

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

October 8, 1916. Lesson II.

Paul Before Felix.—Acts 24: 1-27.

Commentary.—I. The charges against Paul (vs. 1-9). There was no great delay on the part of the Jewish ecclesiastical system in bringing charges against Paul, who had been taken from the hands of his enemies in Jerusalem. Only five days elapsed from Paul's arrival at Caesarea before Ananias, the high priest, and others in authority came from Jerusalem to secure the condemnation of the apostle. They brought with them a professional orator, or pleader, to present the case before Felix, the governor. Tertullus began his making remarks full of compliments to Felix, that he might win his favor for the cause he was pleading. He did not confine himself to the truth in his flattery, for history tells us that Felix was far from being the excellent character that Tertullus painted him. The charges against Paul, as the orator presented them, were threefold. 1. He was guilty of treason. 2. He was an enemy of the Jews and their religion everywhere. 3. He had defiled the temple at Jerusalem. One needs only to know the facts in the case to see how far Tertullus came from the truth in these charges. The Jews had no authority to execute Paul, and their only hope now, since their plot against him had failed, was to prejudice the Roman Government against him to the extent that it would judge him worthy of death. Tertullus declared that the Jews had undertaken to judge Paul, but Lysias, the chief captain, had violently taken him out of their hands. Those who had come from Jerusalem to appear against Paul sanctioned the statements of their spokesman. It is probable that the orator has given us a mere outline of what was said by Tertullus and by Paul.

II. Paul's answer (vs. 10-21). 10. Then Paul answered.—The prosecutor had finished his argument against Paul, and the Jews had given their endorsement to his plea. The tide would seem to have turned against the prisoner, but Felix was not carried away with the Jews' presentation of the case. The governor gave the sign to Paul to reply to the charges made against him. The apostle needed no attorney to plead his cause, for he was fully able to make his own defence. Many years a judge—Felix had occupied his present position six or seven years. Paul used no flattery in making the complimentary remarks in the beginning of his defence. I do the more cheerfully answer—He was pleased to present his case before a judge who had had years of experience in that office, and who had an understanding of Jewish affairs. 11. Because that thou mayest understand.—"Seeing that thou canst take knowledge," R. V. It would be easy to secure evidence to cover all that had taken place in the short time that Paul had been in Jerusalem. To worship—Paul's object in going up to Jerusalem was to worship the Lord, and this fact would be evidence that he was not guilty of the charges made against him. 12. They neither found me in the temple disputing.—This was a direct denial of the charge that he was a "mover of sedition." Neither raising up the people—Paul had carefully refrained from doing anything to prejudice the Jews against him, and had entertained no thought of arousing the people against any measure or against any individual. The crowd in the temple area had been stirred up by the Jews themselves. 13. Neither can they prove the things.—So certain was Paul of his ground that he challenged his accusers to substantiate their charges by credible testimony.

14. After the way which they call heresy.—The first charge, that of sedition, was fully refuted, and the apostle proceeded to prove that he was not an enemy of the Jews nor of their religion. He was not guilty of heresy, for he worshipped the same God that they did, and he believed the law and the prophecies which they accepted as divinely given. Paul's interpretation of the scriptures was not the same as that of the Jews who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, and his belief differed further from that of the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection; yet he was loyal to the God of his fathers. 15. Which they themselves also allow.—Paul is referring to the hope of the resurrection which he holds. Those of the Jews who held the same views were the Pharisees, the orthodox body of the Jewish people. Both of the just and unjust.—The doctrine of the resurrection of the righteous alone can not be reconciled with this express declaration of the resurrection of the unjust.—Whedon. Speaking in the presence of Felix the apostle seems to have chosen words to touch the conscience of the procurator.—(Cam. Bib.) They shall be raised, "some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12: 2.) 16. Herein do I exercise myself.—Paul referred to the worship and doctrine of the Jews. He made it the business of his life to worship the Lord and do his will. He set about it with diligence and would allow no other interests to interfere with his duty toward God and toward man. A conscience void of offence.—He would not violate his conscience. Paul's argument was that one who would thus carefully live before God and man would not be likely to raise a sedition or to oppose the religion which he professed to observe.

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Moses. 19. And object.—The Jews from Asia had falsely accused Paul of bringing Gentiles into that art of the temple where only Jews were allowed, and they should have been at Caesarea to bear witness to the validity of the charges against Paul if they were able. 20. These same here—Those who had come from Jerusalem to appear against the apostle. While I stood before the council—When Paul made his defense before the Sanhedrin. 21. This one voice.—The apostle had given forth the utterance concerning the resurrection and the members of the Sanhedrin were aroused, and contended among themselves, some holding the same views as Paul did and some opposing them. Called in question—Paul was put on trial for declaring his faith in the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. The apostle had clearly proved that he was innocent of all the charges that had been brought against him.

III. Two years' imprisonment in Caesarea (vs. 22-27). Felix was well enough acquainted with Jewish customs and Roman law to know that there was in reality nothing against Paul. He said that he would hear the full report of the case from Lysias when he should visit Caesarea. He commanded that Paul be held a prisoner with certain privileges. He had improved the opportunities he had to declare the truths of the gospel to him and Felix trembled. However, Felix would have released Paul if he had received from him a bribe, but Paul would not stoop to such a sin and he was held a prisoner there for two years. During these years Paul had the privilege of receiving his acquaintances, and his friends were permitted to aid him with gifts and service. Felix retained his office for two years after Paul was committed to him as a prisoner. When he went out of office, he might have given him his liberty; but he wished to have the Jews' favor, therefore when he gave place to Festus, his successor.

Questions.—Who came to Caesarea to testify against Paul? How did Tertullus begin? What charges did he bring against Paul? Why had Paul gone up to Jerusalem? How did Paul answer his accusers? What privileges did Felix grant Paul? Before whom was Paul summoned to speak of Christ? Of what did he reason? What was the character of his hearers? How did the truth affect Felix?

PRACTICAL SURVEY.

Topic.—Paul as conqueror.

I. Before his own countrymen.

II. Before a corrupt Roman judge.

I. Before his own countrymen. It was a most humiliating thing for the Sanhedrin to appear before Felix, a Roman judge, for the purpose of getting one of their own countrymen into their power. The statement of Tertullus was supposed to convey to the judge an impartial description of the prisoner and a just outline of his offence. It consisted rather of flattery for Felix, falsehood against Paul and mockery against the Nazarenes. The charges embraced political rebellion, heresy, sacrilege and disorder. Tertullus implied that the Sanhedrin would have judged Paul righteously if Lysias had not interposed. The accusations were met by Paul in a clear and bold denial, by a simple and candid statement of his position as a private and public man. Paul was loyal to the revealed will of God and to the rules of social relations of men. He began by selecting the only ground on which he could count himself fortunate in being tried before Felix. He could depend at least upon his acquaintance with the rites and customs of Judaism. In whatever he had to do, in whatever he was engaged Paul sought to act faithfully. He indulged Felix in no flattering complimentary titles. He respected his office and the existing order which it represented, but not the wicked man in the office. He spoke with freedom and boldness. He challenged his accusers to prove their assertions. His most concise way of conveying his view of the state of things to his judge was in a simple confession of his religion. The calm, heroic, lofty-minded apostle proclaimed that an opportunity was given him to proclaim the gospel. He was not overcome by the danger of his situation. Paul showed triumphantly that what was criminal in the charge against him was not true, and what was true was not criminal. A straightforward account was his best defense. He confessed Christ. He served God. He revered the Old Testament. He believed in the resurrection. He maintained a clear conscience. He held that he was truly orthodox. There was no manifest excitement in his reply and no resentment. He made no plea for clemency. He was intent on accomplishing a sublime purpose, that of presenting the kingdom of Christ in the midst of his enemies at bay and the world beneath his feet, a conqueror and not a captive.

II. Before a corrupt Roman judge. Paul stood before the highest tribunal of Judea. His accusers were his countrymen. His judge was an unprincipled Roman. The scene was extraordinary. Though the prisoner at the bar, Paul seemed to exercise the functions of prosecutor, witness and jury, handing over his judge as a condemned sinner into the hands of the supreme Judge of all, while the judge was neither able to defend nor excuse himself. Felix was a poor trembling transgressor on whom the words of Paul fell like a death sentence. Many things conspired to give Felix opportunity of hearing and knowing the truth. Paul sought to enlighten his mind and to carry conviction to his judgment. Felix played with opportunity. He did not treat Paul to point out the way of escape, though his heart was smitten with fear. There was a great difference between Tertullus and the candid presentation of gospel truth as it came from Paul. Felix realized that a great crisis was upon him. He had never heard such a message from a prisoner. He was powerfully moved. He was conscious that he had lived in violation of righteousness and temperance. He had every reason to fear coming judgment. The contact of Christianity with a heart of corruption and a life of guilt caused an unmistakable disturbance. Paul knew the character of his hearers. He felt

the great importance of his opportunity. He made known to Felix the one thing needful, the development of his nobler nature, the radical renunciation of sin. At the beginning of that interview Paul stood a captive before Felix. At its close Felix stood a moral captive before Paul. The trembling evidenced a momentary desire in Felix to put himself in the right. His cupidity was stronger than his sense of justice. His heart clung to sin, while his spirit was quaking at the thought of the wrath of God to which sin exposed him. Felix trembled and sent Paul away. T. R. A.



TREATMENT OF CLAY SOILS.

The clay or clay loam types of soils are made up of particles which are extremely fine. They are very retentive of moisture and also of plant food. In the management of a clay soil, unless the proper methods are practiced, a condition will be secured which renders the soil impervious to moisture, air may be excluded and the soil rendered infertile.

Proper management of a clay soil would be to permit of the water of rainfall being quickly absorbed by the soil, the surplus water being quickly carried away by means of under-drainage, the surface soil particles being flocculated or combined into what is called "compound soil particles," which will tend to prevent the formation of a crust, or the surface baking.

As the percentage of humus or decaying organic matter in the soil is increased the tendency of the clay particles to stick to each other is decreased, and in the successful management of a clay soil it is especially important that a liberal amount of organic matter be incorporated with the soil. This tends to change the character from that of the still impervious clay to the type resembling the clay loam, and in this type we have our most fertile soils. Probably no soil receives more benefit from an application of lime than does the clay soil. The well-known cementing properties of lime in part account for this beneficial action. It prevents puddling of the clay and renders the surface soil more porous; it changes the physical properties so that the relation of the particles to each other is secured which is so well known to the buttermaker, who churns the cream until the globules of fat are brought into a granular condition. This granular condition of the clay soils, especially of the surface particles, is the ideal condition.

FALL PLOWING FOR CLAY SOILS.

There is such a thing as adapting the crop to the soil upon which it is to be grown, and, where our system of rotation makes it possible, the clay soils should be devoted to those crops which require the most broadcast, those crops which are to be given in the culture can be grown to better advantage on soils which are of a lighter and looser texture. All the cultivation which can be given to the sowed crops must be given before seeding, and the quality of the clay soil, which enables it to hold moisture, enables these sowed crops to thrive, when if they were grown on soils of a lighter, more open texture the effects of drought would be far more serious. The soil, if turned slightly on edge rather than being turned flat, the effect of the winter's freezing and thawing, and the pulverizing action of the rain, will do much toward making these soils friable and in good condition.

By incorporating humus with the clay its condition may be changed and it may be brought more into the condition of the clay loam. This humus can be most readily secured in coarse farm manures, and through plowing under cover crops. While, as a rule, we prefer applying farm manures to the surface of the soil and harrowing them in, yet on some clay soils where the physical action of the manure may be fully as valuable as its chemical action, we can plow under coarse manure to advantage.

COVER CROPS ADAPTED TO CLAY

Of the various cover crops which can be grown to advantage, rye, barley and peas are most valuable. The rye should be used in all cases where a winter covering is desired, the crop of rye to be plowed under in the spring, late April or early in May if spring crops are to be grown; and plowed under later if some such crop as buckwheat is the one desired. If the clay is to be plowed in the fall, then the other crops mentioned are valuable for plowing under.

Barley and Canada field peas might be used, the seed being sown and disked in after some special crops, as oats or early potatoes, or even after a forage crop of oats and peas.

In planning to increase the organic matter in the soil, it matters not as much what crop we grow so long as each year we plow under something. In some sections of the country, one crop will be better adapted to the soil than others, and wherever the land is to be left for a few months without any special crop growing upon it, some means should be taken to secure a clover crop to plow under.

In the preparation of a clay soil there is such a thing as harrowing much. It is almost a universal practice with those who advise concerning tillage to advise that we harrow the soil all that we think we can afford to harrow it, and then harrow it as much more. But in fitting clay soils this advice may lead to trouble. So much tilling should be given as is ne-

cessary in breaking down clods and in compacting the sub-surface soil, but the tilling should not be carried to the point that will make the clay particles over fine. Should that be done the injurious effects would be apparent at the first heavy rain, and seeds which might be placed in the soil would be effectually buried beneath the crust of the puddled clay particles.

In applying fine, well-rotted manure to the clay soil, almost without exception, it should be applied as a surface dressing and harrowed in. While it is important that clay soil be not worked when too wet, it is equally important that it be not too dry. If the spring plowing is delayed until the land is dry, then the plow instead of pulverizing and fining the soil as it should, will break the soil up in lumps and clods where it is almost impossible to reduce it to a good condition of tilth. This type of soil requires the exercise of more care and more judgment in its successful management than does any other. When properly handled it may be made our most fertile type of soil; but if improperly handled for a single season, it will require years of labor to restore it to good physical condition.

FARM NEWS AND VIEWS.

The average period of gestation for animals is given as follows: Jennet, 12 months; mare, 11 months; cow, 9 months; sheep, 5 months; pig, 3 1-2 months; bitch, 9 weeks; cat, 8 weeks; rabbit, 30 days.

Salt is being used on many farms this season as a plant food liberator, and practical investigators have shown that it possesses considerable power in making plant food in the soil available.

If a baby had the appetite of a young beetle it would eat from 50 to 100 pounds of food every 24 hours. If a horse ate as much as a caterpillar, in proportion to its size, it would consume a ton of hay every 24 hours. A caterpillar eats twice its weight of leaves every day, but a potato beetle devours every day at least five times its weight of foliage.

Keep posted and market products as demand and price suggest the best time to seed. A glutted market is the speculator's harvest field. Allow no weed seeds to ripen. Kill weeds in the tender seeding stage. Induce fall sprouting by giving a late cultivation. Burn weeds bearing mature seeds. Never plow them under. Thoroughly compost stable manure if contaminated with seeds of noxious weeds. Sow only pure seed. Watch for weeds new to your locality. Practice rotation of crops. Turn orange blossoms and 1,000 tons of roses.

Under the license law of Sweden no one may buy drink without buying something to eat at the same time. Monaco has the smallest army in the world. It consists of fewer than 200 men, not much more than a regulation company. The average weight of the Greenland whale is 100 tons—224,000 pounds—equal to that of 500 elephants or that of 400 bears.

As a race, the tallest people in the world are the Borosos, of the south-west of Brazil. They average 6 feet 4 inches in height.

The word "and" occurs 46,527 times in Holy Scripture—10,984 times in the Old Testament and 35,543 times in the New Testament.

Selling seaweed is one of the functions of the Philippine fishermen. The native women make use of it in the preparation of a dessert much like gelatine.

Ninety per cent. of the world's supply of cloves comes from the Zanzibar Archipelago, but much of the crop is lost through inefficient harvesting methods.

Aluminum is one of the most abundant of metals and ranks third among the elements which compose the crust of the earth, being exceeded only by oxygen and silicon.

The limit of the carrying power of thunder is about 15 miles, while twice that number of miles is not considered any great distance for the sounds of battle to travel.

For signaling time to vessels there are two lights in the Lisbon harbor which are automatically illuminated as the hour is about to end and are extinguished on the second of the new hour.

Polar Bears in the Water. Polar bears enjoy a bath for the sake of cleanliness as well as for swimming and hunting. At a certain zoological garden when the polar bear's bath was being filled with fresh water it would stand with its mouth open, letting the water run through the jaws, and when the bath was full would play all kinds of tricks, revelling in the water. One of its antics was to float on its back in the water and then catch hold of its heels with its fore paws and roll over in a ball. It would also turn over backward on the edge and fall in with a big splash.

Geordie and the German Bullet. Two Tyne-side pitmen in the North-umbrian Fusiliers were doing fatigue work behind the lines when a stray bullet chanced to hit one, going right through his hand and lodging itself in the thigh of the other. In hospital their wounds were attended to, and as is the case when a bullet is extracted from a soldier the doctor invariably returns it to his patient as a keepsake. Unfortunately, in this instance this practice nearly ended in a free fight. Joe said: "Whey, I we hit first; the bullet passed through ma hand first, so I shud hev the bullet!" His "pal" Geordie replied, with a rueful look at his wounded thigh: "Aye, yer wor hit first right eneef; but I stopped her. If ye wanted the bullet, why did ye not keep it, man, when ye had it?"—Newcastle Weekly Chronicle.

The fearful unbelief is unbelief in yourself.—Carlyle.

Wigg—I took that Chicago girl out for a walk, but she soon got tired. Wigg—Which simply proves that the girl with the largest feet doesn't always cover the most ground.

can think of your spirit without clothing, without furniture, you can out the fastest motor—rise above the most daring birdman, and be absolutely safe. Mountains, oceans, earthquakes, icebergs are nothing to you. Does the eagle in his flight study how he may cross a river? You have no care, no fear, no danger, your agility is past finding out, and they say a thousand spirits can dance on the point of a needle.

Come, sail in this beautiful yacht, drop anchor in this beautiful bay, hoist your signals, put yourself in communication with this multitudinous world, pure, brave, victorious. There are spirits bearing the burning bliss of the inner circle of the most adorable Presence. You, too, may come and find a welcome, an open door, and nothing to pay; why, take care that the one who has far less money than you does not glide in and get ahead of you, and rise above you in the true and enduring exaltation.

Historic Water Clock.

In the days of the Roman empire the water clock was nothing more than a vase, with a small opening in the bottom, through which the water dripped at a known rate. This gave the name clepsydra, or water stealer, to the kind of clock which preceded both the pendulum and the spiral spring. Of all the clepsydras of history the most remarkable was the one sent to Charlemagne by Haroun-al-Raschid. It had twelve gages, behind which were as many brass balls as the number of the hour indicated. As the gage opened the balls struck the hour by falling on a metal base. At 12 o'clock tiny horsemen issued from all the open gages, made the circuit around the disk, put the balls back and closed the gates, all by means of the delicate and complex mechanism that was run by water pressure. It was a sample of the state of culture in Baghdad in 786 A. D.

SCIENTIFIC JOTTINGS.

There are about 1,300 gas plants in the United States. A condor can exist without food for 40 days and an eagle 20 days. Serbia is said to lead in centenarians, and Ireland is a close second. The centennial of gas lighting in the United States has just taken place. There are 2,800 women working as guards on the railroads of Germany. The first experiment in Japan in the manufacture of artificial silk is being tried at Yonezawa.

The perfume industry of Italy annually makes use of 1,860 tons of orange blossoms and 1,000 tons of roses.

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MARKET REPORTS

TORONTO MARKETS

FARMERS' MARKET.

Table with columns for Dairy Products, Eggs, Live Poultry, Turkeys, Ducks, Spring Chickens, and various meats. Prices are listed in dollars and cents.

MEATS—WHOLESALE.

Table listing wholesale prices for Beef, Pork, Mutton, and other meats.

SUGAR—MARKET.

Table listing market prices for various types of sugar.

LIVE STOCK.

Table listing prices for various types of live stock including cattle, sheep, and pigs.

OTHER MARKETS.

WINNIPEG GRAIN EXCHANGE.

Table showing grain exchange prices for wheat, oats, and other grains.

GRAIN AT MINNEAPOLIS.

Table showing grain prices at Minneapolis.

GRAIN AT DULUTH.

Table showing grain prices at Duluth.

CHEESE MARKETS.

Table showing cheese market prices for various types of cheese.

CHICAGO LIVE STOCK.

Table showing live stock prices in Chicago.

BUFFALO LIVE STOCK.

Table showing live stock prices in Buffalo.

LIVERPOOL MARKETS.

Table showing market prices in Liverpool.

Fragments of Guineas.

Few geographical names have in turn swollen and shrunk in importance as "Guinea" has. Originally this or something like this appears to have been the name of a forgotten little town and "kingdom" in the Niger region. Then the name expanded in European use to signify everything from the coast opposite the Canaries to the boundary of Southwest Africa and gave us not only the coin called after its gold and the guinea fowl, but also, by a natural error, the "guinea pig," really the Guinea pig.

Whoever lives true life will love true love.—Mrs. Browning.