

**PASTOR'S THOUGHTS**

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**God has not forgotten.**

A recent report by the world's leading hunger monitor, The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), has assessed that half a million people are suffering from famine in Gaza.

What is most disturbing and shocking is the fact that this famine is "entirely man-made" with the various aid bodies, with aid organisations today condemning Israel for the "systematic obstruction" of food entering the Gaza Strip.

According to the IPC study, famine conditions of "starvation, destitution, and death" are being experienced by residents of the Gaza City area.

According to current patterns, hunger is predicted to strike much of the rest of Gaza in September, indicating that malnutrition is spreading quickly.

Three important indications were used to achieve the report's conclusion:

- Starvation: At least 1 in 5 households face an extreme shortage in their consumption of food
- Malnutrition: Roughly 1 in 3 children or more are acutely malnourished
- Mortality: At least 2 in every 10,000 people are dying daily because of outright starvation or the combination of malnutrition and disease

The IPC determines that hunger is occurring when two of these three "thresholds" are reached. According to the IPC, it determined that all three standards had been met in Gaza.

According to the IPC, a malfunction in the monitoring systems is the reason why the "mortality" indication is not visible in the data that is now accessible. According to it, the majority of non-traumatic fatalities go unreported.

The IPC has determined that the "mortality" criterion for famine has been reached based on the available facts and expert opinion.

The study was released just as the health ministry administered by Hamas in Gaza reported two more fatalities from malnutrition, raising the total to 273 deaths—112 of them children.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has always disputed that malnutrition is occurring in Gaza and blamed Hamas and charity organisations for any hunger that occurs there.

It is easy for us to ignore the suffering of the weak and deprived or simply be removed as they do not impact us. But as Mary Robinson writes, "Many people today in the developed countries are so far removed from poverty and suffering and starvation that they lack empathy for the sufferings of others."

In the midst of everything that is happening in Gaza, we are reminded that God is not blind and neither has he forgotten his people. In Psalm 105:8, it states, "He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations."

Let us remember those who are suffering as we pray for peace and an end to this suffering.