

Isaiah 56:1–8

The Lord's Day for the Lord's Family to Delight to Be Gathered Together to the Lord

Wednesday, May 8, 2024 • Read Isaiah 56:1–8

Questions from the Scripture text: Who says this (v1a)? What two things does He command them to keep (v1b)? What two things are about to arrive/appear (v1c–d)? Who are blessed (v2a–b)? In doing what two things with God's righteousness? What must he especially not do (v2c)? And what else (v2d)? Whom does v3a especially address? But what has this son of a foreigner done (v3b)? What must he not do (v3c)? What, specifically, must he not say (v3d)? Who else must not say something (v3e)? What, specifically, must he not say (v3f)? Who speaks the reason for this (v4a)? Whom does He address in v4b? What do these particular eunuchs keep? Whose Sabbaths? What do the eunuchs choose by keeping the Lord's Sabbaths (v4c)? What do the eunuchs hold fast to by keeping the Lord's Sabbaths (v4d)? Where will God give to them on the Sabbath (v5a–b)? Whose house? Whose walls? What two things will He give? To what two things will this name place and name be superior (v5c)? How long will they have this name? What will not happen to this name? Whose case does v6a address? What have these specific sons of foreigners done (v6b)? For what have they joined themselves to YHWH (v6b–c)? What are those who serve YHWH careful not to defile (v6d)? To what do they hold fast (v6e)? Where does YHWH bring them (v7a)? What does He do to them (v7b)? In what place? Where will their ascensions ("burnt offerings" NKJ) be accepted (v7c–d)? Where will their sacrifices be accepted? In this way, what will the Lord make His house to be called (v7e)? For whom will it be a house of prayer? What will the Lord YHWH do (v8a)? What else does He say that He will do (v8b–c)?

What do those looking forward to salvation do? Isaiah 56:1–8 prepares us for the first serial reading in public worship on the Lord's Day. In these eight verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **those who look forward to salvation do righteousness, especially that of not defiling the Sabbath, but keeping it with God's people.**

Obedience on the Sabbath, v1–3. Those who are looking forward to the curse-reversal blessings of the new creation (cf. 55:12–13) show their desire, hope, and delight by a forward-looking obedience. They repent ("keep justice and do righteousness," v1b) because the kingdom of heaven is at hand ("My salvation is about to come," v1c; "My righteousness is about to be revealed," v1d). So they refuse to do any evil (v2c), but especially they keep the 4th commandment (v2d).

In the Mosaic and Christian administrations of the covenant of grace, the Lord has supercharged the perpetual, moral Sabbath commandment with grace. For, by gathering to Himself a church that draws near corporately by ascending sacrifice (v7c), the Lord has made this a day that is holy to Him as Redeemer even above how it is holy to Him as Creator. It is a day of inclusive (no separated foreigners, v3a–d!) and fruitful (no dry-tree eunuchs, v3e–f!) blessing among the covenant people, to the glory of the God of the covenant.

How many live in circumstances where they feel barren, without progeny who will bring their fruitfulness into future generations. Not so among those keeping Sabbath with God's people! How many live in circumstances where they feel barren, without progeny who will bring their fruitfulness into future generations. Not so among those keeping Sabbath with God's people!

Fruitfulness on the Sabbath, v4–5. Barrenness is a theme throughout Scripture, as a consequence of the fall. At various times, Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Hannah were barren. And it has been a theme in Isaiah as well (cf. 49:20–23; 54:1–3). This time, it is the eunuch who gets one day off each week from being alone. He is no longer to think of himself as a "dry tree" (v3f). The Mosaic administration was full of special, ceremonial Sabbaths. These, and the weekly Sabbath, were holy convocations (cf. Lev 23).

God's command here is opposite our flesh. Often someone who has lost children or been unable to produce them will feel more desolate among a congregation full of them, rather than less. But this is not right. As the eunuch is keeping Sabbath in v4, he's counting what pleases God above what pleases man (v4c) and holding fast to God's covenant (v4d). For such a eunuch, the people of God are kin more than any who would have merely come from his flesh. God's household is his primary household on the Sabbath (v5a–b). And the name that he has in the house of God is superior to sons and daughters not only in quality (v5c) but in endurance (v5d–e). Every Sabbath, spent with the household of God, is a literal taste of heaven.

How much more this is true of the Lord's Day! Gone are the "high Sabbaths," for the Lord's Day is higher than any of those had been. The weekly Sabbath has come into a golden age of glory in the Christian church. Let those who keep it, "choose what pleases the Lord and hold fast His covenant." They are gathered in the Only-Begotten Son, as adopted children of the Father, indwelt by the Spirit of adoption. The Lord's Day is the greatest family day there is in this world!

Inclusiveness on the Sabbath, v6–8. This was also true for the sons of foreigners who were no longer foreigners. Ex 12:48 gave the procedure by which they could become as a native of the land. Israel, as a church, were always a covenantal entity. Even when they were tied to one land and twelve tribes, a mixed multitude (cf. Ex 12:38) of converts from other nations were to be among them. Again, joining oneself to the Lord (v6b) in this way to become a member of His people meant especially refusing to defile the Sabbath (v6d), holding fast to the Lord's covenant (v6e). The Lord Jesus very much looked forward to the gathering in of these nations (v7e, cf. Mt 21:13), and His clearing of the temple anticipated these sweet Lord's Day assemblies in which we ascend to God as His covenant people in the earth. The Sabbath is not a day for your "people" to be your biological or patriotic family. The Sabbath is a day for God's household and God's people to be your people. He gathers them all to Himself in Christ (v8).

How does it appear from your habits that the Lord's Day is a covenantal day spent with the Lord's household?

Sample prayer: Lord, forgive us, for we do not so eagerly anticipate the great arrival of Your salvation in the return of Christ. Forgive us, for among the evils that we have failed to keep our hands from committing, we have defiled the Sabbath. We have sometimes treated it as our own family day, or a day in which we were separated or without family. On Your Sabbaths, we have chosen what pleases us instead of what pleases You. We have not treated it as a covenantal day, and thus we have not held fast to Your covenant. Grant unto us repentance, so that we may be brought to Your holy mountain and made joyful in Your house of prayer; we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP92 "It's Good to Thank the Lord" or TPH153 "O Day of Rest and Gladness"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Isaiah 56 verses 1 through 8, these are God's words. Thus says, Yahweh. Keep Justice and do righteousness. For my salvation is about to come. And my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man who does this and the son of man who lays hold on, it Who keeps from defiling the Sabbath.

And keeps his hand from doing any evil. Do not let the son of the Foreigner who has joined himself to Yahweh, Speak saying y'all fight has utterly separated me from his people. Nor let the eunuch say here, I am a dry tree. For thus, says Yahweh. To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths and choose.

What pleases me. And hold fast, my Covenant. Even to them, I will give in my house and within my walls a place and a name better than that of Sons and Daughters. I will give them an everlasting name. That shall not be cut off. Also, the sons of the Foreigner.

Who joined themselves to Yahweh to serve him? And to love the name of Yahweh to be his servants. Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath. And holds fast my Covenant even then I will bring to my Holy Mountain. And make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar.

For my house shall be called a House of prayer for all nations. The Lord Yahweh who gathers the outcasts of Israel says yet. I will gather to him others besides those Who are gathered to him. Amen, that sends this reading of gods, inspired and inerrant word. This is a very helpful passage for us.

Especially in a day, when there are Many, who think that the keeping of the one day in seven, the day that is for us. Now the Lord's day. Having, Been transformed as a covenantal day. Not only Under the old Covenant, in which the creational day. The worship of the Creator became.

Especially for the church that God had gathered to himself. By Moses at Sinai. A covenantal day in the Covenant Administration under Moses. But now even greater than that. Of covenantal day for the church that God has gathered to himself in his own son. in Christ, of course, every believer was always saved in Christ.

But now the church is gathered to God in Christ, which is something new when Christ becomes a man becomes our Prophet priest and King and that is what this these eight verses are especially looking forward to because they follow upon and explain. The reversal of the curse. looking forward to the day when there will not be thorns or Briars, but cypruses and Myrtles where the creation will no longer groan.

When the sons of God will have had their bodies redeemed, and be displayed as adopted and that adoption theme and children of God theme. Is here in these eight verses and so there's a close connection between what we heard at the end of chapter 55. I'm looking forward to.

the mountains and the hills. Breaking forth into singing before the children of God, just as the creation is going to be liberated to participate in the Glorious Freedom. Of the children of God and the keeping then of the Sabbath is. Has a special place among the righteousness among The Obedience to God's Commandments that those who are his Render unto him.

It starts with that. If we're looking forward to heaven, then we want to wake up for our Salvation is nearer than when we first believed. Just like we heard in Romans 13. And so, having just talked about this, This complete reversal of the curse at the end of chapter 55.

Our passage begins keep righteousness and do sorry, keep Justice. And do righteousness for my salvation is about to come and my righteousness to be revealed. And so, the way we anticipate Heaven is by living. According. To Heaven's ways, even on Earth for Heaven is coming. It is similar to John the last of The prophets Jesus's cousin.

And then Jesus himself saying, repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. It's one of the ways that we show that we live in the hope and the joy of the soon return of Christ and the hope and the joy. Of those who are about to have a new heavens and a new Earth.

And eternal blessedness with God is by living like people, Who belong to that Eternal blessedness. So he continues as blessed as the man who does this, and the son of man who lays hold on, it And so, God has given us. To lay hold on eternal life by virtue of our sanctification.

Doesn't mean we do it by our strength. It does mean he commands us to do it and that we really do do it that we do it. Of course, only by his strength. But we lay, hold on it. And what is the that part of his obedience? Righteousness and Justice and laying hold of.

What it has such a core. Continuing the verse 2 who keeps from defiling the Sabbath and keeps his hand from doing any evil. So it's not like, you know, the the Sabbath is instead of all of other obedience, no, it's like this Crown Jewel. In all of the obedience that we offer, the one who is looking forward to Heaven, doesn't want to do any evil.

but among those evils that he keeps himself from doing is, defiling the Sabbath corrupting, twisting or making dirty. Either of those ideas. This wonderful beautiful thing that the Lord has given us. Because it is for us a covenant day. And so he deals with the Foreigner who comes in from outside the Covenant and the eunuch who is in the Covenant, but he has not fathered any children.

So will he continue in the Covenant? Because he has no household, he has no progeny who are coming from him. And one of the things that the Sabbath, Assures us of is that we are genuinely and eternally joined to God in this enjoyment of him and service to him forever.

It's a little taste of Heaven. It's a little taste of Of Eternity. now we have In God's Providence, just been through. at the end of Numbers chapter 9, a reminder of the instruction for The Foreigner who joins himself to Yahweh and we looked back then, of course, at the end of Exodus 12 and The instruction that those who wish to belong to Yahweh in this Everlasting, Covenant, bond that they could receive the sign of the Covenant renounce their former identification.

With their former people. And rather than being an ethnic people, they would be a covenantal people and become part of the people of God, part of Israel who Of whom we are reminded then in Exodus 12 and numbers 9 that they were never primarily in ethnic people. Although there is that descending according to the Flesh and God, extending the households of those who are his Covenant people.

But there was that mixed multitude, many of whom Joined one or another tribe of Israel. And so he refers to people from this group, in verse 3, saying do not let the son of the Foreigner who has joined himself to Yahweh or in our context that would be Similar to saying a new convert and someone who's a new convert might be tempted to say or feel something like this.

If he looks around it, these other families where there's been three, four more Generations of of godliness and Covenantly identifying with God rejoicing that he is, our God and we are his people through faith in Jesus Christ in whom and through whom our households now are assembled into the church and gathered to God.

Do not let the son of the Foreigner who has joined himself to Yahweh, speak saying, Yahweh has utterly separated me from his people. Now, we're going to come back to the Foreigner in verses 6 through 8, but it reminds us that the Sabbath is not just a day for obedience for keeping it for refusing to defile it.

But the Sabbath is especially a day for inclusion. Every member of the body should gather that you should not forsake the assembling of himself together but he shouldn't come into the assembly and be unassembled. Or disassembled unassembled in his mind, or in his heart, the eye, or the ear, or the hand, because they are not whatever other part of the body, should not say, I am not part of the body.

So, he's teaching us. Verse 3 and verses 6 through 8. Something similar to what he teaches us. In First Corinthians 12, that when the Lord has arranged Those whom he has gathered to himself that we are to take confidence and hope and identity from the fact that God has made us, his people God has made us to belong to himself.

And then he introduces. The end of verse 3, the eunuch whom he is especially going to cover in verse 4 and verse 5. He says, nor let the eunuch say here, I am a dry tree. What a horrible thing. Yes, in God's Providence, there are some who are unable to Bear children.

And we have, we have just heard about the barren woman. As Israel in chapter 49 wondering after all of her children, she was bereaved of all her children. I guess she's the bereaved woman in chapter 49 and she says, who has borne, all of these for me?

Where did they come from? And then we've heard of the barren woman who sings because she was not able to Bear children, but God provides children for her. And now we hear of the eunuch who has no children, he doesn't come in and look around at the families in the congregation and say, all these families.

It hurts my feelings so much that I did not have children. And he's there. In his family that God has given him. All those. all those mothers and fathers or his, his brothers

and sisters, and all of those children, or his brothers and sisters. And he has this godparent sort of relationship to them because We are to transmit the faith from one generation to another and even if they're not in his household, on the other six days of the week on the Sabbath, Everyone's in God's household.

Yeah, this is one of the reasons that First Corinthians 11 gives for the head covering because we're gathered as the household of God in Jesus Christ, and we're not there to see the display. Of the glory of a man as the Of his household. And so the eunuch must not say here, I am a dry tree for thus, says yolly to the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths and choose, what pleases me.

Okay, so this is something we're gonna hear about again in a couple of chapters in Isaiah 58, where we have another one of those. Looking forward to the New Covenant in which Sabbath keeping will really come into its own as the Lord's day under the Lord Jesus Christ, but that's the essence of Sabbath keeping, isn't it?

To choose what pleases the Lord instead of what pleases us? we have much more personal individual discretion. About what to do on the other six days. But on the seventh day, it's not like we're not choosing We are choosing, if you're not choosing it, if you're begrudging it or feeling like you have to, you're not really keeping the Sabbath.

On the Lord's day. We choose the things that it has pleased God to set aside for that day. And so, We see it has pleased God. And then we remember in God's Providence, whatever are the circumstances of our life. It has pleased, the God who is giving himself to us, And taking us for himself.

Who gives us a day on which it says that he rests, he doesn't need rest. But he takes rest. What does that mean? Well, he assigns a day for expressing and taking as it were a particular Delight in his people gathered to himself for worship. And so on that day, the barren woman or the barren man or the bereaved couple, whoever it is, we realize that we are the household of God.

That he has given us, not the extension of our family name. But to come under his family name, And that is so much better and so he says to the eunuchs, you keep my Sabbath and choose what pleases me and hold fast my Covenant even to them. I will give in my house and within my walls.

A place and a name. So, we are now part of his household. We are gathered as his household. It is as he said for Moses. Those under Moses a holy convocation, a holy assembly. A convocation calling together. And he keeps telling us, doesn't he? And that sabbath, keeping that remains Hebrews 4.

Verse 9, do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, Hebrews 10 25 because that is the day, especially we remember that we are the household of God. The Sabbath is not family day for someone else's house, it's family day for God's household. The past Sabbath is not family day for hakeem's.

Or. Rodents or Griffiths or whomever else? Turner's Glides. The Sabbath is family day for those who have the name. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, put on them. This is one of the reasons why it's so sad. When there are churches that recognize that families are doing life so badly together.

They have no other family days and they're like, we're not going to have evening worship this week or even sometimes we're not going to have evening worship anymore. So that this can be a family day. Oh, I'm sorry. It's already been claimed by a better family. With a better household and a better name.

And it is, especially for the eunuchs. Among God's people. That it is a church family day. They should not be feel badly to assemble. But in the churches, where there are those people who have different Providence to them in different seasons of life where they are more alone than, than others are.

How sad would it be for them? That their Church decided to turn God's family day into men's family's days? And here they are without a family. No, the eunuch shouldn't do that and the church shouldn't do that. We should Rejoice that we are in God's house and within God's walls and we have God's family name.

Is that one gonna die out? Of course not Could have a whole bunch of Sons. And in God's Providence. That family name, still dies out eventually. But if you are part of the household of God and Jesus Christ, You have a family name that will never die out. And so he says oh better than that of Sons and daughters, I will give them an everlasting name.

That shall not be cut off. So it's a day of obedience and a day of inclusion in God's family, and then it's a day of sorry it's a day of obedience and a day of fruitfulness, as part of God's family. And it's also a day of inclusion. In God's family.

the sons of the Foreigner who joined themselves to Yahweh, now to serve him and that was originally the reason Exodus 12, 48 and Numbers. 9 19-23. the great reason for the Foreigner to join himself was so that he could keep the Passover, No, that's not 19-23. It was in, it was numbers nine, one through 14.

So Exodus 12 48 and in Numbers chapter 9, the reason that the that the Foreigner joined himself, To Yahweh was so that he could serve him so he could keep the Passover so that he could worship. And so he says the sons of the Foreigner who join themselves, do you always to serve him and to love the name of Yahweh to be his servants?

Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath so he mentions here again, to find the Sabbath. But he said he sets that negative over against the positive What is a right keeping of the Sabbath? Is it all about all the stuff that we don't do? No, it's about taking Delight on the Lord.

Like we're going to hear in chapter 58 but even right here, you can see Joining yourselves to him, taking hold of his Covenant. To use the language. Of vers.

And verse 4. So, joining yourself to him, taking hold Of his Covenant. And also sorry, here verse 6. So verse 2 verse 4, verse 6, keeping the Lord's day is taking the God's covenant with us in our hand, serving him. That is to be worshiping him. Loving his name, loving to be part of his household.

And having his name upon us, these are These are the ways that the Lord's day is kept in the heart as we worship him all the day long. And what does the Lord do then? What is the day for? Because we are not, not only do, we do something significant and special unique on that one day and seven, we're actually responding to the Lord, who is doing something unique.

Look at what he says he does for us in verse 7 when we keep his habits, even them, I will bring to my Holy Mountain. Now, before the Lord Jesus Takes his seat in in glory. This does not actually happen every Sabbath. For every Israelite. Because they can't all come to Zion to the Tabernacle to the temple, and that's really a copy of the Holy Mountain.

that's really a copy. Of the that place to which the Lord himself has ascended. But now we do come. Every Lord's day. To the Heavenly Zion where there are the Angels gathered for feast and The Souls of the just who have been perfected and God our Father and Christ, our mediator, whose blood speaks better than Abel.

This is something that is actually by Union with Christ and the special assembly of the Lord's day fulfilled for us every week. That when, when we keep Sabbath together, God brings us to his holy Mountain says I will bring them to my Holy Mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer.

So we're not only delighted. In the day because it's the day. But on the day, he takes us to the place where he gives us our Delight. And that is in his house of prayer, and knowing, then the reason for that worship and knowing, then that with Christ's coming, he was especially going to be gathering in the Nations.

You can understand. Jesus is righteous and holy indignation. Where the core to the Gentiles as far as they could go so far into the temple. was littered with the marketplace and not just buying and selling, but of course, Sinners who are buying and selling, but the place for the Foreigner to be joined to God's people and not separated from from him, the the place where the Foreigner could come and take Delight in the Lord.

And here he is trying to take Delight in the Lord, but they're selling pigeons over there. And they're selling sheeps over here and they're exchanging currency. You know, Roman currency for the temple shekels over there and it's a bunch of chaos. And, and the poor man. Wants to take to light in the Lord because he has joined himself.

Good. And this is the this is what the Lord Jesus quotes. When he drives all those people out, Of that court. Well, the Lord Jesus has that same Fury, doesn't he? When we corrupt the Sabbath, when we corrupt the Lord's day, And refill it with all sorts of Earthly business.

And all sorts of Earthly Recreation. And we don't take it as the day to Rejoice, that we are the household of God together. That he's put his family name upon us and made us his family together. And given us to to take his Covenant in our hands, to lay hold of his Covenant and grasp it and serve him, and who worship him and love his name and be his servants.

And so, it's good for us to remember, That Fury that the Lord Jesus showed in the temple. And the place from which he quoted. So that we'll see how good a thing. His day is that we wouldn't want to defile it or corrupt it. lest we defile and corrupt that, which was so good and that, which he had come to secure and, of course, they're corrupting in his day that which was so good.

was that which he righteously and furiously responded to It says even. I will bring to my Holy Mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer, their Ascensions and their, sacrifices will be accepted on my altar. For my house shall be called a House of Prayer for all Nations.

And that which Jesus commanded them to be done as he was ascending to take his seat. And start leading from Heaven. Those worldwide worship Services. He ascended there and he charged then saying he would be with them, his presence with us like the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire just like we We heard about, the Lord Yahweh who gathers the outcasts of Israel.

Says yet, I will gather to him others besides those Who are gathered to him, and that's what he has continued to do now. These past 2000 years. Worth of Lord's days. In which? None of us should say I am separated or I am a dry tree. Or forsake the assembling of ourselves together.

But we should assemble together in that Sabbath. Keeping that remains because we know his salvation is about to come. His righteousness is about to be revealed as soon as the last of those for whom he has died. Has been gathered in our bodies will be redeemed, the adoption will be completed.

The new heavens and new Earth will be created. Releasing the old from bondage and To corruption and Decay and we'll go out with joy and be led forth with peace mountains. In the Hills will Break Forth into singing all the trees of the field will clap their hands. And Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman, Will have crushed the Serpent's head.

And the whole curse will have been removed. Praise God, may he give us to look forward to that, especially well to look forward to that every day. But especially on his Lord's days. Let's pray. We do pray, Lord that your Holy Spirit would give us hearts and minds that love what you love and that think the way that you think that we may have Wills that desire.

What you desire? We pray that you would not let us. Feel sorry for ourselves. but rather that you would open our eyes to what you have done for us and making us your children. And being brought into your household and having your name on us. give us, we pray to Rejoice over you especially on your day.

And to Rejoice to be part of your household, especially on your day. But grant, that, that joy and that optimism and that that identity Would penetrate and permeate the rest of our week as well. Grant that we would be those who are living looking forward to laying hold of Glory.

And therefore, who obey all of your Commandments. As Those whom you are conforming to Christ. So do this by your spirit conform us to Christ. We ask in his name, amen.