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The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church Faith and Order
www.ethiopianorthodox.org

4th Sunday of Fasika (The Passover from death to eternal life)

1Peter 3 : 15 – f

Acts 11 : 1 – 19

Psalm 3 : 5, 6

I recline to rest and I sleep,
I awake and rise, for the Lord does keep me.
I will not be afraid of throngs of people

Luke 24 : 33 – 45

REFLEXIONS (commentary challenging all to take these readings to heart)

To properly celebrate this fourth Sunday of Christ's victory over death, our faithful Fathers left us this specific set of Scripture readings. The central learning objective of this selection explains that our celebration should prompt us to participate in that victory, yielding true peace. The first essential step is to be initiated into a living covenant with God. The most prominent Old Testament covenant which God revealed was that with Abraham. The sign of that covenant was circumcision of all males who lived unto the eighth day. Even as it began, God told Abraham that thus, eventually, all the families of the earth would be blessed. (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18)

Christ, of Abraham's seed, having offered the ultimate sacrifice, rose from the dead, and appeared, commissioning His Apostles to go forth and baptize all nations. Since it is the new birth into life with God, baptism is the initiation into the new and everlasting covenant: "The Eighth Day." In baptism, as we go down into the water, we die with Christ, hid with Him in God. (Col. 3:3) When He shall appear again, then also, shall we appear with Him in glory. As we progressively cut earthly attachments, which are earth-bound, we, also, ready each other_ by all our actions_ to answer for this reason of hope that is in us. (1Pt 3:15) Like His disciples, with whom He ate, we must be nourished in the breaking of the bread to recognize God's will for us_ even when it requires temporary suffering. As we work with His grace growing in us, we learn to fulfill all righteousness by replacing vices with virtue.