

Week 33: Aug. 18 (Aug. 11–Aug. 17)

- Begin the book of Nehemiah, who served as governor, while Ezra served as priest, in the post-Exile era
- Rebuilding continues, both Temple and city of Jerusalem
- Then Nehemiah and Ezra turn their attention to the Book of the Law. They gather the people in the square and read from the book, with Ezra standing on a platform, and the Levites helping with interpretation. Here we have our model for worship: reading from the Word, with interpretation, “making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read”
- Sermons today, though, are shorter! “Ezra read aloud from daybreak till noon....”
- The Israelites renew their covenant, including bringing their first-fruits and their tithes. One further promise: “we will not neglect the house of our God”, a promise to keep up with maintenance of the Temple
- Paul: “The wife does not have authority over her own body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife.”
- Paul’s concerns are two: (1) unfaithfulness to God and to one’s spouse, and (2) giving in to lust of any kind
- Paul believed that Jesus’ return was imminent: “The time is short...For this world in its present form is passing away”
- “Knowledge puffs up while love builds up. Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know.”
- Paul also believes that those who do the work of the Lord should be fairly compensated. “If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn’t we have it all the more?... The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.”
- Paul comes back to a crucial point: “‘I have the right to do anything’, you say - but not everything is beneficial...not everything is constructive. No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.”
- Paul is patriarchal: “But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man...[Man] is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man.”
- Psalm 31:24 - “Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord”

- Psalm 33:16 - “No king is saved by the size of his army, no warrior escapes by his great strength. A horse is a vain hope for deliverance.”
- Psalm 34:18 - “The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit”
- Proverbs 21:13 - “Whoever shuts their ears to the cry of the poor will also cry out and not be answered.”
- Proverbs 21:17 - “Whoever loves pleasure will become poor; whoever loves wine and olive oil will never be rich.”