

Changing Seasons - Changing Industries: Part 1

Dear Friends,

It is clear, from the narration in Genesis chapter one, verse twenty-eight through thirty (Genesis 1:28-30 ESV), that God's plan from the onset is for man to live and work the Earth that He has created, and make it something wonderful for all creatures, including man:

*And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food. " And it was so.*

Man has instead become so irresponsible because of the greediness called industrialization and advancement in science which, seemingly is intended for our good, but the result has been disastrous. The reckless damage to the Earth's atmosphere has changed the weather patterns all over the world and has caused significant negative and disastrous changes in our environment.

When I was growing up in the early sixties one could predict the weather. In my geography classes we were taught the rainfall pattern for Ghana and its benefits to farming and fishing. Ghana has two rainy seasons in the country: a minor and a major rainy season, each at different times of the year. And those patterns are shifting in a way that is making farming and fishing more difficult.

The basic knowledge of the Ghanaian weather and rainy seasons has always helped with the fishing and farming activities of our people. Farmers would only go into the bush at the appropriate time based on the traditional knowledge of the times and seasons. They know automatically when to prepare the land for cultivation and then wait for the rains of the major season, always resulting in abundant harvest and produce of the land. In the shallow lands, particularly, the minor season is when crops such as corn, vegetables, potatoes, and cassava, are sown, to stock kitchens and homes with food before the next rains.

The fishing industry, likewise, depends on the seasons, to bring in fish for homes and kitchens and to sell to make a living. In our part of the world, fishermen use dugout canoes that are not fitted to go beyond a certain point on the seas. They mostly use portable outboard motors and paddles to move the canoes across the seas. Some of them go for a few hours, from near dawn until early afternoon and then bring their catch to sell at the seashore.

Ghana's seasons, as a result of the shift in the weather patterns, have changed drastically, creating huge challenges and difficulties for local industries that provide us with the basic necessities of life. Some of the shifting weather patterns are obviously the result of human disrespect for the created order, God's handiwork. Some of our changing weather patterns are the cycles that our Earth have naturally gone through for all of time.

Currently, for the farmers, the patterns of sowing and reaping have changed and made their already precarious existence even worse. For the fishing industry, apart from the unpredictable periods suitable for going over the seas, they have to face the changing tides and currents that make their industry more and more unstable and unsafe.

Next month we will continue this exploration of how the changing seasons are changing the industries of farming and fishing in Ghana.

With the best of regards to all.

Shalom.

Pastor Ben