

Fast Forward from Past Failures

Text: Isaiah 58:6-12 (NLT)

6 “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
to loose the chains of injustice
and untie the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?

7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—
when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn,
and your healing will quickly appear;
then your righteousness[a] will go before you,
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

“If you do away with the yoke of oppression,
with the pointing finger and malicious talk,

10 and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the oppressed,
then your light will rise in the darkness,
and your night will become like the noonday.

11 The Lord will guide you always;
he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land
and will strengthen your frame.

You will be like a well-watered garden,
like a spring whose waters never fail.

12 Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins
and will raise up the age-old foundations;
you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls,
Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.

Background:

A prophet is called to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. So Isaiah is afflicting those among God's people who are comfortable. God tells the prophet, "Shout with the voice of a trumpet blast" (Isa. 58:1). He describes their failure as a nation: They have embraced a wicked lifestyle, but they have kept up their religious activities. They pray, but they only offer empty prayers.

They fast, but it is a waste of time. So the prophet is called by God to say, "Enough of this." Every time we try to hide behind how much we pray or read the Bible or how often we go to church, we need to remember this: **God sees through it all and deals with what really matters—our hearts.**

How to Fast forward from Past Failures:

- Humble Ourselves - Ezra 8:21 (NIV)

²¹ There, by the Ahava Canal, I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions

[*The New International Version*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ezz 8:21.

- Stop Hiding and Holding onto things - Isaiah 58:7 (NLT)

7 Is it not to **share** your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—
when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

- Receive Healing, Refreshing and Restoration - Isaiah 58:8-12

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and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

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