

You realize when you read the prophet Isaiah that the people of Israel had a great problem. Their worship was unacceptable to God. This was true because they really did not agree with God. They did not want to obey and submit to Him, because they did not feel that He was the ultimate Good. How could they possibly worship a being which they felt had inferior ideas to their own? Isaiah mentions many times that the people chose their own way.

Let us read Isaiah 58:3-7... Read the whole chapter when you can. We see right at the top that God is not accepting their 'fasting' or worship. They are doing as they please, following their own desires. They did not, in the simple words of Amos in Amos 5:15 'hate evil' and 'love good'. Worshipping God should be the natural consequence of realizing that God the highest Good that we know of. Amos' message was also one of a need for improving the worship.

The kind of agreement I'm talking about is found in the words of Moses in Deut 32:3-4, 'I will proclaim the name of the Lord. Oh, praise the greatness of our God! He is the Rock, His words are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.' Moses was in total agreement with God, even as he was being forbidden entrance into the promised land.

Isaiah emphasizes that true worship is not just something we do one day a week. True worship is the implementation of Good, that is, taking care of the helpless and to love our fellow man. Once we have done this for the right reasons, then God is pleased with our worship. Externals do not matter at all. Isaiah had begun his book with this same message in chapter one. God will not accept meaningless worship, vs 13. And in verse 17 he states what is important, 'learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the cause of the widow.' This is pure religion and worship indeed.

Do we agree totally with the law of God? Or do we go our own way and pay only lip service to him? We must strive to worship Him from our heart.