

# Week 4 Devotion: Lourdes Al Sayeh

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed.” – Luke 4:18

In these times, we believers hold on to the tradition of Lent in preparing to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus. Christ made the ultimate sacrifice, and through the cross and his resurrection, he offers us eternal life. As followers of Christ, we remember Jesus' way of life and his call for us to live in service to our neighbors and to God.

In Luke 4:18, we see Jesus fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1. He names himself as the anointed one from the Lord, initiating a new dawn and a sacred new beginning for us. This beginning is centered on the sacred image in which God creates us to bear witness to God's kingdom on earth. In God's kingdom, no voice of injustice is heard, there is no destruction, people are judged fairly, and rulers govern with peace. Jesus' proclamation confirms the beginning God's kingdom on earth and the fulfillment of ancient promises for the poor, weak and forsaken.

Jesus' embodiment as the true revelation of God models for us how to bear witness to the kingdom of God. We see this in the disciples' transformation from prejudiced, spiritually ignorant men into some of the greatest Christian leaders of the first century. They excelled in their service despite harsh conditions, being active where they were and serving the weak the forsaken, and the widows. They embodied the practical application of the new beginning that resulted from Christ's death and resurrection.

In service such as this, we work to fulfill humanity's sacredness, striving for equity for all and advocating for justice, liberation and love. We have a role in this message, and as Palestinian Christians, we take pride in the earliest Christian witness happening here. But the Christian witness is now worldwide—it is all our responsibility to represent Jesus in our communities. Fasting is empty if we are not active in the work of justice, compassion, and love. What is the benefit of our worship if we do not apply to our own communities the purpose for which Christ came, which was to bring the kingdom of God?

As a proud Palestinian, I pray that the message of Christ is applied here in Palestine. I pray that the world will look at my siblings in Christ and my community with the eyes of our Creator, the one who gave his life to revitalize justice, peace and hope.



# Week 4 Discussion and Prayer:

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### Questions:

1. Are we practicing true fasting in our own lives?
2. How does this Scripture reveal the fullness of the gospel and lead us to a broader understanding of the kingdom of God, beyond personal salvation and including community care, justice and liberation?
3. Do we represent Jesus Christ in our communities through our actions? If not, what are some ways we can begin this work together?

### Prayer

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal God, who faced temptation and overcame the weakness of the flesh, teach us to hold fast to your word. Fill us with your Holy Spirit, which strengthens and guides us through the wilderness of this life. Quench our thirst with your love. Satisfy us with the richness of your heavenly word. We are weak, yet you have said, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Help us to see you not in the wealth of money or possessions, but in the treasures of justice, compassion, and peace. In you alone, we find true fulfillment. Amen.

## Lourdes Al Sayeh

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