

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.”

An Intercessor



Isaiah 59:1–21 · This week: The Redeemer Shall Come to Zion, Isaiah 58–66

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START

In Isaiah 59:16, the Lord looks for someone to step in and save his people. He finds no one, so he does it himself.

READ TOGETHER

The chapter opens by saying the Lord’s hand is strong enough to save and his ear can hear. The problem was sin, which had separated the people from God (Isaiah 59:1–2). In verse 10, they feel their way along the wall like people who cannot see.

ISAIAH 59:16–17

16 And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. **17** For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.

ISAIAH 59:20

20 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

WHAT IT TEACHES

An intercessor is someone who steps between two sides and pleads for one of them. No one in Israel could do that, because everyone needed saving. So the Lord’s own arm “brought salvation.”

In our day the Savior has told us what he says as he pleads our cause with the Father. He points to his own suffering and death and asks the Father to spare those who believe on his name (Doctrine and Covenants 45:3–5).

Verse 17 shows him dressed for the work, with righteousness as a breastplate and “an helmet of salvation upon his head.” Paul told the Saints to put on the same breastplate and helmet (Ephesians 6:14–17). We wear his armor, and he does the saving.

Verse 20 gives this week’s title. “The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression.” He comes to people who turn toward him, and verse 21 promises that his Spirit and his words will stay with their children “for ever.”

TALK ABOUT IT

When has someone stood up for you or spoken up for you? How does it feel to know the Savior pleads for you with the Father?

TAKE TO CHURCH

No one else could step in to save us, so the Savior did. He still pleads our cause with the Father.

Beauty for Ashes



Isaiah 61:1–11 · This week: The Redeemer Shall Come to Zion, Isaiah 58–66

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START

Early in his ministry, Jesus stood up in the synagogue in Nazareth, the town where he grew up, and read from Isaiah 61. Then he sat down and said, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears” (Luke 4:16–21).

READ TOGETHER

In a synagogue, a reader stood to read the scriptures and sat down to teach. After Jesus sat down, everyone in the room kept their eyes on him (Luke 4:20).

ISAIAH 61:1–3

¹The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; ²To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; ³To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Read verse 1 as Jesus describing his own work. He came to heal the brokenhearted, to free the captives, and to open the prison for those who are bound. He said so in front of the neighbors who had watched him grow up.

Verse 3 promises “beauty for ashes.” In Isaiah’s day, people in deep grief dressed in sackcloth and ashes, as Mordecai did in Esther 4:1. The Hebrew word for “beauty” here means a headdress, the kind a bridegroom wore on his wedding day (Isaiah 61:10). The Lord takes away the ashes and crowns his people instead.

He also gives “the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.” The people who receive these gifts become “trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.” He often gives them through his people. At baptism we promise to mourn with those that mourn and comfort those who need comfort (Mosiah 18:8–9).

TALK ABOUT IT

What “ashes” might someone in our family or ward be carrying right now? When has the Savior given you something good in place of something hard?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Jesus read Isaiah 61 and said it was about him. He still gives beauty for ashes and joy for mourning.

Thy Light Is Come



Isaiah 60:1–20; 62:1–4 · This week: The Redeemer Shall Come to Zion, Isaiah 58–66

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START

Isaiah 60 opens with a sunrise. “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”

READ TOGETHER

Verse 2 says darkness will cover the earth. Isaiah saw the Lord’s people as a lit place in that darkness, with other nations coming to their light (Isaiah 60:3).

ISAIAH 60:1–3

¹Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. ²For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. ³And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

ISAIAH 60:19–20

¹⁹The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. ²⁰Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Notice where the light comes from. Zion shines because the glory of the Lord has risen on her. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world: he that

followeth me shall not walk in darkness” (John 8:12).

In verses 19 and 20, Isaiah looks further ahead. A day will come when the sun and moon are not needed, because “the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light,” and the days of mourning will end. John saw that city in vision and wrote that “the Lamb is the light thereof” (Revelation 21:23).

In Isaiah 62:4, the Lord gives Zion new names. She will no longer be called Forsaken. She will be called Hephzi-bah, “for the Lord delighteth in thee.”

Our part is to reflect his light. The risen Savior told the Nephites to hold up their light, and he said he is the light they should hold up (3 Nephi 18:24). When we act the way he did, people around us can see him.

TALK ABOUT IT

Where do you see the Savior’s light in the people around you? What is one way you could let his light show through you this week?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Zion shines because the Lord’s glory rises on her. We shine the same way, by reflecting the Savior.

The Winepress Alone



Isaiah 63:1–9 · This week: The Redeemer Shall Come to Zion, Isaiah 58–66

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START

Isaiah sees someone coming from the direction of Edom in bright red clothes. He asks why the clothes are red, like the clothes of a man who has been treading grapes (Isaiah 63:1–2).

READ TOGETHER

To make wine, people poured grapes into a pit cut in the rock and stomped on them with bare feet. The juice stained their clothes red. In Doctrine and Covenants 133:46–51, the Lord says he will be red in his apparel when he comes again.

ISAIAH 63:1–3

¹Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

²Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? ³I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

ISAIAH 63:9

⁹In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

WHAT IT TEACHES

The answer in verse 3 is “I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me.” The Doctrine and Covenants says the winepress he trod alone held the fierce wrath of Almighty God (Doctrine

and Covenants 76:107). He took on himself what should have fallen on us.

That suffering began in Gethsemane, where his sweat was “as it were great drops of blood” (Luke 22:44). The name Gethsemane means *oil press*, a place where olives were crushed. He asked Peter, James, and John to watch with him, and three times he found them asleep (Matthew 26:36–45). On the cross he cried, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46).

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught that “because Jesus walked such a long, lonely path utterly alone, we do not have to do so.”

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, “None Were with Him,” General conference, April 2009

Verse 9 tells why he did it. “In his love and in his pity he redeemed them.” Whenever his people suffered, “he was afflicted” too, and he carried them “all the days of old.”

TALK ABOUT IT

Verse 7 says, “I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord.” What kindness from the Lord could each of us mention tonight?

TAKE TO CHURCH

The Savior stood alone in Gethsemane so that we never have to. In all our afflictions, he is afflicted too.

A New Earth



Isaiah 64:1–8; 65:17–25 · This week: The Redeemer Shall Come to Zion, Isaiah 58–66

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START

Isaiah’s last chapters look ahead to the day Jesus Christ comes again. In Isaiah 64:1 he prays, “Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down.”

READ TOGETHER

Latter-day Saints believe that Christ will reign in person on the earth and that the earth will be renewed (Articles of Faith 1:10). His thousand-year reign is called the Millennium. Isaiah 65:17–25 describes life in that day.

ISAIAH 65:17–19

17 For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. **18** But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. **19** And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

ISAIAH 65:24–25

24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. **25** The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Count the words about joy in verses 18 and 19. The people rejoice, and so does the Lord. “I will rejoice in

Jerusalem, and joy in my people.” No one will hear the sound of crying.

People will build houses and live in them, and plant vineyards and eat the fruit (Isaiah 65:21–22). In Isaiah’s day, armies often took what families had worked for. In the Millennium, what people build will stay theirs.

Verse 24 is about prayer. “Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” In verse 25, even the wolf and the lamb eat together, and “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.” That peace comes from the Prince of Peace reigning in person.

Isaiah 64:8 shows how to get ready. “We are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.” People who let the Lord shape them now will be glad to see him come.

TALK ABOUT IT

What do you look forward to most about the day the Savior comes again? What could we do now to be ready to meet him with joy?

TAKE TO CHURCH

When the Savior reigns, even the wolf and the lamb will be at peace. We get ready by letting him shape us now, like clay in a potter’s hands.

Call It a Delight

Isaiah 58:13–14; 66:23 · This week: The Redeemer Shall Come to Zion, Isaiah 58–66

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START

The last chapter of Isaiah pictures all people coming to worship the Lord “from one sabbath to another” (Isaiah 66:23). Today is one of those Sabbaths.

READ TOGETHER

Back in Isaiah 58, right after the verses on fasting, the Lord teaches his people how to keep the Sabbath. He had already called the Sabbath a sign between himself and his people (Exodus 31:13).

ISAIAH 58:13–14

13 If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: **14** Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

WHAT IT TEACHES

Verse 13 asks us to “turn away thy foot from the sabbath,” stepping back from our own plans and pleasures for a day. Then it asks us to “call the sabbath a delight.”

President Russell M. Nelson said that as a young man he studied lists of things to do and not do on the Sabbath. Later he learned from the scriptures that his conduct on the Sabbath was a sign between him and God. “When I had to make a decision whether or not an activity was appropriate for the Sabbath, I simply asked myself, ‘What sign do I want to give to God?’”

President Russell M. Nelson, “The Sabbath Is a Delight,” General conference, April 2015

Jesus kept the Sabbath by blessing people. In a synagogue on the Sabbath, he healed a man’s withered hand and asked whether it was lawful “to do good on the sabbath days” (Mark 3:1–5). He taught that “the sabbath was made for man” (Mark 2:27).

Verse 14 gives the promise. “Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord.” The day becomes a delight because we spend it with him.

TALK ABOUT IT

What sign do you want our family’s Sabbath to give to God? What is one thing we could add today to make it more of a delight?

TAKE TO CHURCH

Isaiah calls the Sabbath a delight. It becomes one when we give the day to the Lord and spend it blessing others, as Jesus did.