



### Isaiah 58:9b-14 New Revised Standard Version

If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,  
<sup>10</sup> if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.  
<sup>11</sup> The LORD will guide you continually  
and satisfy your needs in parched places  
and make your bones strong,  
and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water  
whose waters never fail.  
<sup>12</sup> Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;  
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,  
the restorer of streets to live in.  
<sup>13</sup> If you refrain from trampling the Sabbath,  
from pursuing your own interests on my holy day;  
if you call the Sabbath a delight  
and the holy day of the LORD honorable;  
if you honor it, not going your own ways,  
serving your own interests or pursuing your own affairs;  
<sup>14</sup> then you shall take delight in the LORD,  
and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth;  
I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob,  
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.



He/She was \_\_\_\_\_. What word(s) would you use to fill in that blank? Kind? Generous? Perhaps Joyful? Now...how would others describe who you are? By this, I am not asking about what we *hope* people will say concerning us, but rather what is true of their

experiences with us as family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc. Hopefully, there will be consistency between our assessment of our lives and what others have come to know of who we are and what we are about.

Let's go a step beyond our personal lives and apply the same exercise to our reputation as a faith community: Little Rock OFWB Church is \_\_\_\_\_. For those of you who may be lifelong members of this congregation, your opinions may include friendly, graceful, compassionate, etc. However, what would the newbie, the stranger, the outsider say of who we are, what we value, and how we embody said values to our community?

Following their time in exile, God's people had much to do in order to reestablish their lives in the land of Judah. Not only was it necessary to rebuild the Temple and reconstruct their homes, they also needed to rediscover their identity in relation to God. For years prior to the Exile, Judah had allowed her passions and pursuits to grow cold and separate from those intended by God.

Now, a new day had dawned and that which characterized the people's past "would not cut it" moving forward. The status quo/lackadaisical faithfulness which had tainted the people's calling to be a light to the world had proven disastrous for them and, if not careful, can prove true for us as well. The prophet's words continue to challenge the faithful to think about who and what we wish to be and what form of impact that will have upon others.

1. Be committed to making your relationships healthy.
2. Be others-focused with your acts of service.
3. Be invested in your relationship with God.

**Prayer Pebble:** Lord, enable me to leave this world a bit better than how it was before me.