

Bible chat week starting 5 2 23

'Shout it aloud, do not hold back.

Raise your voice like a trumpet.

*Declare to my people their rebellion
and to the descendants of Jacob their sins.*

*2 For day after day they seek me out;
they seem eager to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that does what is right
and has not forsaken the commands of its God.*

*They ask me for just decisions
and seem eager for God to come near them.*

*3 "Why have we fasted," they say,
"and you have not seen it?"*

*Why have we humbled ourselves,
and you have not noticed?"*

*'Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please
and exploit all your workers.*

*4 Your fasting ends in quarrelling and strife,
and in striking each other with wicked fists.*

*You cannot fast as you do today
and expect your voice to be heard on high.*

*5 Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,
only a day for people to humble themselves?*

*Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed
and for lying in sackcloth and ashes?*

*Is that what you call a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?*

6 'Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:

to loose the chains of injustice

and untie the cords of the yoke,

to set the oppressed free

and break every yoke?

*7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter –
when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?*

*8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn,
and your healing will quickly appear;
then your righteousness will go before you,
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.*

*9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;
you will cry for help, and he will say: here am I.*

*'If you do away with the yoke of oppression,
with the pointing finger and malicious talk,*

*10 and if you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the oppressed,
then your light will rise in the darkness,
and your night will become like the noonday.*

*11 The Lord will guide you always;
he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land
and will strengthen your frame.*

*You will be like a well-watered garden,
like a spring whose waters never fail.*

*12 Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins
and will raise up the age-old foundations;
you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls,
Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.*

*13 'If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath
and from doing as you please on my holy day,
if you call the Sabbath a delight
and the Lord's holy day honourable,
and if you honour it by not going your own way
and not doing as you please or speaking idle words,
14 then you will find your joy in the Lord,
and I will cause you to ride in triumph on the heights of the land
and to feast on the inheritance of your father Jacob.'*

For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

1. How does this passage of scripture make you feel?
2. Try to summarise it in one sentence.
3. Why is it that in biblical faith, worship and ethics are so closely related?
4. Is worship a transaction? If so, what transaction is going on? If not, what **is** worship then?
5. How do we keep our worship at Hearsall fresh? How can our worship flow out into ethical community living?
6. How might the vision of Isaiah 58 guide our development as a church?
7. In Matthew 5: 13 - 16, Jesus told his followers they were salt and light for the world. Discuss what these two metaphors might have meant in Jesus' day. What do they mean for us today?