

# By Precepts Taught of Ages Past

Neale

1. By precepts taught of ages past,  
now let us keep again the fast  
which year by year, in order meet  
of forty days is made complete.
2. The law and seers that were of old  
in diverse ways this Lent foretold,  
which Christ himself, the Lord and guide  
of every season sanctified.
3. More sparing, therefore, let us make  
the words we speak, the food we take;  
deny ourselves in mirth and sleep,  
in stricter watch our senses keep.
4. Avoid the evil thoughts that roll  
like waters o'er the heedless soul;  
nor let the foe occasion find  
our souls in slavery to bind.
5. Blest Three-in-One and One-in-Three,  
almighty God, we pray to thee,  
that thou wouldst now vouchsafe to bless  
our fast with fruits of righteousness.

Inspiration: "Ex more docti mystico"; ascr. to Gregory the Great, ca. 540-604.

Lyrics: 88.88; tr. John M. Neale, 1818-1866, in "The Hymnal Noted", 1851 as "The Fast as Taught by Holy Lore"; adapt. in "Hymns Ancient and Modern", 1861.