

Isaiah 58:1-12

- 1 "Cry loudly, do not hold back;
Raise your voice like a trumpet,
And declare to My people their transgression
And to the house of Jacob their sins.
- 2 "Yet they seek Me day by day and delight to know My ways,
As a nation that has done righteousness
And has not forsaken the ordinance of their God.
They ask Me *for* just decisions,
They delight in the nearness of God.
- 3 'Why have we fasted and You do not see?
Why have we humbled ourselves and You do not notice?'
Behold, on the day of your fast you find *your* desire,
And drive hard all your workers.
- 4 "Behold, you fast for contention and strife and to strike with a wicked fist.
You do not fast like *you do* today to make your voice heard on high.
- 5 "Is it a fast like this which I choose, a day for a man to humble himself?
Is it for bowing one's head like a reed
And for spreading out sackcloth and ashes as a bed?
Will you call this a fast, even an acceptable day to the LORD?
- 6 "Is this not the fast which I choose,
To loosen the bonds of wickedness,
To undo the bands of the yoke,
And to let the oppressed go free
And break every yoke?
- 7 "Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry
And bring the homeless poor into the house;
When you see the naked, to cover him;
And not to hide yourself from your own flesh?
- 8 "Then your light will break out like the dawn,
And your recovery will speedily spring forth;
And your righteousness will go before you;
The glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.
- 9 "Then you will call, and the LORD will answer;
You will cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.'
If you remove the yoke from your midst,
The pointing of the finger and speaking wickedness,
- 10 And if you give yourself to the hungry
And satisfy the desire of the afflicted,

Then your light will rise in darkness
 And your gloom *will become* like midday.

11 “And the LORD will continually guide you,
 And satisfy your desire in scorched places,
 And give strength to your bones;
 And you will be like a watered garden,
 And like a spring of water whose waters do not fail.

12 “Those from among you will rebuild the ancient ruins;
 You will raise up the age-old foundations;
 And you will be called the repairer of the breach,
 The restorer of the streets in which to dwell.

Zechariah 7:1-14

1 In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth *day* of the ninth month, *which is* Chislev.

2 Now *the town of* Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regemmelech and their men to ^aseek the favor of the LORD,

3 speaking to the priests who belong to the house of the LORD of hosts, and to the prophets, saying, “Shall I weep in the fifth month and abstain, as I have done these many years?”

4 Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying,

5 “Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, ‘When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months these seventy years, was it actually for Me that you fasted?’

6 ‘When you eat and drink, do you not eat for yourselves and do you not drink for yourselves?’

7 ‘Are not *these* the words which the LORD proclaimed by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous along with its cities around it, and the Negev and the foothills were inhabited?’ ”

8 Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah saying,

9 “Thus has the LORD of hosts said, ‘Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother;

10 and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.’ ”

11 “But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from hearing.

12 “They made their hearts *like* flint so that they could not hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts.

13 “And just as He called and they would not listen, so they called and I would not listen,” says the LORD of hosts;

14 “but I scattered them with a storm wind among all the nations whom they have not known. Thus the land is desolated behind them so that no one went back and forth, for they made the pleasant land desolate.”