who were present, he stopped suddenly, rapped with his baton and found fault with the instrumentalists, one of whom threatened:

"Don't you talk to us that way Mr. Rice, or we'll follow your bat."

**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT.**  
The headmaster entered the classroom and beckoned to little Tommy Brown. "I was very surprised," he commenced, "to see a boy like you throw a stone at a little bird this morning. That was a thing I could never do."  
A look of innocence came over the boy's face. "Oh, it's very simple, sir," he replied. "It only needs a bit of practice."

**ONE OF MANY.**  
He was looking through the hatched, matched, and dispatched columns of the local paper. "I say, dear," he said to his wife, "I see Miss White has joined the great majority."  
"What! She isn't dead, is she?" demanded the wife anxiously. He laughed. "Gracious, no," he replied. "She has married a man named Smith."

# MUTT AND JEFF—By BUD FISHER

