

Quick Facts About FASTING:

Fasting is prayer and abstinence from food and drink to attain forgiveness of sins and reward of the soul. It serves to weaken the force of the body so that the body may obey the soul. Fasting is more than prayer abstinence from eating meat and meat products. Fasting includes avoiding works of Satan and all wrongdoings in general. Special days are appointed for fasting.

Our Lord Christ has taught us that fasting with prayer has the power of driving away evil spirits (Matt. 17:21). During fasting, consumption of animal products is prohibited. These include meat, egg, butter, milk, cheese and anything that contains these products. (**ፍትሐ ነገሥት**/*Fitha Negest/Feteha Nagast*). However, in true fasting, the eyes are kept from seeing, the mouth from speaking, and the ear from hearing evil things. Fasting has perpetual relation with religion though the way it is practiced differs from religion to religion.

Fasting Days:

The 7 official fasting periods ordained in the ፍትሐ ነገሥት/Fitha Negest:

1. **የረቡዕ እና ዓርብ ጾም**/All Wednesdays and Fridays, except for the fifty days after Easter and also if the Feasts of Christmas and Epiphany fall on these days.
2. **ጾመ ነቢያት**/Tsome Nebiyat): the fast preceding Christmas and which lasts for some 40 days. It begins with Sibket on 15th of the Ethiopian month of Hedar and ends on Christmas Eve with the feast of Gena on the 28th of Tahsas.
3. **ጾመ ገነድ**/The Gahad of Epiphany: the fast on the eves of Epiphany and Christmas
4. **The Great Lent**: This fast is also known as Fast of *Hudade* or **ዐቢይ ጾም**/Abiy Tsom. It is moveable and lasts for fifty five days
5. **Jonah's Fast of three days** also known as Fast of Ninevah (**ጾመ ነነዌ**/Nenawe): This is also a fast of movable dates and is observed in commemoration of the preaching of Jonah. It comes on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of the third week before Lent.
6. **Apostles' Fast** (**ጾመ ሐዋርያት**/Tsome Hawariat): It begins on Monday after Pentecost and ends on the 5th of July.
7. **Assumption of St. Virgin Mary** (**ጾመ ፍልሰታ ለማርያም**/Tsome Filseta): This fast is held from August 1-15 and is dearly observed by many.