

2015-05-28

## Fråga-svar

### Eritrea. Tideräkning och dopbevis i den Eritreanska ortodoxa kyrkan i Eritrea.

#### Fråga

1. Vilken tideräkning använder den Eritreanska ortodoxa kyrkan i Eritrea?
2. Vilken tideräkning används på dopbevis utställda av den Eritreanska ortodoxa kyrkan i Eritrea?

#### Svar

##### 1. Tideräkning

Källorna nedan uppger att Eritrea använder den Gregorianska kalendern som officiell kalender medan den Eritreanska ortodoxa kyrkan som liturgisk kalender följer den etiopiska kalendern – *Geez* – eller den Julianska kalendern. Läs utdragen nedan där olika uppgifter förekommer och förklaras. Hur den etiopiska kalendern/*Geez*/ortodoxa året är uppbyggt beskrivs i utdragen nedan.

Calendar Converter (2015):

The Ethiopian calendar, also called the Ge'ez calendar, is the principal calendar used in Ethiopia and also serves as the liturgical calendar for Christians in Eritrea belonging to the Eritrean Orthodox Church, Eastern Catholic Church and Lutheran Evangelical Church of Eritrea. It is based on the older Alexandrian or Coptic calendar, which in turn derives from the Egyptian calendar, but like the Julian calendar, it adds a leap day every four years without exception, and begins the year on August 29 or

August 30 in the Julian calendar. A seven- to eight-year gap between the Ethiopian and Gregorian calendars results from alternate calculations in determining the date of the Annunciation of Jesus.

E-bok via Google: *Ethiopia: The Land, Its People, History and Culture* (2013):

The Ethiopian calendar (Amharic: የኢትዮጵያ ዘመን አቆጣጠር *yä'ityōppya zāmān ākoṭaṭār*), also serves as the liturgical calendar for Christians in Eritrea belonging to the Eritrean Orthodox Church, Eastern Catholic Church and Lutheran Evangelical Church of Eritrea.

Like the Coptic calendar, the Ethiopian calendar has twelve months of 30 days each, plus five or six epagomenal days, which comprise a thirteenth month.

The Ethiopian months begin on the same days as those of the Coptic calendar but their names are in Ge'ez.

The sixth epagomenal day is added every four years without exception on August 29 of the Julian calendar, six months before the Julian leap day. Thus the first day of the Ethiopian year, 1 Mäskäräm, for years between 1901 and 2099 (inclusive), is usually September 11 (Gregorian), but falls on September 12 in years before the Gregorian leap year.

The current year (2012) according to the Ethiopian calendar is 2005, which began on September 11, 2012 AD of the Gregorian calendar.

(s. 243)

E-bok via Google: *Eritrea Nations in Focus* (2010):

Post-independent Eritrea adopted the Gregorian (European) calendar as its official calendar. Hence, public holidays and official festivities are celebrated on the basis of the Gregorian calendar. However, a great majority of religious holidays are also celebrated on the basis of the ancient liturgical (Ge'ez or Alexandrian/Julian) as well as Muslim calendars. Adherents of the Orthodox *Tewahdo*, the Roman Catholic and Lutheran religions, follow the Ge'ez calendar while Eritrean Muslim populations celebrate their holidays on the basis of the lunar calendar. Therefore, there are three applicable calendars in Eritrea: the Gregorian calendar (which is used for official purposes), the Ge'ez calendar (which is used by great majority of Christian populations), and the lunar calendar (used by the Muslim sections of the Eritrean population).

(s. 357)

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the basis of lunar observances; hence, they change almost every year. The Ge'ez calendar follows characters closely related to the ancient Egyptian solar year. The Ge'ez calendar year comprises 12 months of 30 days each as well as 5 extra days known as *pagume* (ጸጉመ) or *pagumen* (ጸጉሜን). "The years are in groups of four. Each of the four years, called *zāmān* [ዘመን] (lit. "time," receives the name of an Evangelist (Mathew, Mark, Luke . . . )" (Fritsch and Zenetti 2003: 668). Unlike the Gregorian calendar (reformed by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582), the Ge'ez calendar is mostly similar to the Julian system; however, it also differs some from the Coptic and Julian calendars (see also Fritsch and Zenetti 2003: 668). In the following sections, the Tigrinya names

(s. 357)

Shabait, Eritrea Ministry of Information (2011):

When it comes to the Geez New Year, people and especially foreigners, get confused about the notion of celebrating New Year in September. The fact remains while officially Eritrea follows the Gregorian calendar (GC); the elders usually stick to the Julian calendar for traditional and religious holidays. According to the Julian calendar, the year, which starts in September, is divided into 12 months of 30 days each and a 13th month, known as Pagumien (a Greek word meaning addition) of 5 days and 6 days in leap years (like the present year).

Nazret (2006-12-29):

A renowned Ethiopian born U.S scholar, Prof. Ephraim Isaac said that the Ethiopian calendar is unique in that it belongs neither to the Julian, nor to the Gregorian calendars.

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Prof. Ephraim also said that many people mistakenly assume that Ethiopian calendar is Julian. "The Gregorian calendar is actually the revisions of Julian calendar, which Pop Gregory edited or decided according to certain calculations," he said.

Months in both Julian and Gregorian have 30 and 31 days, and with February or June either 28 or 29 days during the leap year, he explained and said that the two do share similar character in terms of months and 365 days, which is 366 days in each leap year.

But, he said, months in the Ethiopian calendar which is based on Mestehafe-Hissab (Book of Calculation), the derivatives of the Alexandrian Jewish calendar, have equal 30 days, and then Pagumen, which is the 13th month of 5 days and 6 in each leap year, he said.

Australia. Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (2006):

For centuries Eritrea has followed the Ethiopian calendar which is based on the Julian calendar as opposed to the Western Gregorian calendar. The Ethiopian year is on average 365.25 days long, causing the calendar to gain a day about every 134 years. The Ethiopian year consists of 365 days, divided into twelve months of thirty days each, plus

one additional month of five days and six in leap years. The Eritrean/Ethiopian new year begins on 11 September and ends the following 10 September. The Eritrean/Ethiopian year also runs almost eight years behind the Western Gregorian year. For example, the Eritrean/Ethiopian year 1983 began on 11 September 1990, according to the Western (Gregorian) calendar, and ended on 10 September 1991. However, Eritrea has substantially adopted the more universal Gregorian calendar for business and official use. (s. 13-14)

E-bok via Google: *Mai Weini, a Highland Village in Eritrea: A Study of the People, Their Livelihood, and Land Tenure During Times of Turbulence* (1998):

The traditional agricultural life of the Eritrean peasant is not only influenced by ecological changes, but also marked out by an abundant number of saint's days, feasts and fasts ordained by the Orthodox Church, which directly impinge on the work on the land. These red-letter days—which are ordered according to the ancient Julian calendar which survives nowhere else in the world than among the clergy in Eritrea and Ethiopia—constitute the framework of accepted behavior for the peasants in relation to their agricultural work. Since religion permeates all aspects of everyday life of a villager, acquiring knowledge about the Orthodox Church and its calendar becomes essential for a general understanding of peasant life.

The Orthodox (Coptic) year consists of 365 days distributed over twelve months, each of thirty days, plus one additional month at the end of the year containing five days only (six days in leap years).<sup>1</sup> The Julian year commences at a different point in time than the Gregorian and has, in consequence a different New Year's Day. This means that from 11 September till 31 December the Orthodox calendar is seven years behind the Gregorian one, while, for the remaining part of the year, the gap amounts to eight years. The years in the Orthodox calendar are classified (s. 166)

## 2. Dopbevis

Enligt uppgifter från en präst i Eritreanska ortodoxa kyrkan i Sverige kan både den Gregorianska och den gamla tideräkningen/Julianska förekomma på dopbevis som utfärdas i Eritrea. I praktiken innebär det att vilken tideräkning/kalender som används beror på den enskilda präst som utfärdar dopbeviset.

### Konsulterade källor

Sökning har gjorts i följande källor:

Dow Jones Factiva  
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IRIN News

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Denna sammanställning av information/länkar är baserad på informationssökningar gjorda under en begränsad tid. Den är sammanställd utifrån noggrant utvalda och allmänt tillgängliga informationskällor. Alla använda källor refereras. All information som presenteras, med undantag av obestridda/uppenbara fakta, har dubbelkontrollerats om inget annat anges. Sammanställningen gör inte anspråk på att vara uttömmande och bör inte tillmätas exklusivt bevisvärde i samband med avgörandet av ett enskilt ärende. Informationen i sammanställningen återspeglar inte nödvändigtvis Migrationsverkets officiella ståndpunkt i en viss fråga och det finns ingen avsikt att genom sammanställningen göra politiska ställningstaganden. Refererade dokument bör läsas i sitt sammanhang.

## Källförteckning

Länkarna kontrollerade 2015-05-27

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### **Muntlig källa**

Präst i Eritreanska ortodoxa kyrkan i Sverige, i telefonsamtal med Lifos, 2015-05-28