

LOOKING AT ISAIAH 58

Verse 1	<p>“Cry out loud don’t hold back. Tell my people their transgression.” NIV: “Shout it aloud.” Declare to my people their rebellion. Amplified: “Cry aloud, spare not” *****</p> <p>The word “aloud” or “out loud” literally means: “with the throat”, “with full voice”...loud enough to call attention. God had something to say about their fasting and He wanted them to hear. It apparently had reached the point, He could not allow what they were doing to keep going on as it had been. He wanted them to know what they were doing was meaningless! *****</p> <p><u>Your Thoughts:</u></p>
Verse 2	<p>“They seek Me day after day and delight to know My ways, like a nation that does what is right and does not abandon the justice of their God. They ask Me for righteous judgments, they delight in the nearness of God.” *****</p> <p>As far as God was concerned, what they were doing was only an outward show. Were they thinking that by what they were doing would lay god under obligation to their fasting? If so, He was about to straighten that view out. People want God’s presence . They want to hear from Him but continue to keep their own ways/sins in their lives. They don’t seem concerned about “ridding it from their lives.” That is an indicator of no fear of God. There is great hypocrisy in their lives. They just go through the motions (externally). God always looks beyond the external! He sees and knows ALL that is there! *****</p> <p><u>Your Thoughts:</u></p>
Verse 3	<p>“Why have we fasted but you have not seen? We have denied ourselves but You haven’t noticed.” *****</p> <p>They were deceived. They were fasting with the wrong motives. The Lord answers: “It means nothing. You do as you please and go about business as usual.” The principle of a fast should be that an individual is so concerned about his or her condition (or situation) that ones physical necessities or other important things fade into the background. The process leads to humbling oneself before God out of desperation for Him to move in that particular situation. *****</p> <p><u>Your Thoughts:</u></p>

<p>Verse 4 (Amp)</p>	<p>“(The facts are that) you fast only for strife and debate and to smite with the fist of wickedness. Fasting as you do today will not cause your voice to be heard on high.”</p> <p>*****</p> <p>Fasting as they were doing, the Lord says they should not expect their voice to be heard. Their fasting was meaningless especially when their relationships with others was not right. (look at : Matthew 5:23,24) Go and make it right and then come back.</p> <p>These are hindrances that prevent access to the Father. Were they even entering the fast already deceived with believing they were right and wanting God’s intervention? Have you ever experienced a time of fasting and perhaps there were some situations in your life that were not pleasing to the Lord?</p> <p>*****</p> <p>Your Thoughts:</p>
<p>Verse 5</p>	<p>The Lord asks a question: “Will the fast I choose be like this?” (HCSB) “Is this the kind of fast I have chosen?” (NIV) “Is such a fast as yours what I have chosen?” (Amp.) The Amplified goes on to ask the question “Is true fasting merely mechanical?”</p> <p>*****</p> <p>The pain felt by abstinence is not the end to be sought. That is only of value when it leads us to amend our ways. The Lord states they fast for strife and debate. How often this is: to implore God’s blessing on wars carried on for purposes of wrath and ambition. Their fasts (for whatever reason) did not alter their poor relationships with others. they were disregarding other peoples’ needs.</p> <p>*****</p> <p>Your Thoughts:</p>

<p>Verse 6 (Amp)</p>	<p>“(Rather) is not this the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the bands of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break ever (enslaving) yoke.” *****</p> <p>Their fast days did not mean a thing when day in and day out they were doing things which oppressed others/when fellow believers were in need and they did nothing to help them. “bands of wickedness” refers to dissolving every tie where one has unjustly bound his fellow man.</p> <p>All of a sudden going into fasting means nothing when day in and day out our lives are not obedient to the Lord and applying His Word in our lives. Why should we think that living in this way and then coming before the Lord expecting something from Him? We are not living our lives in obedience to His Word. It is me choosing what I will and won’t do. Look at Acts 8:23. Fasting was to encourage a person to respond positively to God’s commands. *****</p> <p>Your Thoughts:</p>
<p>Verse 7</p>	<p>The Lord tells us how He looks at it. Write down HIS LIST!</p>
<p>Verse 8</p>	<p>“The shall your light break forth like the morning, and your healing (your restoration and the power of a new life) shall spring forth speedily; your righteousness (your rightness, your justice, and your right relationship with God) shall go before you (conducting you to peace and prosperity) and the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.” *****</p> <p>Spiritual restoration would come quickly if we are living righteously each and every day. If people had inner righteousness (revealed in outward acts of justice and mercy...verses 6 & 7) then the Lord would bless them. Also refer to Deut. 28:1-14. Answered prayer would be another result.</p> <p>The glory of the Lord your rear guard: just like the pillar of cloud and fire which went behind Israel, separating them from their Egyptian pursuers. *****</p> <p>Your Thoughts:</p>

<p>Verse 9 & 10</p>	<p>The Lord goes on to say further what He will do when we come before Him in the appropriate manner. List here what further we will see:</p>
<p>Verse 11 (Amp)</p>	<p>“And the Lord shall guide you continually and satisfy you in drought and in dry places and make strong your bones. And you shall be like a watered garden and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.”</p> <p>*****</p> <p>drought speaks of parched places make strong your bones: speaks of strength watered garden : speaks of fertility</p> <p>*****</p> <p>Your Thoughts:</p>
<p>Verse 12</p>	<p>“And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of (buildings that have laid waste for) many generations; and you shall be called Repairer of the Breach, Restorer of Streets to Dwell In.”</p> <p>*****</p> <p>Repairer: one who restores damaged things Breach: a break; an infraction or violation of a law or obligation</p> <p>*****</p> <p>Your Thoughts:</p>
<p>Verse 13 & 14</p>	<p>“If you keep from desecrating the Sabbath, from doing whatever you want on My holy day; if you call the Sabbath a delight, & the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, seeking your own pleasure or taking too much...then you will delight yourself in the Lord.”</p>
	<p>Sabbath: means intermission It was instituted at Creation: Genesis 2:2,3...set apart as His own The Sabbath in the O.T. was literally carried out as a rest/intermission from any kind of work. Symbolic of that to come. Heb. 4:9-10: A Sabbath’s rest remains therefore for God’s people. For the person who has entered His rest has rested from His own works, just as God did from His. Isa. 58:13 & 14: if we lay aside doing our own thing, laying aside ourselves, and walk in God’s ways then we will delight ourselves in the Lord & He will make us ride on the high places.</p>

To sum up: God is always looking for those who place Him first and not doing as we wish/ going our own way/doing our own pleasure. What a word for even us today as the society we live in is so promoting of self...what feels good to me....looking out for me as number one. Let's not get caught up in that trap! It is a trap when it comes to the things of God! If we are caught up in any way, let us be on our face before the Lord repenting so that His blessing will be on all that we do and our hearts will be motivated in the right way.

Your Thoughts: