

Ayekah Text Study – Yom Kippur 5781
Rabbi Gail Swedroe
Congregation Agudas Achim

This translation was taken from the JPS Tanakh.
Isaiah 57:14-58:14, Haftarah Yom Kippur

Isaiah 58:2-10

² To be sure, they seek Me daily,
Eager to learn My ways.
Like a nation that does what is right,
That has not abandoned the laws of its
God,
They ask Me for the right way,
They are eager for the nearness of God:

³ "Why, when we fasted, did You not
see?

When we starved our bodies, did You
pay no heed?"

Because on your fast day
You see to your business
And oppress all your laborers!

⁴ Because you fast in strife and
contention,
And you strike with a wicked fist!
your fasting today is not such
As to make your voice heard on high.

⁵ Is such the fast I desire,
A day for men to starve their bodies?
Is it bowing the head like a bulrush
And lying in sackcloth and ashes?
Do you call that a fast,
A day when the Lord is favorable?

⁶ No, this is the fast I desire:
To unlock the fetters of wickedness,
And untie the cords of the yoke

To let the oppressed go free;
To break off every yoke.

⁷ It is to share your bread with the
hungry,
And to take the wretched poor into
your home;
When you see the naked, to clothe him,
And not to ignore your own kin.

⁸ Then shall your light burst through
like the dawn

And your healing spring up quickly;
Your Vindicator shall march before
you,

The Presence of the Lord shall be your
rear guard.

⁹ Then, when you call, the Lord will
answer;
When you cry, God will say: Here I am.
If you banish the yoke from your
midst,

The menacing hand and evil speech,

¹⁰ And you offer your compassion to
the hungry

And satisfy the famished creature —
Then shall your light shine in darkness,
And your gloom shall be like noonday.