

8 Great Fast Lessons about Baptism into the Truth

The following 8 step outline lists traditional Amharic titles for each of the eight weeks of the Great Fast, along with liberal English translations. Next the appointed Gospel citation is listed for each, followed by a brief interpretive summary with respect to preparing for the celebration of Christ's victory over sin and death at Fasika (Pascha [Easter]).

1. **Zewered (ዘወረደ)** Submit to God: first in earthly things; then, in heavenly things.
2. **Kidist (ቅድስት)** Holiness requires becoming Holy, as God is holy.
3. **Mikurab (ምኩራብ)** To discover where God would live, clean house, fix your priorities.
4. **Metsagu (መጻገብ)** Seek spiritual as well as physical healing
5. **Debre Zeite (ደብረ ዘይት)** Mt. Of Olives: It's about time.
6. **Geber hare (ገብር ሄር)** Good servants respond with results.
7. **Nicodimus (ኒቆዲሞስ)** Nicodemus learned that walking with God requires spiritual rebirth.
8. **Hosanna (ዎሳዕና)** Pray, save us, O Saviour of the world.

Zewered (ዘወረደ) John 3 : 10 – 25

1. To ascend to eternal life in the kingdom of heaven, submit to God, by accepting Him Who descended. Christ came down to, first, teach us about earthly things. We must master those initial lessons, in order to be able to follow what He will then teach us about heavenly things.

2. Kidist (ቅድስት) Mt. 6 : 16 – 25

To reach full human potential, playing to human critics is not valid. Improving one's behavior, should be according to God's will, not to impress others. True repentance proceeds from acts of holiness. It follows secret fasting, almsgiving and prayer, which were explained in first sixteen verses of the cited chapter.

3. **Mikurab (ምኩራብ)** John 2 : 12 – finish

Clean house! Tough love is required to set personal priorities straight. Eliminate all selfish actions and motivations, to anticipate becoming a fit dwelling for God.

4. **Metsagu (መጸጎፅ)** John 5 : 1 – 25

Rather than making excuses about why you continue to suffer, seek spiritual, as well as physical, healing. Sin causes the worst degenerative paralysis. Until one is completely rid of it, it just gets worse.

5. **Debre Zeite (ደብረ ዘይት)** Mt. 24 : 5 – 36

Mt. Of Olives: At the end of time, there will be a reckoning. But, no one knows “When?” Is it, already, later than you think? When Time runs out, all things except Christ’s word will pass away. Only those who accept and endure in it, will be rewarded.

6. **Geber hare (ገብር ሄር)** Mt. 25 : 14 – 35

A good servant returns dividends on his master’s investment. Don’t bury what God gives you. Wisely invest whatever He gives you, glorify Him as you do.

7. **Nicodimus (ኒቆዲሞስ)** John 3 : 1 - 10

To receive eternal reward, accept God’s grace, and work with Him.

Baptism is the rebirth which begins the grace flow. Once that life, begotten water & Spirit, is planted in the Church, it must grow up to bear fruit. Life in Christ grows through preparation and fulfillment. Fast then feast. Repent, confess your sins, receive the nourishment of Qurban.

8. **Hosanna (ሆሳኒና)** Parallel coverage in all four Gospels.

□□□□ Mt. 21:1-11; □□□□ Mk. 11:1-11;

□□□ Lk. 19 : 28-41; □□□□ John 12 : 12-17

የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ሃይማኖትና ሥርዓት

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church Faith and Order

www.ethiopianorthodox.org

Considering those comments in Luke 19:39 & 40, God could make rocks do what we are supposed to do. But, in His great love, God gives us a choice: whether or not to respond to His holiness, by consistently becoming more holy, as He is holy. Christ, the only-begotten incarnate Word of God, became like us, in all things except sin, to show, tell, and empower us to become like Him.

Like the children, who waved palms of victory, let us grow up to carry our cross, following Christ, singing,

Hosaenna (Pray save us now)

Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord.

Abba Thomas

www.ethiopianorthodox.org