

# Doctrinal Mastery: Isaiah 58:6–7

## The Blessings of a Proper Fast

*Isaiah proclaimed the Israelites' sins and hypocrisy, emphasizing their disobedience to the Lord's law of the fast. He corrected their false worship, and he taught about some purposes of fasting and about specific blessings that come through a sincere fast.*

## Possible Learning Activities

### Know the doctrine

Consider displaying the following scenario to help students assess their knowledge of the Lord's law of the fast. If needed, refer students to "Fast, Fasting" in the Guide to the Scriptures or "Fasting and Fast Offerings" in *True to the Faith: A Gospel Reference* ([2004], 66–69).

Two students could be asked to role-play the scenario in front of the class.

Alternatively, students could be grouped in pairs to role-play, allowing for more to actively participate. Regardless of which method you use, help all students reflect on their understanding of, experiences with, and questions about fasting.

Imagine you have a friend not of your faith staying with you over the first weekend of the month. At dinner, the topic of the upcoming fast Sunday is brought up, and your family discusses ideas or needs they are aware of to include in their fast. After the meal, your friend asks you about fasting, wondering what it is, why people fast, and how often they have to do it.

- How would you respond to your friend?

Reflect on your experiences with fasting and any questions you might have about the Lord's law of the fast. Seek inspiration from the Holy Ghost as you study this lesson for answers.

The prophet Isaiah taught about some of the purposes of fasting and some specific blessings that come through a sincere fast. Read Isaiah 58:6–7, looking for Isaiah's teachings about the blessings and purpose of fasting. Consider marking this doctrinal mastery passage in a distinctive way so you can locate it easily.

- What stands out to you from Isaiah's teachings about fasting?

In the following table are phrases Isaiah used to explain the blessings and purposes of fasting. Choose one of these phrases to study that you would like to understand better. Look up any words you may not know, and consider reading the cross-references listed. Then practice writing this specific blessing or purpose of fasting in your own words.

Consider displaying the following chart or creating it as a handout for students. Additional helps are available in the "Commentary and Background Information" section.

Blessings and Purposes of Fasting from Isaiah 58:6–7	How would you explain this in your own words?
"loose the bands of wickedness" (see also 2 Nephi 1:13)	
"undo the heavy burdens, ... that ye break every yoke" (see also Mosiah 23:12–13)	
"let the oppressed go free" (see also Mosiah 27:28–29)	

<p><i>“deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house ... that thou cover [the naked]; and ... hide not thyself from thine own flesh” (see also Malachi 3:8, 10; Alma 34:28; Doctrine and Covenants 104:18)</i></p>	
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Allow students to teach each other by sharing what they learned. Consider inviting them to make notes in their scripture margins or electronically in the Gospel Library app to clarify these phrases from Isaiah 58:6–7.

- What principle can we learn from Isaiah’s teachings in your own words?

One way students might state this principle in their own words is **fasting helps us repent and be forgiven of our sins and provides food and clothing for the hungry and the naked.**

- In what ways do you think the Lord’s law of fasting can teach us about Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ or bring us closer to Them?
- How is our fasting for others similar to what the Savior does for us? How might fasting consistently help us become more like Him?

### Practice application

Review the principles of acquiring spiritual knowledge by inviting students to select one of the specific principles to study: “Act in faith,” “Examine concepts and questions with an eternal perspective,” or “Seek further understanding through divinely appointed sources.” Have them review their chosen principle in the *Doctrinal Mastery Core Document* and then draw or create a picture using symbols that could be used to explain to someone what that principle is. Help students use their time wisely by giving them a time limit to study and prepare their visual representation. Invite a few students to share their visual and explain how it represents their chosen principle.

Imagine yourself as Sierra in the following situation:

Sierra was recently encouraged by her parents to start obeying the law of the fast by going without food or drink for two meals. Sierra believes in the principle of fasting but has some major reservations about it because she feels that it would be too difficult for her.

#### Act in faith

- If you were Sierra, what actions might you take to show the Lord you are acting in faith to overcome your concern?

#### Examine concepts and questions with an eternal perspective

- What do you know about the blessings and purposes the Lord gives for His law of the fast? How might understanding His purposes help you in this situation?
- How might the truths taught in Isaiah 58:6–7 help you see fasting the way the Lord sees it?

#### Seek further understanding through divinely appointed sources

In addition to Isaiah 58:6–7, consider additional divinely appointed sources that might help you in this situation. Use one of these resources to seek for help, considering how you might apply what you find.

- What additional divinely appointed sources did you use?
- What did you learn from these sources that might help you in your situation?

## Memorize the reference and key scripture phrase

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Write the reference and words for the key scripture phrase—*Isaiah 58:6–7: The blessings of a proper fast*—on the board in a scrambled order. Invite a student to write the words in the correct order along with the correct scripture reference, and have the class help. Then invite students to individually work on memorization.

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## Review the passage

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Have students review this reference and key scripture phrase in a lesson in the near future. Here is one possible way to do this:

Display the reference and key scripture phrase for Isaiah 58:6–7 with some words missing, similar to the following:

Isaiah \_\_: \_\_–\_\_ The \_\_\_\_\_ of a proper \_\_\_\_\_

Consider writing more than one version of this, with different words missing for students to fill in. After students have practiced this a few times, invite them to try to write or recite the entire scripture reference and key scripture phrase completely from memory.

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## Commentary and Background Information

### What are fast offerings?

Elder L. Tom Perry (1922–2015) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught about fasting and fast offerings:

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The longer I live, the more impressed I am with the Lord's system of caring for the poor and needy. Surely no man would think of such a simple yet profound way of satisfying human needs—to grow spiritually and temporally through periodic fasting and then donating the amount saved from refraining from partaking of those meals to the bishop to be used to administer to the needs of the poor, the ill, the downtrodden, who need help and support to make their way through life. (L. Tom Perry, "The Law of the Fast," *Ensign*, May 1986, 31)

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### Where can I learn more about fasting and fast offerings?

To find additional scripture helps, testimonies of individuals, and prophetic commentary, consider the following resources, all available on [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

- "[Fasting and Fast Offerings](#)" in *True to the Faith*.
- "[Tithes and Offerings](#)" in *For the Strength of Youth* (booklet, 2011)
- "[Fasting and Fast Offerings](#)" in **Gospel Topics**

