



Reflections | Fast for the Climate

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Fasting & Climate Change

By Lydia Mogano

Fasting can take many forms depending on its purpose. On a personal level, fasting is a devotional act of refraining from food for a spiritual purpose¹. It is often accompanied by prayer and giving because it is meant to subdue the body's desires or your own desires in order to heighten your spirit's capacity to receive from God. In other words, it is a two-way spiritual process wherein you are consciously and actively putting time aside or making way for God to have His will established in your heart while you are ready to listen to His voice. In the process, you fully surrender to God's purpose², will or kingdom and supremacy regardless of whatever is happening around you. You communicate with God at a more engrossed level of awareness than could be achieved otherwise. Although food is the primary aspect one can refrain from, other things such as watching television, using social media and private than public transport, buying bottled water, littering and etc. could also be withdrawn so that you can give or sacrifice for those who don't have and have a healthy community of life (in a general sense). Other outcomes of this sacred act may include an answered prayer or a met need, enhanced sense of inner-strength/hope, conviction, repentance, faith, just to name a few. Fasting should be part of our lifestyle because it can only allow God to be fully at work in us.

The problems we are facing today are a clear sign of humanity wanting control over the earth's resources above and beneath it. For example, instead of letting God's will of justice, peace, equity, grace and love to reign, humanity simply ignores all of that through greed and self-centredness. Concurrently, the gap between the poor and rich keeps

¹ This definition is sourced from Frankin, J. (2008). *Fasting: Opening the door to a deeper, more intimate, more powerful relationship with God*. Casa Creacion, ISBN: 978-1-59979-331-3.

² This is because God is our point of reference, the only one in whom we live and move and have our being (Act 17:28), Holy bible, NIV.

widening. With regards to climate change, humanity continuously digs itself to death through intensive extractive mining and burning of fossil fuels and other minerals, through deforestation of our beautiful planet, as well as abolishing away various animals and plants to extinction in order to accumulate more wealth. This is totally unacceptable and unjust to this planet and God and these need to end today and not tomorrow. The land thirsts for water in many places through drought; earthquakes, floods take away many livelihoods, hurricanes, typhoons and landslides wash away many homes and destroy many forms of life on earth, we are all witnessing these events recently more than ever before. However, more devastating and difficult to ignore is the fact that Africa (and future generations) will be the most hit by climate change impacts, which will drag nations deeper into impoverishment. As devastating as these extreme weather events can be, we still have many who have eyes to see but fail to see and ears to hear but do not hear. In denial, self-centredness, greed, lack of empathy and/or embracing the delusion of regarding climate change as a myth to rationalise inaction or to secure their comfort-zones, sense of control and other fears known to them, they fail to embrace the reality that is felt on the ground in everyday life. For how long are we going to keep losing life on earth in pursuit for more wealth?

The evidence to validate urgent climate change response is publicised yet many remain in denial and passive. Simultaneously, all of us, in our respective contexts, are urgently required to respond positively and justly to climate to change. On my journey across the SADC region, faith leaders of various faiths strongly agree that climate change response is seriously none negotiable! By echoing their words, I participate in fasting to seek God's guidance in understanding His will is for my life and this world to find solutions to climate change. Moreover, according to 1 Tim 2:1, God asks us to pray for our leaders that there may be peace in the world. My deepest prayer is to ask God intervene in His great power and open our leader's eyes to see, their ears to heart and their hearts to respond urgently and appropriately. While we do not shrink back, we continue to take care of His earth, being confident that He who began a good work in us will carry it to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Phil 1:6).

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