

**Prayer and Fasting:
The Heart of the Matter**

Isaiah 58

Isaiah 58

...

2 Yet they seek Me daily,
And delight to know My ways,
As a nation that did righteousness,
And did not forsake the ordinance of their God.
They ask of Me the ordinances of justice;
They take delight in approaching God.

3 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen?
Why have we afflicted our souls, and You take no notice?'

Isaiah 58

... "In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure,
And exploit all your laborers.

4 Indeed you fast for strife and debate,
And to strike with the fist of wickedness.

You will not fast as you do this day,
To make your voice heard on high.

Isaiah 58

5 Is it a fast that I have chosen,
A day for a man to afflict his soul?
Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush,
And to spread out sackcloth and ashes?
Would you call this a fast
And an acceptable day to the Lord?

Isaiah 58

6 "Is this not the fast that I have chosen:
To loose the bonds of wickedness,
To undo the heavy burdens,
To let the oppressed go free,
And that you break every yoke?

7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out;
When you see the naked, that you cover him,
And not hide yourself from your own flesh?

Isaiah 58

8 Then your light shall break forth like the morning,
Your healing shall spring forth speedily,
And your righteousness shall go before you;
The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
9 Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'

Isaiah 58

..."If you take away the yoke from your midst,
The pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
10 If you extend your soul to the hungry
And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in
the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday.
11 The Lord will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul
in drought, And strengthen your bones;
You shall be like a watered garden,
And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.

Isaiah 58

12 Those from among you
Shall build the old waste places;
You shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach,
The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.

Isaiah 58

13 "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the Lord honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words,
14 Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord; And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken."