

The Chosen Fast

Isaiah 58:3–12 · This week: The Redeemer Shall Come to Zion, Isaiah 58–66

In the manual: **Come, Follow Me lesson 42, “The Redeemer Shall Come to Zion,” on Gospel Library**



START

The people in Isaiah 58 had a complaint. They had been fasting, and they wanted to know why God had not noticed.

READ TOGETHER

They skipped meals and bowed their heads like reeds (Isaiah 58:5). On those same fast days they quarreled and even got into fistfights (Isaiah 58:4).

ISAIAH 58:6–9

⁶Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? ⁷Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? ⁸Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rearward. ⁹Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

WHAT IT TEACHES

In verses 6 and 7, the Lord describes the fast he has chosen. It lifts heavy burdens off people. It feeds the hungry, brings the poor into our homes, and covers the naked. The fast he chooses turns our hunger into help for someone else.

Latter-day Saints fast once a month, usually for two meals, and give a fast offering to help people in need. President Henry B. Eyring told of a grandson

who had always found a full day of fasting too hard. When a school friend lost a young cousin, the boy asked his mother whether it would help his grieving friend if he kept fasting. President Eyring said the principle of the fast had been planted in the boy's heart.

President Eyring also taught where our fast offerings go. “Part of your fast offering and mine this month will be used to help someone, somewhere, whose relief the Lord will feel as if it were His own.”

President Henry B. Eyring, “Is Not This the Fast That I Have Chosen?” General conference, April 2015

Jesus taught the same thing. “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40). Then come the promises in verses 8 and 9. Our light breaks forth “as the morning,” and when we call, the Lord answers, “Here I am.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Who do we know who could use our fasting and prayers this month? How might fasting for them change the way the fast feels?

TAKE TO CHURCH

The fast the Lord chooses turns our hunger into help for someone else. When we fast that way and call on him, he answers, “Here I am.”