

Week 28: July 14 (July 7–July 13)

- Do you remember the fleeting popularity of the “Prayer of Jabez”? (1 Chronicles 4:10/July 7/p. 621): “Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain.”
- Paul adamant: “I have done nothing wrong against the Jewish law or against the temple or against Caesar.” He then appeals to Caesar; begins his journey to Rome
- Switches yet again to “we” as Paul begins his long journey
- Paul and all on board shipwrecked on Malta
- Finally makes it to Rome; Paul assembles the Jewish leaders, who say to him, “We want to hear what your views are, for we know that people everywhere are talking against this sect.”
- Paul final words to them were probably not the most tactful: “You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving” (quoting Isaiah)... “Therefore, I want you to know that God’s salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!”
- Paul carries on his work for another 2 years, the text tells us, but tells us nothing more. We’ve nothing definitive about Paul’s death.
- We begin Paul’s letter to the Romans, his longest and most deeply theological writing
- Paul writes of Jesus that he, “through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead.” Much confusion in the first few centuries about the person of Christ - Fully human? Fully divine? Born human but then made divine later? If later, when - baptism, transfiguration? Compromise: human from the neck down, divine from the head up?
- “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile”
- “the righteous will live by faith”
- “Since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse”
- Those who refused to see were then given over by God to “shameful lusts”
- What does the text for July 13 (Romans 1:26-27/p. 644) say about homosexuality? Does the text condemn it? What is Paul’s point? What is his concern?
- A few verses down: “they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy”

- Psalm 8: “You have made [human beings] a little lower than the angels [and] put everything under their feet” What responsibility do we have to God’s creatures? Any? To be given “dominion” means...?
- Proverbs 18:21– “The tongue has the power of life and death”
- Proverbs 18:23 - “The poor plead for mercy, but the rich answer harshly”