

Week 2 Devotion: Lorans Qassis

"Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people." Luke 2:10

The time of fasting in Lent is important in Christianity. Fasting is not just about abstaining from certain foods; it is a spiritual journey aimed at purifying our hearts and drawing closer to God through prayer and reflection.

The meaning of fasting in God's eyes is even deeper than this. In Palestine, fasting teaches us patience in facing challenges and reminds us of our responsibility toward our people who are suffering from occupation, oppression and deprivation. It also encourages us to help those in need and share what we have with others, just as the apostles did, with love.

In the book of Isaiah, it is written, "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them and not to hide yourself from your own kin?" (58: 6–7).

In Palestine, our people suffer from poverty and displacement before our very eyes. Therefore fasting becomes a call for mercy and justice in this land. When we help those in need or stand with the oppressed, we fulfill the true meaning of fasting and we spread God's good news to all people. If you want to make your fasting this Lenten season alive and meaningful, serve others. Share your food with the hungry. Pray and plant hope in broken hearts. Fasting is not just a tradition, habit or ritual—it is a way of life and a reflection of God's love for us.

Christ lived as a perfect human, enduring Roman occupation, fasting, being tempted and obeying God even in death. We know the good news, that Jesus understands us. He stands in true solidarity with us. If we, as Christians, remain silent about the suffering of our people, we are also silent about Christ's suffering. God is present everywhere, even among ruins.

Christ declares that every act of love and mercy—feeding the hungry, welcoming strangers and so on—is done for him. In our painful Palestinian reality, where many people suffer from poverty and injustice, we are called to live out this fasting truly as God desires. This happens when we share our food with the hungry, stand by the oppressed and give love to all who have lost hope in life. In this way, we not only fast but also fulfill God's mission in our lives. We see Christ in the face of every needy person, every oppressed individual, every sick person and every heartbroken soul.

Week 2 Discussion and Prayer:

Lorans Qassis

Questions:

1. What does Lenten fasting look like in your context?
2. What are ways we might fear the act of fasting?
3. How can fasting be a way to spread justice and love toward Palestinian people?
4. What can we do spread the good news and practically to fulfill God's will in our communities?
5. Are you ready to make your fasting a message of love, justice and mercy to those around us?

Prayer

Lord, teach us to fast as you desire – not just by abstaining from food but by breaking the chains of oppression, feeding the hungry and helping the needy. Fill our hearts with your mercy. Help us see your face in every poor person, every oppressed person, and every suffering soul. Grant us the strength to be tools of peace and justice, to shine your light amid darkness and to bring hope where there is despair. May our fasting be a prayer that pleases you and our actions a testimony of your love. Amen.

Lorans Qassis

Lorans Qassis is a Palestinian Christian from Beit Sahour and a student of the Bethlehem Bible College.

