

### January 7th Readings

[EZRA 8:21-9:15](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 5:1-13](#)

[PSALM 31:1-8](#)

[PROVERBS 21:1-2](#)

Paul provides cautions to Christians in the reading in 1 Corinthians 5. We need to be careful with what we allow each other to do. Paul provides several examples of willful sins that people can commit, but makes a careful note that we should only judge those who are among the brethren. God will judge those who have not obeyed Christ. We need to keep an eye out for those among us, not to be accusers, but to try and guide them back to the proper path. It is when they refuse to follow what the Bible says that we need to be wary of fellowshiping with them. As the old saying goes, one bad apple ruins the bunch, so we should be on guard to ensure the integrity of the Church.

### January 8th Readings

[EZRA 10:1-44](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 6:1-20](#)

[PSALM 31:9-18](#)

[PROVERBS 21:3](#)

David tells a powerful story with the portion of the Psalm that is in today's reading. Enemies are closing in on all sides, his friends have abandoned him, and he is seemingly alone. How many of us have felt this way in our lives? It seems a bleak existence in the beginning of the reading, but at the end we can see where David's heart lies. He says that he trusts in God, and that God's love is everlasting. What a powerful reminder! No matter our circumstances, God is there with us, and if we trust in him, then he will see us through.

### January 9th Readings

[NEHEMIAH 1:1-3:14](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 7:1-24](#)

[PSALM 31:19-24](#)

[PROVERBS 21:4](#)

Many people wonder, why has God allowed me to get to this place in my life? God's plan for each person has the ultimate goal of bringing them into a relationship with him, and for them to spread his word. Look at the start of the story of Nehemiah. The Israelites had been in captivity for many years, and the walls of Jerusalem had crumbled. Nehemiah was bitterly sad at the news of his people. God had a plan though! Through Nehemiah's position as the King's cupbearer, he was able to influence the king and get permission and resources to rebuild Jerusalem! In the same way, God provides opportunities for us each day, we just have to be willing to step out in faith and act on them.

#### January 10th Readings

[NEHEMIAH 3:15-5:13](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 7:25-40](#)

[PSALM 32:1-11](#)

[PROVERBS 21:5-7](#)

How important is it for us to confess our sins to God? Doesn't he already know everything we've done? David talks about the benefits of confession to God in the Psalm for today's reading. Before he confessed his sins, it was a heavy weight on his mind. However, once he opened himself to God and confessed, God forgave him and lifted that weight from his shoulders. In the same way, when we repent our sins to God, he forgives us and allows us to be cleansed from our iniquity. We don't deserve this, but his love for us is so great that he will always forgive us if we ask.

#### January 11th Readings

[NEHEMIAH 5:14-7:73](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 8:1-13](#)

[PSALM 33:1-11](#)

[PROVERBS 21:8-10](#)

What is the difference between knowledge and love? Paul describes the difference in a situation that many early Christians found themselves in. Was eating meat sacrificed to idols wrong? Through knowledge we can understand that the meat is just meat, no matter what it was used for. However, some early Christians had difficulty separating from their previous

pagan practices, and felt it was wrong to eat this meat. Knowledge states that we can eat, so they should know better. Love has compassion on them, and avoids doing anything that might make a fellow Christian struggle. Such is the same for us today, there are things that we may be allowed to do, but we have to be mindful about how it will impact our fellow Christians. The goal for all of us should be to help each other get to Heaven, and anything that gets in the way of that should be put aside.

#### January 12th Readings

[NEHEMIAH 7:73-9:21](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 9:1-18](#)

[PSALM 33:12-22](#)

[PROVERBS 21:11-12](#)

What do we put our trust in? Is it our bank account? Our nice job, or family? David describes in the Psalm for today that God is the only one that can protect us. All the things of this earth pass away, and they can only provide temporary comfort. God is the true source of our salvation, and if we trust in him then he will protect us from the schemes of the Devil.

#### January 13th Readings

[NEHEMIAH 9:22-10:39](#)

[1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-10:13](#)

[PSALM 34:1-10](#)

[PROVERBS 21:13](#)

The Proverb for today provides a valuable lesson for us in regards to how we help other people. Jesus also talks about this as the second most important commandment. When we are generous and help out those that need it, we are fulfilling God's word. In addition to this, when circumstances change, people will also be much more likely to want to help us out. Now, this shouldn't be the motivation for helping others out, but it is a natural consequence that when we love other people and tend to their needs, when the tables turn, they will be more likely to do likewise.