

The Lord reminds the people that righteousness is about justice more than correct religious observance. Fasting and worship that is accompanied by oppression are not righteous or pleasing to God.

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah: 58:1-9a

Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments,
they delight to draw near to God.

"Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?"

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,
and oppress all your workers.

Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.

Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?

Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

Psalm 112:1-9 (*8am spoken, 10am sung*)

¹ Hallelujah! Happy are they who fear the Lord *
and have great delight in his commandments!

² Their descendants will be mighty in the land; *
the generation of the upright will be blessed.

³ Wealth and riches will be in their house, *
and their righteousness will last for ever.

⁴ Light shines in the darkness for the upright; *
the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.

⁵ It is good for them to be generous in lending *
and to manage their affairs with justice.

⁶ For they will never be shaken; *
the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.

⁷ They will not be afraid of any evil rumors; *
their heart is right;
they put their trust in the Lord.

⁸ Their heart is established and will not shrink, *
until they see their desire upon their enemies.

⁹ They have given freely to the poor, *
and their righteousness stands fast for ever;
they will hold up their head with honor.

Paul reminds the Corinthians that his proclamation was based upon the power of God rather than human wisdom and he encourages them to recognize the wisdom of God revealed through the Spirit.

A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians: 2:1-12

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written,

"What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the human heart conceived,

what God has prepared for those who love him”—these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.