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Article

Praises of the Cross, Waddase Mäsqäl, by Abba Giyorgis of Gasačča:

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Praises of the Cross, *Wəddase Məsqāl*, by *Abba* Giyorgis of Gāsočča

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Introduction:

According to local tradition, the prolific author *Abba* Giyorgis of Gāsočča/Sāgla (died in 1427) wrote a work praising the holy Cross, titled *Wəddase Məsqāl* or “Praises of the Cross,” comparable to *Praises of Mary* (*Wəddase Maryam*). This is the work, I believe, the text of which I present here from EMML 5041,1 copied for Fassāha Krosōs (fol. 16’ and passim) during the reign of Asē Lbnā Dāngal (1508–40). At the time of its microfilming, the manuscript belonged to Liqā Məzəmmrān La’skā Maryam, with baptismal name Gābrā Məsqāl (fol. 76’ and passim). It was also owned by Ra’sā Dābr Abbābā Gʷa[n]gw (fol. 74’).

The tradition about its composition can be taken as credible for several reasons. First, the *Gādîl* or “Acts” of *Abba* Giyorgis, includes it in the list of the saint’s works.2 Second, the following quotation from *Abba* Giyorgis’s *Māshafà Məstir* signals that the Cross, like the Blessed Virgin, was a subject in which the author was interested:

Furthermore, there is a report that ran through our ears on how people contend about (the position of) Mary and the Cross: While some say Mary is greater than his [Christ’s] Cross because she bore him, others say the Cross is greater because it was immersed in the blood of his sufferings. But we say, “We believe in Maria, that she is the Mother of God, and we believe in the Cross, that it is a sign of light that has been sanctified with the blood of the humanity of his Divinity.”3

1 Parchment, 76 fols., 14.5 x 12.5 cm, 2 cols., 12 lines to a colon.
3 Cf. YAQOB BEYENE 1990: 8.
It would not be surprising for Abba Giyorgis, given his views on Mary and the Cross expressed in this quotation, and given that he had already written extensively in praise of Mary, to write about the Cross as well. Furthermore, as we shall see, the Woddase Mäs₂āl that I present here is written in the unmistakable style of Abba Giyorgis, a style that is clearly discernible in his other works, especially his Aragonā Woddase, Ṣḥoḥṭā Barḥan and Ḫnizira Ṣḥabḥ. The present work ends, just as his Aragonā Woddase does, with a solicitation of the blessing of the saints, from Adam to the present Christian community. Note also that Dillmann has found the word ḪnDQ�F, derived from ḪnDQ only in the Māḥṣafā Ṣḥṭir by the same Abba Giyorgis. The appearance of this word in this Woddase Mäs₂āl (fol. 32v) and the Māḥṣafā Ṣḥṭir puts to rest, if any doubt remains regarding the question of authorship of this Woddase Mäs₂āl. Indeed, the two works include several other words derived in the same fashion from existing ones. Giyorgis was not only in command of the Gǝz.language and its literature, he was also a master at coining new words.

One final point: The Church during the time of Abba Giyorgis (that is, the time of the reigns of Dawit, 1382–1411, to Zār’a Ya’aqob, 1434–1468), gave extreme reverence to both the Cross and Mary. We know that the two prayers, called Māṣṭōbqәz-Maryam (“Supplication of Mary”) and Māṣṭōbqәz-za-Mäs₂āl (“Supplication of the Cross”), were composed to be recited together, as they still are. Emperor Zār’a Ya’aqob’s complaint against the Ṣṭifanosites was that they refused “to worship or bow to Mary and the Cross of her Son”. The reported appearance of light at the land of Iba, light that inspired Zār’a Ya’aqob to change Iba’s name to Dābrā Barḥan, i.e. “Mount Light,” took place on the feast day of the Holy Cross, 10 Māggabit, 38 days after the Ṣṭifanosites were condemned to various punishments for refusing “to worship or bow to Mary and the Cross of her Son”. Consistent with this reverence for Mary and the Cross, during this period the Church produced vast, well documented literature about Mary but virtually no known literature about the Cross. Given that Mary and the Cross were worshipped equally and inseparably, it seems to me that the Church of Abba Giyorgis’s day simply could not have been without at least one composition glorifying the Cross.

Admittedly, the Woddase Mäs₂āl has not been as widely circulated as the Miracles of Mary, which was heavily promoted by Emperor Zār’a Ya’aqob. Nevertheless, the Mäs₂āl has been the subject of a great deal of under-

4 DILLMANN 1970, col. 1304; and YAQOB BEYENE 1990: 46.
5 Ṣḥaḥṭā Ṣḥfr, p. 113.
6 PERRUCHON 1893: 70.
Praises of the Cross, Waddase Mäsqäl, by Abba Giyorgis of Gassača

ground literature. For example, the Ḥaṣurā Mäsqäl or “Rampant of the Cross” comes in countless versions.⁷

Giyorgis’s understanding of what the Cross and Christ’s death on it mean to the Church and his symbolic interpretations of the event are presented in this text in his usual eloquent language. The following sentences might serve as examples:

Your Cross is a dowry for the bride (the Christian Church) and a certificate for the one you divorced in the synagogue (Judaism) (fol. 53v).

For I am your servant, the son of your handmaid, (cf. Ps 115/116: 16) and the son of the holy Church that you bought with your blood, (the Church that) you set free by the slapping you suffered, beautified by your death, (to which) you appeared by your resurrection, exalted by your ascension and decorated by your sitting at the right of the Father (fols. 59v-60r).

Your Cross, O Lord, is the bed of your wedding on which you were wedded to your holy Church, washed with the spring of water that flowed from your side, and sealed with the fountain of blood that dripped from your right side (fol. 63v).

Make me refreshed by the fragrance of your perfume that attracted virgins to follow you, martyrs to carry the partnership of your suffering, and the righteous to take up the yoke of your Cross (fol. 43v).

The Cross is, it almost goes without saying, an important and sacred religious object for the Church of Ethiopia. Mäskäräm 17, the day Queen Ellen, mother of Constantine the Great, found the true Cross is a major annu-

⁷ See LIFCHIZ – GRÉBAUT 1940.
al feast. The celebration starts with the building of a huge bonfire on the eve; the light of the fire symbolizes the light the holy Cross gives to the entire world. Emperor Zär'a Ya'qob, who assumed the name of Constantine and modeled his life according to this Caesar, ordered his Christian subjects to paint the sign of the Cross on the clothes they wore, the staffs they carried, and on their weapons and ploughs. If the “Supplication for the Cross” was to be strictly followed, the Cross is to be worshipped:

\[ \text{Supplication for the Cross} \]

\[ \text{Supplication for the Cross} \]

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9 See also *Aethiopica* 2:4, pp. 818–819.
Let the priest say:

We supplicate also the wood of the holy Cross,
Which is of firm authority and power,
And of different image and body,
From the image of the rod of Aaron the priest of shadow and likeness.
The rod of Aaron that spouted and fruited peach without being planted,
Standing outside,
Did not save a just person or redeem a sinner,
For it has no ability or (the power of) victory.
But the Cross of Christ is our redeemer and our power.
It has saved the just and the sinner
From the servitude of our enemy Satan,
Taking authority from God\textsuperscript{10} our God.\textsuperscript{11}

Let the deacon say:

Pray before the Cross, all of you the faithful,
Holding it with the right (hand),
And denouncing Satan,
Because it has been sanctified with the blood of Christ the Savior.

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Aget'abher}.
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Amlakonä}.
Let the laity say:
Honored you are, O Cross, king of woods.
Honored you are, O wood of the Cross.
Honored you are, O sanctified one with the blood of Christ the Word.

Let the priest say:
We Christians prostrate to the ground for the honor of this Cross,  
With fear and trembling,  
Because the Creator himself, in the person of the Son,  
Sanctified it with his blood, not with the blood of another one,  
When divinity died on this Cross in his humanity.  
But humanity never separated from his Divinity nor was it mingled  
With it.  
With the rod of this Cross his Apostles (raised) the dead,  
As they worked wonders,  
They cast demons,  
Broke idols.  
Therefore, the teachers of the holy Gospel,  
The likeness of the exalted Creator,  
Have ordered,  
That we prostrate before the Cross and the Virgin Mary.  
We prostrate before Mary because God her Creator,  
Took flesh from her flesh,  
And we found salvation from her.  
And (we prostrate) before the Cross, as we said before,  
Because blood dripped on it,  
Of the non-suffering Word who suffered in the nature of flesh.  
These two crenatures deserve glory of the Creator,  
Because they are equal in their honor.  
Now, always and forever and ever. Amen.

The following hymn (mâzmur) is taken from Vat. etiop. 28, fol. 30v, a 15th-century manuscript of the Doggo da12

\[ \text{The hymn in Ethiopian script.} \]

Praises of the Cross, Waddase Mäsqäl, by Abba Giyorgis of Gasaḥča

In 1: Today the Cross is glorified.
Today the Cross gave light to brothers.
And to those who are in darkness, their light is the Cross.
We take refuge with you.
Help us, and save us,
For the sake of your name that is set on us.

In 1: There is a certain country that is bright like the sun;
A rampart with the sign of the Cross encircles her construction and foundation.

In 1: There are who say, “Do you worship wood? And do you make a feast for (a piece of) wood?”
Has not his honored blood sanctified the wood of the Cross? Therefore, we worship it.

The word ዆ብ (‘az) in ዆ብ መ⊔ፋ (e.g. “wood of the Cross”) poses a problem in the translation. It stands for the English “wood,” “tree,” “plant” and “(medical) herb.” In the text, the same Gǝz word, ăz (‘az), is used to describe the Cross as being any of these English words. To choose only one of these meanings results in a loss of meaning, whereas alternating among the several meanings is both inconsistent and diminishes the beauty of the author’s language. But alternation is encouraged by the fact that the English Bible uses “tree” in Acts 5: 30, 10: 39, and 13: 29, with the word “wood” hardly appearing in connection with the cross.

One would expect Abba Giyorgis, the combatant and polemic theologian, to raise and refute in his Waddase Mäsqäl some of the Christological controversies he dealt with elsewhere. There is not much such discussion in this text, but what is there is succinct and precise. He expresses his defense of the tawā ḥadd faith, or Cyril’s miaphysitism, with a clear formulation. When it comes to local controversies that started centuries after him, the Unctionists, members of one of the three schools of thought, might find support in his statement, እንግ ዝሚለው እንግ እንግ ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለው ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝሚለwald ዝмещен ዝмещен ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバー ዝメンバ
The Father is the anointer; the Son is the anointed; and the Holy Spirit is the ointment.\(^{13}\)

As a prayer book intended for daily prayer like the \textit{Waddase Maryam} and his Arganoná \textit{Waddase}, the \textit{Waddase Mäsqäl} was obviously divided into the days of the week. However, in this single copy of EMML 5041, although the divisions are clearly marked, it is not clear which part is for which day of the week. Erasures of the names of the days of the week and the unclear replacement of them by other names have resulted in confusion. Therefore, I will only note the divisions with a sign.

It is unfortunate that I was not able to find any copy of the \textit{Waddase Mäsqäl} other than the one at hand, in EMML 5041. Although EMML 5041 was copied clearly and well preserved, it has been affected by many copying errors. Although it is a 16\textsuperscript{th}-century copy, the amendment suggested on fol. 14\textsuperscript{v} to keep the wrong but respected word \textit{⻈} shows that the \textit{Vorlage} of EMML 5041 was not the original text, but one with copying mistakes such as this \textit{⻈} for \textit{⻈}. The manuscript was proofread at least twice, first in the same hand that copied the text, hopefully against the scribe’s \textit{Vorlage}, and later in a 20\textsuperscript{th}-century hand. The (two) proofreaders caught many errors, but many remain uncorrected, and some have been “corrected” erroneously. However, since the beliefs and style of \textit{Abba Giyorgis} are well known from his other works and since the biblical quotations are discernible and numerous, I believe I have reconstructed the text to an acceptable level, bracketing expressions that I have introduced as have been overlooked, and putting in the apparatus the words I replaced.

Admittedly, a good number of my corrections are supported neither by \textit{Abba Giyorgis}’s style nor the biblical scriptures. Moreover, some of my restorations of biblical words could be wrong because I might be using a different version of the Bible. \textit{Abba Giyorgis}’s use of the words \textit{⻈} for \textit{⻈} that we have today in Genesis 14: 3 is an example. In this and other such cases, it is not clear whether the author simply misremembered the quote or used a Bible that differs from the \textit{textus receptus}.

It is also possible to question whether the extensive texts I offered to restore, such as the one from the Psalms on fol. 8\textsuperscript{v}, \[\textit{⻈}, \ldots\] were really overlooked by the scribes. But I believe they were, because sections of text were immediately copied again, one by one, to be commented upon. Note also in this example that what follows the reintroduced quotation begins with \textit{⻈}, the same words with which the example begins, when copied again to be commented upon.

\(^{13}\) See \textit{Getatchew Haile} 1990.
Here is another example of an error that was clearly missed by the scribe: The flow of the text indicates that the question [ъӃӿӗң֓پкԺ֓ӺԟӇ֓ԈӚԓъԦӑяӈ֓ԓԥдчҤң֓ԊӇԥѷԧь] (fol. 6v) was missed. The author raised the question about each of four rivers that branch from a river flowing out of Eden to water the Garden (Genesis 2:10), to offer his interpretation of the rivers as prophetic symbols to the Cross and Christ who was crucified on it. Accordingly, it seems beyond doubt that the scribe mistakenly omitted [ъӃӿӗң֓پкԺ֓ӺԟӇ֓ߙѪԓԓъԓԥдчҤң֓ԊӇԥѷԧь] (fol. 8v).

But what of the reconstructed omissions that are not rooted in the Bible? There are indeed many of these. At least I have ventured reasonable guesses for many of the shorter ones. Here is an example: The expression, [ӊפӌ֓кӂԦђ֓ԊӇԥѷԧь] (fol. 23v), does not make sense. The original proofreader did not attempt to rectify it, either because he did not know how to or did not notice the problem. The next proofreader (of the 20th century) did try: As a restoration, he added ӃӠ֓кӂԦђ֓ԊӇԥѷԧь to the end of ӊפӌ֓кӂ and produced the word ӊפӌ֓кӂԦђ֓ԊӇԥѷԧь, “tomorrow,” a good Gosz word. But the emendation did not add much to sentence’s clarity, because ӊפӌ֓кӂԦђ֓ԊӇԥѷԧь. It is not only tomorrow that we wish us does not sensibly go with the author’s thought. But if the flow of the thought is followed strictly, it would lead to ӊפӌ֓кӂԦђ֓ԊӇԥѷԧь. Another interesting case is [ӊפӌ֓кӂԦђ֓ԊӇԥѷԧь] (fol. 16r). Its translation would be “(Root out my enemies) so that my life might be in hiding/mysteriously.” The sentence is grammatical, but its sense does not fit into the ideas of the text. My guess is that it was [ӊפӌ֓кӂԦђ֓ԊӇԥѷԧь] (fol. 5v) (to ӊپӌ֓кҷԓԦђ֓ԊӇԥѷԧь). When words in possessive case are objects (accusative) the object marker is inconsistently dropped, e.g. ԓՒҧӚ֓ԓҤӊ 舳 ԓҤӊ 不得转载, ԓҤӊ 不得转载. Also, I am not sure if the frequent change of person and number are copying errors or are correct according to the language of the time. I have changed only the ones that seemed most awkward to me. There are a few cases where ӊпӌ֓кӂ comes in place of ӊпӌ֓кӂ. I have reluctantly let them stand.

Punctuation and paragraphing are mine. In the translation, words in parentheses are supplied in an effort to make the message understandable.

Getachew Haile

ω-φλ: ω-φλ

Text:

(fol. 5) ω-φλ: λ*λλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλλlambda

fol. 5* 1 MS "ω-φλ.

fol. 5* 1 MS "ω-φλ."

| 3 Altered to "ω-φλ. at proofreading" |
| 4 Added at proofreading |
| 4 MS "ω-φλ." |
| 6* 1 MS ω-φλ. |
| 6* 1 MS ω-φλ. |

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Praises of the Cross, Waddase Mäsqäl, by Abba Giyorgis of Gassača

faithful, in contrast to Ḫādīa: Ḫādīa, "Catechumen" 2 For Ḫādī: Ḫādī 1.

fol. 7r 1 MS "רגיש 1.

fol. 7v 1 MS "κατανόησαν 1 | 2 "Committed Christians" or "Faithful," in contrast to Ḫādīa: Ḫādīa, "Catechumen" 2 For Ḫādī: Ḫādī 1.

fol. 8r 1 MS "نحن 1 | 2 MS "نحن 1 | 3 "Committed Christians" or "Faithful," in contrast to Ḫādīa: Ḫādīa, "Catechumen" 2 For Ḫādī: Ḫādī 1.

fol. 8v 1 MS "نحن 1 | 2 For "نحن 1 | 3 "Committed Christians" or "Faithful," in contrast to Ḫādīa: Ḫādīa, "Catechumen" 2 For Ḫādī: Ḫādī 1.

fol. 9r 1 MS added at proofreading | 2 MS "نحن 1 | 3 "Committed Christians" or "Faithful," in contrast to Ḫādīa: Ḫādīa, "Catechumen" 2 For Ḫādī: Ḫādī 1.

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Getatchew Haile

\( \text{Getatchew Haile} \)

\( \text{Aethiopica 14 (2011) 58} \)

\( \text{Aethiopica 14 (2011) 58} \)
Praises of the Cross, *Waddase Mäsqāl*, by *Abba* Giyorgis of Gassača

fol. 13r 1 MS

fol. 14r 1

fol. 13v 1 MS

fol. 12v 1 MS

Praises of the Cross, *Abba* Giyorgis of Gassača

fol. 14v 1 MS

altered to

*Abba* Giyorgis of Gassača

fol. 13 Or

*Abba* Giyorgis of Gassača

fol. 14 | 2 MS adds

fol. 14 | 7 MS adds

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The original could be “you shut it up”.

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\[a\] [b] [c] [d] [e] [f] [g] [h] [i] [j] [k] [l] [m] [n] [o] [p] [q] [r] [s] [t] [u] [v] [w] [x] [y] [z]

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fol. 19v 1 MS өŀт | 2 MS ҭҭ | 3 MS ҭҭ | 4 MS ҭҭ | 5 MS ҭҭ | 6 MS ҭҭ | 7 Obvisually in the form of ҭҭ | 8 MS ҭҭ | 9 Added.
fol. 20v 1 MS ҭҭ | 2 MS їԓ | 3 MS їԓ | 4 MS їԓ | 5 MS їԓ | 6 MS їԓ | 7 MS їԓ | 8 MS їԓ | 9 Added.
fol. 21v 1 їԓ | added | 2 MS їԓ | 3 MS їԓ | 4 MS їԓ | 5 MS їԓ | 6 MS їԓ | 7 Obvisually in the form of їԓ | 8 MS їԓ | 9 Added.
Praises of the Cross, Waddase Mâsqâl, by Abba Giyorgis of Gassêña

...
Getatchew Haile

folios 30v-31v

....

fol. 30v (1) | 2 Alphabetic letters were added later | 3 MS "n".
fol. 30v (2) | 1 Alphabetic letter was added later | 2 MS "m", added later | 3 MS "ч".
fol. 31v (1) | 1 Alphabetic letters were added later | 2 Alphabetic letters were added later | 3 MS adds "ъ".
fol. 31v (2) | 1 Alphabetic letters were added later | 2 Alphabetic letters were added later | 3 MS adds "ъ".

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Praises of the Cross, *Waddase Mäqsäl*, by *Abba* Giyorgis of Gasača

(folios 32r-34r)

1 MS "ά-άά") | 2 MS "ά-άά") with ά and ά added | 3 MS adds άάάά") | 4 MS adds άάάά")

fol. 32r 1 MS ά-άά") | 2 MS "ά-άά") with ά and ά added | 3 MS adds άάάά") | 4 MS adds άάάά")

fol. 32r 1 MS "ά-άά") | 2 See introduction.

fol. 33r 1 MS άάάά") | 2 MS "ά-άά") | 3 MS adds άάάά") | 4 MS adds άάάά")

fol. 33r 1 MS "ά-άά") | 2 MS "ά-άά") | 3 ά added | 4 MS "άά")

fol. 34r 1 MS άάάά") | 2 MS "ά-άά") | 3 ά added | 4 MS "άά")
Aethiopica 14 (2011)
Praises of the Cross, Waddase Mäsqäl, by Abba Giyorgis of Gasačěa

fol. 42v | 1 MS “$Ah” | 2 MS “$c” | 3 MS “$c” | 4 MS “$c” | 5 MS “$c” | 6 MS “$c” | 7 MS “$c”
fol. 42r | 1 MS “$c” | 2 MS “$c” | 3 MS “$c” | 4 MS “$c” | 5 MS “$c” | 6 MS “$c” | 7 MS “$c”
fol. 43v | 1 MS “$c” | 2 MS “$c” | 3 MS “$c” | 4 MS “$c” | 5 MS “$c” | 6 MS “$c” | 7 MS “$c”
fol. 43r | 1 MS “$c” | 2 MS “$c” | 3 MS “$c” | 4 MS “$c” | 5 MS “$c” | 6 MS “$c” | 7 MS “$c”

Aethiopica 14 (2011)
Getachew Haile

folios 44v

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>(\text{folio 45r})</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>(\text{folio 44v})</td>
<td>(\text{folio 45r})</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

fol. 44v 1 MS " affection | 2 MS " affection | 3 MS " affection | 4 Altered from " affection | 5 Added | 6 added.

fol. 44v 1 Altered from " affection | 2 MS " affection | 3 MS " affection | 4 MS " affection | 5 MS " affection | 6 added.

fol. 46v 1 MS " affection | 2 MS " affection | 3 MS " affection | 4 MS " affection | 5 MS " affection | 6 added.

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fol. 49v 1 MS "ם" 1 | 2 MS adds ר"ת | 3 b added.
fol. 50 1 Corrected from ה(fol. 50)ה" | 2 MS יד | 3 MS д | 4 MS יד | 5 MS יד.
fol. 50 1 MS י | 2 MS א | 3 MS א | 4 MS א | 5 MS א.
fol. 51 1 This place name is not given in Genesis at the expected place | 2 MS רד | 3 MS רד
fol. 51 1 h added | 2 MS א | 3 MS א | 4 MS א | 5 MS א.
Praises of the Cross, Wǝddǝse Mǝsqǝl, by Abba Gıyorgis of Gǝsačǝ

Aethiopica 14 (2011)
Getatchew Haile

Aethiopica 14 (2011) 76
Praises of the Cross, *Waddase Mäsqăl*, by Abba Gıyorgis of Gasača

fol. 57v \(\text{MS}\) 1

(\(\text{MS}\) 1)
Praises of the Cross, Waddase Mäsqal, by Abba Giyorgis of Gasaća

fol. 62r 1 Cf., for example, Deut 22: 9 MS adds a tail. 2 Altered to a. 3 Altered to h. 4 MS adds C. 5 MS adds C. 6 MS adds C and adds h. 7 MS adds C and replaces an erased word. 8 MS adds C. 9 MS adds C and adds h. 10 MS adds C.

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Praises of the Cross, Waddase Mäs𝑞ѝl, by Abba Giyorgis of Gassaęża

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Getatchew Haile

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Praises of the Cross, Waddase Mäsqäl, by Abba Giyorgis of Gasača

(by) Giyorgis of Gasača

Praises of the Cross,

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Getatchew Haile

λ.ջř.ջջ : ƛ̄ڕ^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^ա^а}
Praises of the Cross, *Wāddase Māsqāl*, by Abba Giyorgis of Gasača

Praises of the Cross

Translation:

(fol. 5r) In the name of God who is first without yesterday,
Of the middle time without today,
Of latter days without tomorrow,
Of the ancient days without age,
Creator of all without exhaustion,
And a sea of compassion without limit,
Behold, we write Praises of the Cross – addressing its great attributes – and,
behold, we declare its glory – addressing the prophesy that was proclaimed
about it heretofore.
The Cross is a tree of life.
The Cross is a medical plant.
The Cross is a tree of prophesy.
The Cross is a tree of rest.
The Cross is an axe of (fol. 5v) perdition against Satan, and a sword for cut-
ting off the heads of demons.
The Cross is a javelin of fire that pierces evil spirits, and an arrow of light-
ening that strikes the soldiers of the Devil.¹
The Cross is a fortress that he who does not carry the seal of the Trinity
cannot reach.
The Cross is a shield of righteousness from right and left.
The Cross is a weapon of war, as the Apostle Paul has said, “For your fight
is not against flesh and blood.”²
The Cross is a coat of mail of faith that neither scratching (fol. 6r) of an ar-
row can tear nor spears and javelins strike.
The Cross is made in the image of the hands of Moses in the wilderness of
Rephidim for fighting Amalek.³
The Cross is what sweetened the bitter water in the wilderness of Shur
when it was put in it by the hand of Moses.²
The Cross is a seal of holiness and purity.
The Cross is a crown of victory for combatants and the decoration of glory
for those invited to the wedding of the lamb.³
The Cross is a spring that does not dry up and a well of honor filled with benefits.
The Cross is the tree of the Garden (of Eden) that the four rivers water.
(fol. 6v) The name of the first river is Pison from which flows wine of mys-


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tery that God prepared for his saints. The second river is Gihon from which flows honey comb, the share of the pure ones. The name of the third river is Tigris from which flows ointment of oil to soften the body of the (spiritual) combatants. The name of the fourth river is Euphrates from which flows milk of comprehension, which is the drink of pleasure and gladness.¹

Who is the river of wine? Who is the river of honey? Who is the river of ointment? And who is (fol. 7 r) the river of milk? Behold, it is Jesus Christ who is called the river of wine because of the wine of joy that flowed from his side, as David says, “You have put gladness in our heart more than when the seed of wheat, wine and oil abound,”¹ “and oil for shining the face.”²

Behold, the prophet showed the three united into one word. What he said “more than when the seed of wheat and wine” is about the offering of the body and blood of the Son of God. And what he said “and oil for shining the face” is about the oil of balsam that is given for the seal of baptism, which is the example (fol. 7’) of the smoothness of Jesus Christ. Everyone who lives in belief in him will not be coarse, but is softer than silk. Therefore, behold, he who becomes faithful Christian¹ is sealed with balsam oil, as he wears the smoothness (of) Jesus Christ,² as David says in his Psalms, “You prepared a table before me, in the presence of those who torture me. And you softened my head with ointment. And your cup is strong; it gives enough drink.”³ Behold, the beginning of this psalm says, “God pastures me, (fol. 8’) I shall not want.”¹ For whoever believes in Christ is (part of) the flock of Christ. God pastures him and he shall not want anything in the path of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, he repeats, saying, “In a grassy land, there he makes me lie down; he keeps me beside still water. He turns my spirit and leads me in the right path, for his name’s sake.”² The grassy land is the Church, the pasture of the flock of Christ. “He keeps me beside still water” refers to the water of baptism. “He turns my spirit and leads me in the right path” means he turns me from ignorance to knowledge. Indeed, because of your name, “Even if (fol. 8’) I walk through the shadow of death, I do not fear evil for you are with me.”¹ Whoever believes in Christ does not fear dying for the sake of his name, as he says in the Gospel, “Behold, everyone who acknowledges me before others I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; but whoever denies me before others, I will deny before my Father in heaven.” Therefore, the prophet says, “Your rod and your staff, they admonish me.”¹ “Your rod” refers to the rod of faith by

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¹ Ps 4: 7–8 ² Ps 103/104: 15.
² Ps 22/23: 1; ² Ps 22/23: 2–3.
² Mt 10: 32–33 ³ Ps 22/23: 4.
which we support ourselves lest we fall into the error of the heretics. And what he said “Your staff” refers to the staff of the Cross (fol. 9r) by which the faithful are admonished, lest they be partners with the cynics.

“You prepared a table before me.” Behold, he said this about the rite of Communion. Then he says, “And you softened my head with ointment.” He said this about the balsam oil. The teaching of our Apostles says, “And the balsam oil is the strength of faith.” Therefore, our Savior is called river of wine and river of oil. He is also called river of honey and river of milk because he promised our fathers to give them (fol. 9v) a land that flows milk and honey. And this is the ordinance of the New Testament that flowed from the side of Our Lord, as David says, “Your words are sweet to my throat; it is sweeter than honey and sugar to my mouth.” The holy Church says, “His speech is most sweet, and he is altogether desirable.” It says, furthermore, “I ate my honey with my bread; I drank my wine with my milk,” referring to the sacrifice of the Gospel, ordained after eating the Pesach of the Torah. Jacob, too, says, “His eyes (fol. 10r) are happy with wine, and his teeth are as white as milk.” With this, behold, Our God Emmanuel was called river of honey and river of milk.

Now, let us go back to the original theme: about the tree of life that was planted in the middle of the trees of the Garden (of Eden). The tree of life is, indeed, the Cross, and the trees of the Garden are the faithful. In place of the curse that Eve brought upon herself, the Virgin received a blessing from the angel: he said to her, “You are blessed among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb.” In place of Adam who ate from the fruit of the tree, in violation of the commandment of God, Our Lord Jesus Christ stretched out his hands upon the wood of the Cross, being obedient to the words of his Father. And in place of the four rivers that go out of the Garden (of Eden) and are divided (to flow) into the four corners of the world, four holy Gospels are preached into the four corners of the world.

O the depth of the wealth of God’s wisdom! Before he created our father Adam, he prepared for him what he would eat and all (other) needs that are necessary for human beings. Before (fol. 11r) saints were born, he prepared the Garden of Pleasure. And before sinners were born, he prepared Hades by which they will be agonized; he knew their deeds before he created them. He

Praises of the Cross, Waddase Masqal, by Abba Giyorgis of Gasæča

fol. 9' 1 Ps 22/23: 5 | 2 Ps 22/23: 5 | 3 Didaskyla, Article iii, 17, see HARDEN 1920: 96.
fol. 9' 1 MS adds “and Old.” | 2 Ps 118/119: 103 | 3 Song 5: 16 | 4 Song 5: 1.
fol. 10' 1 Gen 49: 12 | 2 Lk 1: 28, actually Lk 1: 42.
fol. 11' 1 MS “community” | 2 Kidan za-Nagh, e.g. መርካል የተስከ አስመድ እስከ ከመሆን እና የጭወ የሆኑት ያሆኑት, p. 175; MARCOS DAOUD – MARSIE HAZEN 1959: 318; see also COOPER – MACLEAN 1902: 82 | 3 Ps 57: 4/58: 3.

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prepared their abode before they come out of the belly, as he himself has said in (the Book of) the Covenant, “he knows all things before (they are) thought, and he examines (all things) before (they are) thought.” David, too, says, reporting that he knows the deeds of sinners before they commit (them), “Sinners are estranged from the womb; they go astray from the belly; they tell lies.” (fol. 11r) Behold, the Prophet says this about the knowledge of the sin of liars before they come out of the womb of their mother. Behold, with whom did they talk in the womb? And to whom did they tell lies? Let us tell about God’s knowledge of the righteousness of the saints. For God says to Jeremiah, “I knew you before you came out from the belly of your mother; and I sanctified you before I created you.” And through the Prophet he said, “I loved Jacob; and I hated Esau” before (fol. 12r) the deeds of the two were distinguished and before Esau sold his birthright to Jacob. God said to Rebecca, “There are two nations in your belly; two nations shall come out of your belly; the one nation shall be superior over the other nation. The older shall serve the younger.” He called Eve “life” because of the holy Virgin Mary, because the Creator knew that the life of the whole world will come out of her. And the tree that is among the trees of the Garden (of Eden) he called tree of life, because he knew that the whole world would have life by his Cross. The tree of (fol. 12v) life was planted formerly in the middle of the trees of the Garden by the hand of God; and the Cross of God was planted at Calvary by the hand of the Jews. The Jews brought the Cross of God from him to him. They caused him to suffer as he himself willed because he consented that they slay him. But they thought that his remembrance would be erased from the face of the earth. They did not know that they would be persecuted by his Cross, and they would be isolated by his Resurrection. Oh very amazing! The crucified is victorious; and those who crucified are vanquished. Oh very astounding! The dead puts (fol. 13r) (his killers) to shame; and the murderers are put to shame. Oh very astonishing! He who suffered disgraces; and those who inflicted the suffering on him are clothed with disgrace. Those who planted the wood (of the Cross) are persecuted; those who crucified a/the man are scattered. The high priest (and Jews) judged him, saying, “We have a law, and according to our law he ought to die, because he has made himself the Son of God.” They thought they were jealous for God and for the Torah of Moses. But who is God, other than the one they cruci-
fied? And who is the giver of the Torah other than the one they crucified? They loved him with their lips, (fol. 13') and they lied about him with their tongue. Although they wanted to tell lies, they spoke the facts: What they said, “We have a law, and according to our law he ought to die,” is the truth. For Moses says in the law, “You will see your savior hanged on a tree.” They have a law for them to find the sun so that they would not walk by its light. They have a law for them to put life to death, (but) not to do what would give life. They have a law to slaughter the lamb, and they would not taste the meat. They have a law to pour out the mystery of wine, and they do not drink it. Caiaphas said, “It is expedient that we put one man (fol. 14') to death than the people and the whole world are lost.”

Truly, they ought to kill the Son of God, for by (his death), he gives life to the dead. Indeed, they ought to crucify the Son of God, for by his Cross he sanctified the world. If he was not crucified, we would not have been saved. And if he had not died, he would not have given us life. Their error became wealth for gentiles. They made his body naked for the crucifixion; for it is not right that one covers the lamp with clothes; rather it is right that it is set on its stick for its light to appear to those who want it. They raised him up unto the wood of the Cross; (fol. 14v) for it is not proper, furthermore, for the lamp to be on the ground, but rather on a candlestick that it may give light to those who walk in its light, as he himself says in the Gospel, “One does not light a lamp to put it under a bed or to cover it under a vessel but to set it on its candlestick to give light to all people.”

The candlestick is the Cross and the lamp is Emmanuel. Behold, let us walk in the light of the Son of God. (fol. 15') Everyone who believes in him walks in the light; “and darkness will not find him.” Therefore, I call out to him with the Prophet David, saying, “In your light let us see light; and in your righteousness let us see your face.” Also, I say, “Nun: Your law is a lamp for my feet, and a light for my path.” Furthermore, I call out with the Prophet Isaiah, saying, “Your commandment is light on earth.”

And now, too, O Jesus Christ, show the light of your face upon me. And open my mouth for the praise of your holy Cross. Fence the wall (fol. 15v) of my soul with the name of your Cross. And confirm my body in your holy divine body. Oh you of high remembrance, (?) I will now reveal you: Who

fol. 13† 1 Or “to” | 2 An allusion to Num 21: 9.
fol. 14† 1 Lk 8: 16.
fol. 15† 1 Jn 1: 5 | 2 Ps 35: 10/16: 9 and 10. Cf. also Ps 16/17: 15 | 3 Ps 118/119: 105 | 4 Isa 26: 9 | 5 Or “reveal in my mouth”.

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are you, you who added your Divinity to the nature of our mortal humanity and made (the latter) one with your immortal and incorruptible Divinity? In the name of the Cross there is a hidden mystery that is ineffable by the tongue of a human being. In the name of the Cross there is a hidden mystery that scatters the community of the crucifiers. In the name of the Cross there is a hidden mystery that crushes the head of the serpent. Crush and weaken (fol. 16\textsuperscript{r}) the power of those who oppose my soul, and make me rejoice by the fall of my enemies, me your servant Faṣṣaḥa Krastos, forever and ever. Amen.

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O you who abased by your Cross the arrogant one like a dead one, kill the sin that dwells in me, your servant Faṣṣaḥa Krastos. O you who rooted out darkness by your Cross, root out my enemies and destroy them from the world that their memory may not be found, so that my life may be in tranquility and quietness, me, your servant ... O you who let the wolf fall by your Cross and rescued (fol. 16\textsuperscript{v}) a/the lamb from its mouth, rescue me from the hand of my enemies, me, your servant Faṣṣaḥa Krastos. O you who reconciled by your Cross mankind with your heavenly Father, keep not from me, your servant Faṣṣaḥa Krastos, the peace which is from you. O you who gave a sign by your Cross to those who fear you so that they may escape from the face of the bow. Show me its good sign so that my enemies may see and be put to shame that you, O Lord, have helped us and made us rejoice.\textsuperscript{1} O you who hunted by your Cross the overpowering serpent and dragged it with the iron of (fol. 17\textsuperscript{r}) your nails, do harm to those who want to do malice against me, your servant ... O you who smote by your Cross, Belial and returned the shame upon him, clothe my enemies with disgrace, me, your servant Faṣṣaḥa Krastos. O you who abolished by your Cross, the strength of the arrogant ones and lifted up the prayer of the saints, grace me with greatness from you. O you who signed the Church by your Cross, blessed it with your name and washed it with the water that flowed from your side, wash me and cleanse me from my sins, and make me clean of my transgressions. O you who tortured Sheol with your Cross and demolished it, (fol. 17\textsuperscript{v}) demolish the fortresses of those who oppress me, me ...

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{1}Ps 85/86: 17. \textsuperscript{1}Not clear.}

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O you who turned the Thief on the Right by your Cross to the belief in you and made him the first to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, permit me to enter the hall of delight of the saints, me ...
O you who fattened your sheep by your Cross and sealed them with drops of your honored blood, grant me the seal of your life-giving Cross so that carrying your seal I may be awe-inspiring bright one against the power of the enemy.
O you who removed the spear of fire by your Cross (fol. 18r) from the hands of Seraphim, and the lightning sword from the hands of Cherubim who were guarding the gate of Paradise and allowed Adam to enter the courtyard of Paradise from which he was expelled, allow me to enter into the inheritance of the saints, for I am your servant.
O you who beautified by your Cross the world that was corrupted, renewed the world that aged and sanctified the world that was polluted, renew my soul and body.
O you who caused by your Cross your vineyard that was planted at your holy right to blossom and made it bear believers, make me bring forth flower of (fol. 18v) faith and bear fruit of penance, me your servant ...
O you who requited by your Cross the debt of Eve and liberated Adam from the agony of death, liberate me from the yoke of sin that I may worship you with a pure heart, me your servant ...
O you who guided by your Cross your holy Apostles, guide me to the right path through which I may walk, me, your servant ...
O you who empowered (the Apostles) by your Cross to tread every power of the enemy and authorized them to render poison of the viper and scorpions ineffective, grant me (the ability) to make the power of Sāmalyal, (fol. 19r) the Satan, ineffective, me, your servant ...
O you who bought your people with your Cross from the law of the Torah, do not abandon me, me the good (you bought) with your blood, but yoke me to the yoke of your holy Gospel so that I may boast by your Cross, me your servant.
O you who released by your Cross those who were chained in the imprisonment of Satan, loosen me from the bondage of sin that (otherwise) will not be loosened, me your servant.
O you who gave light by your Cross to those who were in darkness, enlighten me with the light of your Divinity so that I may see the light of your face which is full everywhere, me, your servant ...
O you who (fol. 19v) strengthened the victorious Martyrs by your Cross and extinguished for them the flame of fire and made the teeth of lions dull

fol. 19r 1 Satna | 2 MS "ר".
for them and saved them from agonies of dreadful torture, deliver me from the evil day and trial hour, so that I may proclaim your truth with security, me, your servant …

O you who blessed the earth by your Cross and purged it with the blood of your crucifixion, “purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean”¹ and wash me with the water that flowed from your side so that I may be whiter than the white snow, me, your servant …

O you who made by your Cross the barren woman bear twins so that she may bear sons and daughters who serve you and your shrine, (fol. 20⁰) make me a servant of your easy yoke and carrier of your light burden,¹ 1, your servant …

O you who showed by your Cross the power of your salvation in Jerusalem, the city of the Hebrews who shouted loud before your Cross, saying, “Let his blood be on us and on our children.”¹² They shouted also, saying, “If you are the Son of the living God, now come down from your Cross so that we may see and believe in you.”¹³

You showed the power of your Cross: Your Cross darkened the sun from gazing at your nakedness; and clouded the moon from seeing your holy body, and the Orion constellation (fol. 20⁰) shined (only) as of the sixth hour. At the sixth hour you lowered your head and delivered your spirit into the hands of your Father. The earth was shaken from its foundations; caverns were torn. The evil of the deniers, the rock, was split asunder.¹ But the hearts of the crucifiers were not terrified. They became harder than a rock; their hearts dried. The tendon of their neck was of iron; and their face was of brass. The rock split and tombs were opened. (But) the blindness of their heart was sealed with a veil of darkness. The sun knew its Lord, and the moon knew (fol. 21⁰) its God.¹ The stars, too, knew their Creator, for they withheld their lights from seeing his nakedness. Caverns, too, knew their Creator; they were torn from fear of death. The earth, too, knew who founded it, because it was shaken by the power of your Cross. The rock, too, knew who strengthened it; for it was split by a drop of your blood.

All these knew you, O Son of God, that you created them. But Israel did not know you, nor did my people understand you. (fol. 21⁰) “They repaid you evil for good. And they hated you for the love you gave them.”¹¹ The pillars of cloud you veiled over them lest the heat of the sun burn them rebuke them for mocking you with a crown of thorn. The pillar of the bright sun that guided them by night, covering them with its splendor, rebukes them for covering you for mockery, saying “Prophesy for us, Christ; who slapped you?”¹²
The water of the miracle of the rock of Horeb rebukes them for making him drink vinegar mixed with gall. The manna of the desert (fol. 22r) that you fed them rebukes them for preparing a table to eat Pasch while you were nailed with iron to the Cross. The water of the (Red) Sea that was torn apart for them so that they might find a path with the help of a pillar of fire in the middle of the water of the sea rebukes them for tearing your clothes and dividing it among themselves. The brass serpent that Moses made for them by your command so that if a serpent bit them in the wilderness they might heal by looking at it rebukes them for killing you on the Cross in Jerusalem by the hands of the children of Jacob.

(fol. 22v) And so the authority of prophesy has been nullified from (Israel). Behold, no prophet has risen in Israel, nor were words of prophesy sounded anymore in Jerusalem and all the regions along it. Caiaphas tore his vestment in rage and so the oil of priesthood was removed from the Levites. For it is written in the Torah about them which says, “They shall not tear their vestments nor incise their body, for they are sanctified for God.” Behold, because of Caiaphas, their sanctity was removed (from them). The curtain of the temple was torn. Therefore, there is no (Messiah) (fol. 23r) they want. The high priests and the scribes of the people have said, “We have no king but Caesar.” “For everyone who claims to be a king is a rebel against Caesar.” He (thus) recognized on their behalf the reign of Rome and denied the Son of David. As of that time, the kingdom of the Jews was nullified from Jerusalem. The grace that was given to Jacob – kingship, priesthood and prophecy – they delivered to the gentiles. The gentiles received the grace from Israel with Christ. And we, the children of the holy Church, believed in you, O My Lord Jesus Christ, that you are the Son of God in your (divine) nature, and the Son of David in your flesh. We are well pleased that you reign over us forever. Your rejection by them is an honor for us, as has been written which says, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.”

It is not only for reign that we want you, but we worship you sincerely, believing that you are equal to the Father in your Divinity and on (fol. 24r) par with the Holy Spirit in your grandeur. There is no (difference in existence of) a single hour between you and them. There is no (difference of) a single day (in existence) between the Father and you; the Father does not precede you in existence, neither you precede the Holy Spirit in existence.

fol. 23r 1 Jn 19: 15 | 2 Jn 19: 12.
fol. 23v 1 Ps 117/118: 22.
fol. 24r 1 MS “| 2 MS “.”
You prohibited your nature from being understood by the mind of mankind and from the perception of the mind of angels. You prohibited your nature of the above from being palpable by the hands of mankind or touched by the diligent angels.

You prohibited your nature of the highest heaven from being seen by anyone as (fol. 24v) one wishes, but rather as you wish.

Furthermore, we do not want a mortal human being to be (our) high priest who cannot save himself from the hands of death. You are our high priest for whom the Father was a witness at the (River) Jordan, saying, “This is my Son whom I love, with whom I am well pleased. Listen to him.”

You are our high priest who gave your life and redeemed your sheep.

You are our high priest who is clean of sin and higher than the heavens.

You are our high priest who (fol. 25v) offered yourself on the Cross as a sacrifice to him who begat you.

You are our high priest who is himself the sacrificer and himself the sacrifice.

You are our high priest who is himself the censor/censer and himself the oblation.

You are our high priest who is anointed by the Father with the Holy Spirit, who brings himself as a sacrifice to forgive (people's) sins.

You are our high priest as of the time you sacrificed yourself to forever, until forever and ever. Amen.

Behold, we entreat in this manner (fol. 25v) the brass serpent of your priesthood. We prostrate ourselves to the ground before your holy Cross on which your body was slaughtered, saying, “The Cross is the salvation of our soul.” We prostrate to the ground before your holy Cross, O Our Master, and kneel to the nails of your hands and feet. We pay tribute to the piercing of your side. We offer glory and praise to the spears that pierced you. We proclaim your Resurrection; and we rely on your ordinance. We boast by your sitting on the right of the Father, saying, “We have for us, with God our heavenly Father, Emmanuel Jesus Christ who sat on the right of his begetter. (fol. 26v) He will come again in the clouds of heaven with power, his angels' being with him and his Cross before him. At that time those who pierced you will weep; but for those who take the seal of your name, it will be peace and security of God.”

And now, behold, we praise you, Jesus Christ, requiter for our debt by your Cross, and, by your death, provider of your peace between us and your Father, and sharer with us the Kingdom of Heaven by your Resurrection. Your mercy has been written on your Cross with drops of your blood. And the

fol. 24v ¹ The quotation is from Mt 17: 5.
fol. 26v ¹ Or “his saints”. MS “his enemies”.

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blood and water (fol. 26v) that flowed from the piercing of your side caused the soldier who pierced you to believe (in you). The shadow of your Cross that touched the Thief on the Right turned (the latter) to believe in you. As he was partaker with you in the suffering of your Cross, likewise, he was partaker with you in the Kingdom of Heaven, for you said to him, “Believe sincerely that you will be with me today in Paradise.” But the other thief whom the trace of your mercy did not touch derided you, saying, “If you are the Son of God, save yourself and us.” But his friend (fol. 27r) rebuked him, saying, “We indeed, received what we justly deserve; we are condemned for our crimes; but this one has done nothing wrong.” He turned toward you to say, “Lord, remember me with your mercy when you come in your glory.” The rope of your mercy drew the Thief on the Right (toward you). The suffering of the Cross met them both equally. And they were condemned for similar crimes. They were not crucified for your sake, but (to pay) for their debt. The thief on the left was lost because of the words of blasphemy that came out of his mouth. And the Thief on the Right was saved because of the words of supplication (fol. 27v) that came out of his mouth. What has been said in the Gospel, “By your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned” has been fulfilled on them.

I, too, call out to you, O My Lord, my God and my Savior Jesus Christ, saying, “Remember me, Lord, with your mercy when you come in your glory, as you remembered the Thief on the Right of the holy and seal of wood (which is) your Cross.” Remember me with your mercy, O Lord, as you remembered Matthew the publican and made him an Evangelist and (fol. 28r) partaker in the lot of your holy Apostles. Remember me with your mercy, O Lord, as you remembered Paul. Although he was a persecutor, you made him an Apostle and preacher of the Gospel of the Kingdom to call the gentiles until those who heard were astounded by him, saying, “The one who formerly was persecuting (us) is now teaching the words of faith, and they thanked God for the grace that was given because of him.” Remember me with your mercy, O Lord, as you remembered the harlot who anointed you (fol. 28v) with perfume, wetted your feet with her tears, and wiped you with her hair; and you said to her, “Your faith has saved

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 fol. 26v 1 Lk 23: 43.
 fol. 27v 1 Lk 23: 39–42.
 fol. 27v 2 Mt 12: 37.
 fol. 28v 1 Cf. Gal 1: 23.
 fol. 28v 2 Cf. Jn 11: 2, and 12: 3.
you. Your sin is forgiven for you.” Say to me, “Your faith has saved you,”
and make me worthy of the Kingdom of your Father, me, your servant
Faḵḵa Kṛṣṭos, for ever and ever. Amen.

O My Lord, Jesus Christ, have your compassion upon me.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, spill your mercy upon me.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, fence me with the rampart of your Cross, (fol. 29r)
and protect me with the shield of your salvation.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, encircle the wall of my body with the power of your
enemy-defeating Cross.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, steer me with the myriad of your diligent angels.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, arm me with the weapon of your Cross.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are of sweet name in the mouth of the saints.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are of sweet memory to those who invoke it
with righteousness.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the star of the morning light, the boast
(fol. 29v) of the shining stars (in) the spirit (?).
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the sun of righteousness that always
shines on the face of the saints.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the olive tree that came forth from the
house of Jacob; the rod of faith that grew out from the root of Jesse; and the
flower that ascended from the stump of David.¹
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are “the conquering lion of the tribe of Judah,”
² by the majesty of whose wrath the rulers of darkness were agitated, and the
foundations of mountains were shaken by the sound of his roar.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, (fol. 30r) shoot down the fraudulent one with the
bow of your Cross, and make from the iron of its nails a hot arrow with
which you may sting the enemy.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, show on me the power of your salvation.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, set on me the light of your face.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, let the majesty of your Cross be with me in all
the days of my life.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, season my tongue with the salt of your Divinity
in order that I may proclaim the praise of your Cross.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, (fol. 30v) fill my mouth with your glory in order
that I may glorify your thanksgiving.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, keep my steps steadfast in your path in order that
I may follow the trace of righteousness of your steps.

fol. 29v ¹ Cf. Isa 11: 1 | ² Rev 5: 5.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen me to do your will.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, install your fear in my body.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, spill on my head the oil of your mercy, and let
the oil of your compassion drip on my face.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, prepare me to receive (fol. 31r) your heavenly
Mystery.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, let me recline at your divine table.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, be pleased with me as you are pleased with the
saints.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, support me from staggering and raise me from
falling.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, save me from trouble; see my pain and my toil,
and forgive me my sins.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, “save me from the hands of my enemy and from
those who pursue me.”
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, “shine your face on (fol. 31r) your servant; let me
not be ashamed, O Lord, because I called you.”
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, let the power of your Cross be my keeper in all
the days wherever place I go and in all nights wherever I lodge.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, “you are my hope since my youth.”
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, “you are my God since I was in the womb of my
mother,” “and you covered me in the womb. You are my memory at all
times.”
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the horn of my salvation.
O My Lord, (fol. 32r) Jesus Christ, you are the crown of my head.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the bread of life that is sweet to my mouth.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the cup of medicine that is delicious to
my throat.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the robe that is not woven, and the cover
that is not spun.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the gold that was doubled, and a pearl
that was found.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the *mowmaw* that was multiplied, and
(fol. 32v) the talent that was earned.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the carrier of sufferings because of the sin
of Adam and his children.

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fol. 31r 1 Ps 30: 16/31: 15.
fol. 31v 1 An allusion to Lk 9: 26 | 2 Ps 70/71: 5 | 3 Ps 21: 11/22: 10 | 4 Ps 70/71: 6 | 5 An
allusion to Lk 1: 69.

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O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the bearer of the sufferings of the Cross because of the mistake of Eve and her daughters.
O My Lord, Jesus Christ, you are the receiver of the iron of the nails of the Cross because of the trespasses of mankind.
O you, who accepted the sufferings of Cross because of our sins, “accept my prayer like incense before you.”
O you, who tolerated torture of the Cross for the sake of (fol. 33v) my trespasses, grant me the patience that dwells in your bosom. Make me yoked to the yoke of the Cross. Let those who rose against me in violence and power flee by the power of your Cross; and let them vanish from the sight of your Cross. Send on them the fear of women until they are terrified by the sound of leaves that move outside. Let dagger torture their children. Let terror prevail in their houses. But for me, let there be security and peace from you at all ages and all years.
(fol. 33v) O My Lord, “raise your power, and come to save us. O God of the powerful, restore us. Let your face shine upon us that we may be saved.”¹ O My Lord, be our guide with your Cross to every path that you want. “Be my helper”² and hider, “because you are my power and my refuge, my strength”³ and the salvation of my soul. Be with me during the day and stay in our midst during the night. Do not leave me at any time and at any day.
Remember, O Lord, your descent from the highest heaven, your dwelling in the belly of the holy and pure Virgin in (fol. 34r) two ways, Mary, your birth from her, and your nursing from her breasts. Remembering (all) this, forgive my sins, your servant Fašša Krastos.
Remember, O Lord, your growing gradually and your maturity in purity. Remembering (all) this, forgive my sins.
Remember, O Lord, your baptism in the hands of John with your body naked in the middle of the water. Remembering this, forgive my sins, me ...
Remember, O Lord, your toil in traveling and your temptation in the desert by the Devil when (fol. 34v) you were hungry when you fasted forty days and forty nights. Remembering this, forgive my sins, me ...
Remember, O Lord, your body and your blood that you gave to your disciples on that night on which you were arrested; you said to them, “Take and eat this bread; it is my body. Take and drink this cup; it is my blood. Behold, I shall not drink this juice of vine fruit until I drink it new in my Father’s Kingdom of Heaven.”¹ Remembering this, forgive my sins, me ...

² Mt 26: 27–29.
³ Aethiopica 14 (2011) 98
Praises of the Cross, Ṇaddase Māsqāl, by Abba Giyorgis of Gassača

Remember, O Lord, your arrest (fol. 35r) by the servants of the high priest and your being slapped at the court of Caiaphas. Remembering this, forgive my sins, me ...
Remember, O Lord, your standing at the court of Caiaphas and your being reviled by (the people at) the court. Remembering this, forgive my sins, me ...
Remember, O Lord, your being stricken with a rod of reed and being scourged with a whip of rope. Remembering this, forgive my sins, me ...
Remember, O Lord, your being crucified on a wood and being nailed (fol. 35v) with iron (nails). Remembering this, forgive my sins, me ...
Remember, O Lord, the vinegar1 they made you drink mixed with gall; and your soul that you delivered to death. Remembering this, forgive my sins, me ...
Remember, O Lord, your being shrouded with linen cloth, your being put in a tomb and your sojourn in it three days and three nights without movement of the soul. Remembering this, forgive my sins, me ...
Remember, O Lord, your resurrection from among the dead (fol. 36r) on the third day and your appearance to the disciples while they were in the hall whose door was closed. Remembering this, forgive my sins, me ...
Remember, O Lord, your ascension to the heavens and your sitting at the right of the Father. Remembering this, forgive my sins, your servant Fāsāha Krāstos.

At your second coming, number me among your blessed sheep; and apportion for me an inheritance in the city of the saints. Have you not put on flesh, O Lord, for my salvation? (fol. 36v) You made the corruptible flesh incorruptible.
If I have to perish, what would you have gained by putting on earthly flesh?
If I have to be condemned, what would you have gained by walking about in this world thirty-three years and 3 months, and by your toil on earth, (acting) according to the nature of mankind, with the exception of sin alone?
If I have to be judged, what would you have gained by your hands being cuffed like a thief, and being slapped on your cheeks like a criminal?
If I have to be condemned and suffer, what would you have gained by (fol. 37r) the striking of your head like an animal1 and the flogging of your back like a lawbreaker?
If I am not to be saved, what would you have gained by bearing the shame of the Cross, and accepting the saliva of the polluted ones and the reviling of the deniers?

By no means, O Lord! Do not execute this condemnation. Do not forsake me, the good (you bought) with your blood. There will be a gain for you, O Lord, in your trading if I am saved. There will be a gain for you, O Lord, in

fol. 35r 1 Or “sour wine”.
fol. 37r 1 ? MS “a lion”.

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your crucifixion if I am alive. There will be a gain for you, O Lord, in your sufferings if I am justified. Remember, O Lord, (fol. 37v) what you have said, “Every one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”

I believe in you, O Lord, that you are God, the Son of God; God, the Son of God; light, the Son of light; pure one, the Son of the pure one. And also I am baptized with the water that flowed from your side. Therefore, I do not deserve damnation. If you keep sin, O Lord, who will stand before you? Rather, have compassion on me so that your words may not be false. For you have said, “Everyone who believes in me will have eternal life.” Forgive me my sins, O you who are the only one without sin. Do not remember my transgression, O you who are the only one without transgression. I am dependent on the belief in your holy Cross. Praising your Cross gives pleasure to my tongue and lips. Protect me with the power of your Cross “like a good shield,” me, your servant Gábrä Mäsqäl.

“Look at me, (fol. 38r) for I have suffered too much.” O God of the powerful, do not forsake me for ever (even) if I sinned against you. “Incline your ear to my prayer.” Let my prayer come before you at the hall of your shrine. “Have compassion on me and listen to me, says my heart to you. I sought your face. I seek your face, O Lord. Do not turn your face from me. Be my helper; do not cast me off.”

“But you, O Lord, live forever. And your memory endures from generation to generation.” You preceded laying the foundation of the earth, and (fol. 39r) the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you endure; all will wear out like a garment. You change them like clothing, and they are changed.” But for you, there is neither beginning for your early age nor end for your later time. You are hidden from the hidden. When you willed you revealed yourself to the earthly ones. Although you were sitting in heaven on the right of your Father, you stood before the court of Pilate down (on earth). Although the curtain of fire hides you in heaven, the deniers exposed your nakedness on earth.
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Although the community of (fol. 39v) angels blesses you up high, the community of Jews reviled you at Calvary. Although you were covered with the wings of Cherubim above the heavens, you were crowned with the crown of thorn in Jerusalem. Although you were riding a chariot of fire on Gilgal, you were crucified on a wood of Cross at the Stone Pavement, and your Cross was anointed with drops of your blood.

*   *   *

O wood which was sanctified with the blood of its God and was immersed in the water that flowed from the side of its Creator!
O wood which became a crown for the trees (fol. 40r) of Paradise and honor for the trees of the wilderness!
O wood which became an altar for slaughtering the Lamb of God of the hosts!
O wood which became an altar of the Pesach for the God of Israel!
O wood which became a spring of the wine of the Mystery of Golgotha!
O wood from which the blood of the covenant and the law dripped for the seal of the faithful!
O wood from which flowed a stream for washing the blessed sheep!
O wood which sanctified the earth, signed the heaven, and blessed the whole world with the blessing of the Father, (fol. 40r) the Son and the Holy Spirit!
O wood which made the heavenly ones partners with the earthly ones!
O wood which saved Adam from error and liberated Eve from agony of death!
O wood about which has been written in the Torah and the Prophets, and has been openly preached by the Apostles!
O wood which scattered those who planted it and brought together those who believe it!
O wood which founded the Church on the faith of Jesus Christ!
O wood which seasoned the tasteless and cleansed the filthy!
O wood which (fol. 41r) exalted the indigent and justified the sinner!
O wood which strengthened the weak and healed the sick!
O wood which multiplied the few and gave wisdom to the fool!
O wood which made the barren fruitful and brightened the dark!
O wood, which is the boast of the whole world.

We exalt the glory of the Cross with our mind alert, our eyes open, and our lips joyous. O Lord, the glory of your Cross awakens the sluggish and makes them join the community of the diligent (fol. 41v) in glorifying.

fol. 41r 1 *Mäšño* | 2 *Anzira.*
The glory of your Cross filled everywhere and is admired exceedingly by the heart. Glorification of your Cross is sweet to whoever reads it and amazes the listeners.
The glory of your Cross is a fiddle\footnote{1} to whoever believes in you, and a rebuke to whoever denies You.
The glory of your Cross is lyre\footnote{2} to whoever loves you, and an offence to whoever offends you.
The glory of your Cross pleases the heart like drinking aged wine.
The story of your Cross is an offense (fol. 42\textsuperscript{r}) to the fool and a boast to the wise, as Paul says, “The story of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perished, but to us who believe it, it is the power of God.”\footnote{1} Let your Cross give light to us and be a guide like the pillar of light that gave light to the children of Israel and guided them forty years in the wilderness from the field of Seir to Kadesh-Barnea.\footnote{2} Now, too, let your strong hand and your exalted arms guide me in all the days of my life.
(fol. 42\textsuperscript{v}) O wise of the wise, “Open my eyes so that I may behold wondrous things out of your law, for I am an alien in the land,”\footnote{1} “and a (passing) guest like all my fathers.”\footnote{2} “Spare me so that I may rest before I go (to a place) from which I will never return.”\footnote{3}
Make me bear fruit of penance, O Lord, before I am cut off with the sword of putridity.
Make me tell, O Lord, the glory of your Cross before my mouth is closed by death.
Make me knock at the door of your hall, O Lord, before I am bound with chains that will never be unleashed.
Make me (fol. 43\textsuperscript{r}) do profitable work for my soul, O Lord, before trading and the marketplace is over.
Make me prepare oil for the lamp, O Lord, before the door of the hall of the Bridegroom is closed.
Make me prepare provisions for the journey, O Lord, before commotion takes place and the horn is blown.
Make me pay my debts, O Lord, before the book that will be a witness regarding my sins is read.
Make me be diligent in glorying, O Lord, before silence that would not allow (fol. 43\textsuperscript{v}) speaking descends upon me.
Make me live in you, O Lord, and in your Holy Spirit.
Make me follow the trace of your Gospel, O Lord, leaning upon your Cross.
Make me refreshed by the fragrance of your perfume that attracted virgins to follow you, the martyrs to carry the partnership of your sufferings, and the righteous to take up the yoke of your Cross.

None of the sufferings of this world – calamity, tribulation, or affliction – will ever touch the soul of anyone who takes up the Cross of his death, as you yourself say in the Gospel, “He who wants to save his life, let him reject it. For he who rejects his life for my sake will find it. What does a man profit, if he gains the whole world and loses his life?”

This I fear, O Lord; save me from the loss of my soul. My heart is resolute, O Lord, in depending on your nails. My heart is resolute, O Lord, to glorify you. May your love awaken me from the sleep of sluggishness, and open the eyes of my heart to praise your Cross.

Your Cross is a wood that is not worm-eaten.
Your Cross is a wood that does not wither.
Your Cross is a wood that does not decay.
Your Cross is a tree that neither the warmth of sun nor the heat of the air dries.
Your Cross is a tree that neither floods nor gusts of wind can shake.
Your Cross is a tree that waves of the sea cannot overthrow.
Your Cross is a tree that heavy rains cannot make fall.
Your Cross is a tree that polluted spirits cannot approach.
Your Cross is a tree that none of the trees of Paradise looks like, nor is any of the trees of the field its equal.
Your Cross is a tree that none of the cedar trees looks like nor is the tree of myrtle its equal, nor is the fir-tree in its sprouting. Neither (the precious) cedar trees are better than it, nor do pine trees look like it.
Your Cross is a wood of smoothness that does not boast against (other) trees.
Your Cross is a wood with which God was well-pleased to ascend on it.
Your Cross is a tree from whose branches dripped rains of wine. And its cloud is a cloud of light from the highest heaven, which is Our Lord, Our God, and Our Savior Jesus Christ; and the faithful are made to drink from the dew of mercy that flowed from it. The faithful have taken from it the seal of baptism. And when they sign their face with the sign of the Cross, Satan flees from the sight of their face, as the teaching of the Apostles says, “Make always haste to sign your face (with the sign of the cross,) because the...
sign of the Cross is, indeed, a sign of pain on Satan.” Wherever it is the Cross strikes his heart. He is terrified by the mention of your Cross until he flees.

The prophets revealed the likeness of your Cross, O Lord: Moses made a likeness of the Cross in the wilderness of Rephidim. When Moses ordered Joshua to fight Amalek he ascended (fol. 46r) a mountain and stretched out his two hands; he raised them in a hovering state, in the likeness of a cross, from morning to evening. Whenever he gathered his hands, Israel would suffer and Amalek would gain strength. Whenever he stretched out his hands, Amalek would flee and Israel would prevail. Hur and Aaron spent the day carrying his hands. The hands of Moses were heavy. So they put for him a big stone on both sides so that he might not gather his hands because by the stretch of his hands in the likeness of your Cross (fol. 46v) Amalek was defeated. Likewise, smite with the power of your Cross those who opposed me (and bless?) my fight, me …

Again, Moses showed the sign of your Cross “when Israel went out from Egypt, and the house of Jacob from hostile people,”1 he struck the sea with his rod once straight; and he repeated the strike sideways. This made the sign of the Cross. The water stood like a wall on one side and like a wall on the other side. And the children of Israel passed through it. For me, too, clear the path of righteousness and (fol. 47r) life through the sea of corruption, and steer me with the power of your Cross, me …

Again, Moses showed the sign of the Cross when he struck the rock with his rod. He struck it once straight and he repeated the strike sideways on both sides of the place where God’s feet had stood. Water sprang from the solid rock; indeed, this miracle was worked by the sign of your Cross. Similarly, for me, too, make water of life spring for cleansing my filth by the rod of the power of your Cross.

Never deliver me to requite for my sin, for the sake of your friend Abraham, (fol. 47v) for the sake of your servant Isaac, and for the sake of your holy Israel, for the sake of your servant Moses who received the law from your hand, for the sake of David who was found trustworthy in your sight, for the sake of all your prophets who preached your appearance in the world, for the sake of your holy Apostles who shouted like the voice of a horn in witnessing to your holy Gospel, especially for the sake of holy and pure Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and for the sake of your holy and blessed wood of your Cross. Bless me with your blessing, with the blessing of your (fol. 48r) heavenly Father, and with the blessing of your life-giving Spirit, and with the blessing of all the saints “who pleased you from of old.”2

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1. Ps 113/114: 1.

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“O Lord, righteousness encircles you with a shield;” and your compassion guides the faithful. O Lord, the heavens and the heaven of heavens are suspended by your command. The earth, too, is set firmly on water by your words. The sun, the moon and the stars shine by your authority. The angels of the page and the angels of sanctification are honored by the words of your mouth. You exalted Adam that, of all (other) people, you molded him with your hand and cast him in your incorruptible image and breathed the spirit of life into his face. You made all submit under his feet – the sheep, all cows, and also the wild animals, the birds of the sky, the fish of the sea and all that moves in the sea. You brought (to Adam) every living (creature) with soul to see what name he would give them. And whatever name Adam gave to every living (creature) that was its name.

When Adam erred and ate from which you commanded him not to eat, he came out from the Garden of Pleasure. But you paid the debt of Adam of eating (the fruit of) the tree with the tree (fol. 49r) of your honored and life-giving Cross. For me, too, pay for my debt for the sake of your sufferings on your life-giving Cross, and forgive all my sins. Also, you renewed the world for our father Noah after the deluge; you swore for him, saying, “Behold, I have sworn that I will not repeat cursing the earth; I will not destroy it with a deluge. Behold, when the rain falls, I will set my bow in the clouds. Therefore, when the cloud is darkened to water (the earth) with rain, I will see the bow (which will be) (fol. 49v) the sign of my covenant, and remember my covenant with you; and so I shall not destroy the world with deluge any more.”

For me, too, set a bow for a sign of covenant, namely your holy Cross, the sign of your covenant with the holy Church. Your holy Cross is a rod of victory in the hands of the faithful. Your holy Cross is a rod of destruction of the renegades. May the power of your holy Cross be a helper to me. Furthermore, you made a covenant with Abraham when he elevated his son Isaac to the altar (fol. 50r) to sacrifice him. He split wood for the sacrifice, and made him carry it on his shoulder. Isaac said to Abraham, “Behold, here is the wood for the sacrifice; and behold, here is the knife; but where is the lamb to be sacrificed?” Abraham said to him, “God will provide his lamb, my son.”

The spirit of prophecy is said in the mouth of the two: Isaac said, “Where is the lamb for the sacrifice?” inquiring about the sacrifice of the earthly lamb. But the interpretation of the prophecy offers the word referring to the Son of God. Abraham said, “God will provide (fol. 50v) his lamb.” He said about the sacrifice of his son. But, the interpretation of the prophecy offers the word

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3 Rom 9: 4–5.
Getatchew Haile

referring to the heavenly lamb. That Isaac went carrying the wood on which his father would sacrifice (him) is the likeness of the Savior who went to Calvary carrying his Cross on which the Jews, his fathers from his Mother’s side, would sacrifice him, as Paul the fountain of wisdom says, “They have the law; and they have the ordinance; to them he promised the glory of being son. They are our fathers, and through them Christ was born.”1 And (fol. 51’) Mount Destruction1 is the likeness of Calvary. The sheep that was sacrificed in place of Isaac is the likeness of the humanity of Our Savior, as Isaiah says, “He came like a sheep to be slaughtered to those who take him to slaughter him. And like a sheep which is silent before the one who shears it, similarly he did not open his mouth in his pain. For they take him to judge him (unjustly); and who knows his generation?”2 He came to die for the sin of the nation. Isaac realized, lying on the altar, (what was happening) after his father’s knife was drawn (fol. 51’) at him. He was still alive because he was saved because the sheep from God was slaughtered, as Divinity has been alive, never affected by the sufferings of the Cross, although (Divinity) was on the Cross with (Christ’s) humanity. As Isaac was not slaughtered with the sheep, similarly, Divinity, too, did not suffer with (Christ’s) humanity. However, union (between Divinity and humanity) is complete; there has never been separation even for one hour or a blink of the eye. O you whose Divinity is not separated from your humanity, make me not separated from the flock of (fol. 52’) your bright sheep, your servant Fašša Krastos.

Jacob, too, showed the likeness of the Cross, when he blessed Ephraim and Manasseh: Joseph made Manasseh stand on his left, toward the right of Israel; and he made Ephraim stand on his right, toward the left of Israel. Israel crossed his hands and laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim and his left hand on the head of Manasseh. Joseph said to Israel, “O father, since this one is the older, put your right hand on him.” Israel said, (fol. 52”) “I know my son, I know; this one shall be a great nation.”1 Israel knew that blessing stands firm by the sign of the Cross. Therefore, he made his hands in the likeness of the Cross. Likewise, bless our king Nablā Dangāl2 with the blessing of your holy Cross that the blessing of Israel and the gift of grace given to him and his race may rest upon him. May the oil of priesthood,

fol. 51’ 1 Dâbrâ Mäsono. This place name is not recognized at the expected place in Genesis. The author might have (Dâbrâ) Ma’lât of Num 21: 3 in mind, which, interestingly, in Hebrew means “Mount of Destruction!” | 2 Cf. Isa 53: 7–8; Acts 8: 32–33.

fol. 51’ 1 Lit. “one”.

fol. 52’ 1 Gen 48: 13–14, and 18–19. | 2 Lâbnâ Dângol/Wänag Sâggâd (1508–40).
Praises of the Cross, Wadjase Mâsqâl, by Abba Giyorgis of Gassêça

kingship and prophecy not be removed from him, his seed and from the seed of his seeds forever. (fol. 53r) Amen.

(O) what an immense gift of grace that has been given to your honored wood of the Cross!
Your Cross is a weapon of war and a sword of Divinity for your soldiers.
Your Cross is a destroyer of the center of quarrel and a demolisher of the wall of sins.
Your Cross is a father for orphans, and a (just) judge of widows.
Your Cross is a calmative for those who are troubled on the sea and a harbor for those who wander in the desert. Your Cross is a guide of the blind, a support (cane) of the lame, and strength of the weak.
Your Cross is (fol. 53v) an herb that makes the children of the faithful grow with the breast of the holy Church.
Your Cross is a crown of kings.
Your Cross is a boast of the Christians.
Your Cross roots out the sorcerers, and scatters the diviners.
Your Cross is ordainer of the priests and awardee for the service of the deacons.
Your Cross raises the fallen ones; and makes the cripple run like a stag.
Your Cross is a dowry for the bride and a certificate for the one you divorced in the synagogue.
Your Cross is a foundation of belief and a pillar of faith to those who depend on it.
Your Cross is a nullifier of all charms and an abolisher of all sorceries. Root out the enemies of your Cross with your Cross and with the sword of your wrath. And let those who want to destroy the Gospel of your Divinity be destroyed from the face of the earth.
O Lord, demolish the horn of the Jews.
O Lord, crush the horn of the Heathens.
O Lord, let your wrath be upon them, and let the fire of your envy blaze upon them.
O Lord, demolish them; do not build them.
O Lord, cause your thunderbolts scatter them.
O Lord, send your arrow and trouble them.
“O Lord, take up shield and spear and rise up to help me”\(^2\) fight my enemies. And let your plague be always upon those who are ashamed of you to call (you) the Son of living God.\(^1\) And let the sword of your wrath be upon every one who belie the words of the Prophets, and does not believe in the teaching of the Apostles. These are those who boast of their disgrace and exult of the lust of their heart. These are those who became horses for Satan, and became abodes for demons. With your Cross “root out their memories from the face of the earth.”\(^2\) Also, allow our King Labnā Dongal\(^3\), your friend, that he may quickly root them out and efface their memories. O Lord, allow our King Labnā Dongal to lay their country waste. O Lord, allow our King Labnā Dongal to defeat all renegades. O Lord, let the power of your Cross be his helper and hider wherever he went. O Lord, let your Cross save him from the rise of hidden and open enemies. May your Cross separate with destruction and plague those who hate him, and with compassion and mercy those who love him, your servant Faššaha Krostos,\(^3\) forever and ever. Amen.

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O Lord, I boast by your Cross, and I rejoice by paying it tribute, as one who found much booty.
O Lord, I boast by your Cross, and by hearing about it I become merry, as one who found fine wine.
O Lord, I boast by your Cross as a son boasts by the honor of his father.
O Lord, I boast by your Cross as a servant boasts by the greatness of his master.
O Lord, I boast by your Cross as a handmaid boasts by the honor of her mistress.

(fol. 56\(^\text{r}\)) O Lord, I boast and exult by your Cross, as Paul the fountain of wisdom says, “By no means that I exult but by the Cross of Jesus Christ.”\(^1\) O Lord, I boast by your Cross, and exult by you, saying:
Glory to you, O you who were nailed with the iron (nails) of the Cross!
Glory to you, O you who bore the shame of the Cross!
Glory to you, O you who accepted the sufferings of the Cross!
Glory to you, O you who did not hesitate to ascend on the Cross!
Glory to you, O you who, coming down from the Cross, (went) to Sheol, (fol. 56\(^\text{v}\)) took booty from the hands of the enemy, took away the trophy of the adversary of your Kingdom, and let the haughty Devil fall to the ground with your Cross!

\footnotesize{\(^1\) An allusion to Luke 9: 26 | \(^2\) Ps 33: 17/34: 16.}
\footnotesize{\(^3\) Gal 6: 14.}

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Praises of the Cross, *Waddase Mäsqäl*, by *Abba* Giyorgis of Gassēča

Glory to you, O you who hurled the arrogant down the cliff with your Cross!
Glory to you, O you who rebuked death with your Cross!
Glory to you, O you who smote darkness with your Cross!
Glory to you, O you who killed death with your Cross!
Glory to you, O you who wounded the inflictor of wound with your Cross!
Glory to you, O you who laid the fortress of Hades waste with your Cross!
Glory to you, O you who demolished the wall of damnation with your Cross!
O Lord, your humility let the haughty ones fall; and the power of your Cross crushed Sheol. By your death the dead became living; and by your Resurrection the crucifiers were put to shame. By the nails of your hands the belly of the enemy was given a blow. By the javelin of your Cross the serpent was pierced. By the sword of your Divinity the head of the angel of death was cut off. And by the power of your rod the head of the serpent was entrapped. By your Cross you disgraced the haughty serpent which by its tail dragged the mountains of the world and destroyed the strong ones. With its eyelash it sucks the stream of the River Jordan lest it flows. It closes its eyes after seven days/years since it opened (them). There was none who could stand before its sight. But you disgraced it with your Cross and swam (the river at your baptism). You pierced its nostrils as (one would do) to a bird and hanged a ring on it. You showed (it) to the refuges of Sheol; and you clothed with shame the soldiers of Hades.¹

Those who inflict weeping on others wept and mourned. Those who inflict wounds on others were wounded. Those who inflict suffering on others suffered. The mourners rejoiced, and the distressed skipped.

By your Cross prisoners were released, and the sick were healed.
By your Cross Adam’s curse was nullified and Eve was set free.
By your Cross the sackcloth of darkness was torn, and the good things of light were spread out.
By your Cross brass doors were broken, and iron cuffs were smashed.
By your Cross the doors of Paradise were opened, and rest was spread out.
By your Cross the words of the Torah were fulfilled and the vision of the prophecy was signed.
By your Cross the news of peace was given, and the Apostles were sent out to call nations.
By your Cross the Gospel of Divinity was preached and the faithful believed.
By your Cross Ethiopians bowed before you, and your enemies shall lick the dust.¹


¹ I am not aware of any Go’az source on this legend that seems to have been based on Rev 12.
By your Cross (fol. 58v) thanksgiving and glory are offered to your holy name from east, west and north. And we bless your blessed name because of your Cross, and sanctify your sanctified name.

By your Cross we exalt your exalted name.

By your Cross we honor your honored name.

Because of your Cross you are God, the God of our fathers who said to the children of Israel in the mouth of your servant Moses, “Make fringes of blue cord at the border of your garment so that it may be a sign for you.”

We, too, who are baptized, have made your honored wood of the Cross a sign to be (fol. 59r) separated from those who are not baptized.

You are the Son of God who became man from the holy Virgin – who did not know man – to redeem the world by the sufferings of your life-giving Cross. You are the Son of God and the Son of man who gave us a promise by your Cross and your Resurrection, even before you were crucified, saying, “As Moses hanged the serpent in the wilderness, similarly, must the Son of man be hanged” and killed; and he will be raised on the third day.”

The brass serpent (fol. 59v) that Moses hanged in the wilderness was not crucified on your behalf; rather it was hanged for a sign in the likeness of your Cross. Moses set the wood of your Cross with the brass serpent sideways on a wood. Therefore, the brass serpent was signed (as a Cross) on the wood that Moses erected, and so the children of Israel were saved from the poisonous teeth of the serpent. Me, too, save me by the power of your honored Cross from the teeth of black serpents filled with poison. For I am your servant, the son of your handmaid, and the son of the holy Church (fol. 60r) that you bought with your blood, (the Church that) you set free by the slapping you suffered, beautified by your death, (to which) you appeared by your resurrection, exalted by your ascension, and decorated by your sitting at the right of the Father. Therefore, keep not far your mercy from me. Help me and save me by the power of your Cross, me your servant Paššha Króstos/GÄbrä MÄsqÎl.

I thank you, O Lord, that you stretched out your hands on the wood of the Cross to sign the whole world, and for the salvation of Adam and his children.

I thank you, O Lord, that you gave your Cross as a sign to those who fear you, lest (fol. 60v) the authority of death dominate them.

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fol. 58v 1 Cf. Num 15: 38.
fol. 59r 1 Jn 3: 14 | 2 Mt 16: 21;17: 23.
fol. 59v 1 Or “by you” | 2 Cf. Ps 115/116: 16.
fol. 60v 1 According to tradition, affirmed in this text as well a few paragraphs later, the holy Cross was discovered by St Helen, the mother of this Caesar. Therefore, the reference could be to the story of the sign of the cross the Caesar saw in a vision before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. See the next paragraphs.
I thank you, O Lord, that you revealed your Cross to Constantine, son of Helen, after the Jews had buried (it) at Golgotha; and (so) you have not forsaken the world to remain sealed with a seal of darkness. Rather, you decorated it with the light of your Cross which is the sun of your saints.

I thank you, O Lord, that you fulfilled the wish of your handmaid Helen who toiled in searching for your Cross.

I thank you, O Lord, for the smoke of incense that you gave her as a sign for finding your holy Cross.

I thank you, O Lord, that you did not turn your face from her prayer (fol. 61r) and did not frustrate her into staggering from her wish, but made her worthy of finding its light for the world.

I thank you, O Lord, that by finding your Cross, you filled her with happiness until she cheered with her mouth, clapped with her hands, and tapped with her feet.

I thank you, O Lord, that by the nails of your Cross that are painted on the rein of the horse of her son, (the latter) made the enemy surrender during the war, and (so) you gave power to those who believe. Likewise, grant me the power of victory and cause my enemy to submit to me, your servant.

I thank you, O Lord, especially (fol. 61v) that you did not make me a partner with the Israelites who denied your Cross. They are kinsmen of my fathers the Apostles in flesh, but are their enemies as regards faith, as Paul says, “As regards the Gospel, they are our enemies, but as regards election, they are our brothers.”

Regarding me, I thank you, O Lord, that you made me diligent since my youth in worshipping you, and dependent on the hope of your Cross. I have no God other than you, or a boast other than by the belief in your Cross.

I thank you, O Lord, that you revealed to me your holy Cross to which your holy hands, that never submitted to violence, and your holy feet, (fol. 62v) that never walked in the path of corruption, were nailed. And on it you received vinegar mixed with gall. On it your holy side was pierced, and (so) blood and water gushed.

I thank you, O Lord, for the grace that you increased on me, which is believing you and finding your Cross.

My soul thanks you for finding your Cross.
My lips glorify you for finding your Cross.
My bones bless you for finding your Cross.
Members of my body praise you (fol. 62v) for finding your Cross.
I cheer with my mouth for finding your Cross.
I shout loud with my throat for finding your Cross.
I clap with my hands for finding your Cross.
I skip with my feet for finding your Cross.
And now, let your Cross lighten for me everywhere I go out and everywhere I travel, in the roads I take, and in the city I enter. Let not the majesty of your Cross be far from me during the day where I be and during the night where I sleep. Seal me with your Cross, O Lord, in order that I may find victory (fol. 63r) over my enemies. I sing for you, my God, with all my power, and, as long as I live, I gird the sword of your Divinity, which is belief in your holy Cross. Let the belief in your holy Cross that gave light to those who are in darkness give me light (from) the lamp of your divine wisdom. Amen.

Let your Cross that drove away Sāmalyal the Satan and dispersed his army likewise drive away my enemy and disperse those that are his. Rise up, O Lord my God, and let your hand rise high to root out those who do not believe in your Cross. Let your right hand fight those (fol. 63v) who depend1 on your death by crucifixion.

Your Cross, O Lord, is the bed of your suffering on which you lay. At the sixth hour it disturbed the heaven and shook the earth. Because of your suffering, your Cross, O Lord, is the bed of your wedding on which you were wedded to your holy Church, washed with the spring of water that flowed from your side, and sealed with the fountain of blood that dripped from your right side. Because life has sprung from your right side, the holy Church asks about you in the Song (fol. 64r) of Solomon, saying, “Where do you lie down at noon, lest I go astray to the flock of your companions?”1

She says, “Where do you lie down at noon?” because of your lying down on the wood of the Cross at noon. She continues by saying, “Where do you pasture,” because everyone who pastures a flock has to ascend a high place to pasture his sheep and lures them with staffs of shepherding. Again she repeats, saying, “Lest I go astray to the flock of your companions.” This means, “Beckon me to where you will be crucified that I may believe in your Cross, (fol. 64v) lest I follow other shepherds who keep a flock of violence, who do not rescue their sheep from the mouth of the wolf.”

Me, too, O Lord, pasture with the staff of your mercy that turns one to the path of righteousness, as David says, “Your royal scepter is a scepter of righteousness. You loved righteousness and hated violence. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions. There are myrrh, aloe and cassia in your robes. Of those with heavy horns, he makes you happy.”1 Who are (fol. 65r) those with heavy horns,

fol. 63r 1 Probably “who rejoice”.
fol. 64r 1 Song 1: 6/1:7.
fol. 64v 1 Ps 44: 7–9/45: 6.
other than kings of the gentiles and kings of Jerusalem? The heavy office of
kingship fell upon them. What he said, “of those he makes you happy” is
(to say), “they failed to please those who are in damnation, but you pleased
with your Cross those who are in damnation.”
You are, O Lord, he who is above all, whose authority is over all, whose great-
ness is above all. You are named Lord of all; and you are called present in all.
You are the high priest.
You are the king (fol. 65v) of kings.
You are the great prophet.
You are the head shepherd.
You are the rational lamb.
You are the fatted cow.
You are the lion, the lion cub.
You are the well of the water of life.
You are the horn of salvation.
You are the path of righteousness and life.
You are the sun of righteousness.
You are the star of the light.
You are the bread of life.
You are the cup of medicine.
You are the gate.
You are the Son of man and the Son of God.
You are named all this (fol. 66r) because of (your) love for us.
Behold, you are named high priest as David says about you, “You are the
priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”1 Indeed, when Melchizedek
met Abraham, he brought forth bread and wine and gave (them) to him. You,
too, took bread of wheat and a cup of wine and gave them to your disciples,
saying, “This bread is my body; this cup of wine is my blood which is given to
you for the redemption of many.”2 You are blessed, O Lord, that you showed
us a hidden mystery from your (fol. 66v) Cross. You are blessed, O Lord.
Behold, you are named king. For Jacob has said to his son Judah regarding
you, “There will come out from you a king who will wash his garment with
wine and his clothes with blood of grapes3 and who binds his donkey with
vine, and his foal with the tree of vine.2
Behold, you are named prophet. For Moses has said about you, “God will
raise up for you a prophet from the midst of your brothers like me, even a
better one. Whosever will not hearken to that Prophet, let that soul be elim-
nated from its people.”3 He said, “like me,” because of the New Testament

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that you gave to your pure Apostles. (fol. 67r) As he said, Moses gave the Old Testament to the children of Israel. Behold, there is no law-giving prophet other than Moses and you, as Paul says, “For he was faithful like Moses in all (God’s) house, yet his glory is greater than that of Moses.”

What Moses said, “Whoever will not hearken to that Prophet, let that soul be eliminated from its people,” is about the Jewish people who disobeyed you. Therefore, you said to the Jews, “For if you had believed Moses, you would have believed me; (fol. 67v) for Moses wrote about me. If you do not believe what Moses wrote, how would you believe me?”

Behold, you are named shepherd; for David says about you in the Psalms, “Give ear, O shepherd of Israel, you who pasture Joseph like sheep.” You, too, say in the words of your holy Gospel, “I am the good shepherd who gives my life for the redemption of my sheep.”

Truly, you are the good shepherd who gave your life on the Cross for your sheep.

Behold, you are named sheep; for (fol. 68r) John Son of Zecharias testified for you; he spoke, saying, “Behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.”

Truly, you are the true lamb who is slaughtered on the Cross for the salvation of the children of man.

Behold, you are named cow; for David says about you, “I will please God better than a cow or bullock that did not grow horn and hoof.” Regarding the prodigal son, it is narrated in the holy Gospel, how his father has said, “Bring forth the fatted cow and slaughter (it). Let us rejoice. (fol. 68v) For this my son was dead and is alive (again); he was lost and is found.”

The fatted cow is you who were sacrificed on your Cross for the banquet of the saints.

Behold, you are named lion, a lion’s cub; for Jacob has said to his son Judah, as he was prophesizing about you, “Judah is a lion’s cub; ascend, my son, from your repose. You crouched down and slept like a lion and like a lion’s cub. There is no one to wake you up. The reign shall not be lost from Judah nor princedom from his (body) member, until he gets what waits (fol. 69r) for him, which is the hope of nations.”

Behold, you are named horn; for David says in the Psalms, “There I will cause a horn to sprout up for David; and I will prepare a lamp for my anointed one.”

Zecharias, too, says, “He has raised up for us the horn of our salvation from the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy

fol. 67r 1 Heb 3: 2–3.
fol. 68v 1 Lk 15: 23–24.
prophets who pleased him from of old.” David, too, says, “And my only one from the horns of unicorn.” He says, furthermore, “My horn will be exalted like that of the unicorn; and my gray hair will be moistened with oil.”

Behold, you are named stone; (fol. 69r) for Daniel says about you, “A stone was cut from a high mountain without the means of a hand, and crushed the golden statue.” David, too, says, “The stone that builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is God’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.” You are a stone of life to those who believe in you; and you are a stumbling stone to those who do not believe in you and to those who are stumbled by your words. You are a stone of denial to those who do not lean upon your Cross. I believed in you, O stone of life; (fol. 70v) and I believe in you that you are the Son of the living God. “Cover me like a good shield.”

by the power of your Cross, your servant

Behold, you are named a well of glory of the water of life; for Isaiah says, “Look to the rock which you hewed and the deep well which you dug.” You, too, say in your Gospel, “And he who drinks from the water I give him shall not thirst.” Water of life flows from your lips.

Behold, you are named way of righteousness and life; (fol. 70v), for you say yourself in the holy Gospel, “I am the way of righteousness and the life.” Whoever walks toward me shall not stumble because he sees the light of this world.

Behold, you are named sun; for the holy Church says about you, “Do not look at me, because I am dark, because the sun has not gazed on me.” In the Book of the Covenant you say (about) yourself, “A sun that never sets; a lamp that never goes out; a sun that always shines over the saints.”

Behold, you are named a star of light; (fol. 71v) for Balaam says prophesying when Balak, son of Zippor, called him (to curse Israel), “There shall come a star out of Jacob; it shall appear from Israel.” And to (John of) the Apocalypse you say, “I am the morning star of light that came forth from the root of David.”

Behold, you are named light from light; for you say yourself, “I am the light of the world.” “Walk while you have light lest darkness comes upon you. Believe in the light that you may be the children of light.” John Son of
(fol. 71r) Thunder, too, says, “There was a man who was sent from God whose name was John. The same (man) came to bear witness to the light that everyone might believe through him. He was not that light but (was sent) to bear witness to the light. And (that was) the light of truth that enlightens to all people; he came into the world. But the world did not know him.”

Behold, you are named bread of life; for you say, “I am the bread of life. He who eats my flesh lives in me.”

Behold, you are named cup; for (fol. 72r) you yourself say, “Take and drink; this cup is my blood.”

Also, you say, “Whoever drinks my blood shall never taste death.”

Behold, you are named gate; for you yourself say, “I am the gate of the sheep. He who comes through me, can get in and out and finds pasture.”

Behold, you are named flower; for Isaiah says, “There shall come forth a rod from the root of Jesse and a flower shall grow from its stock. And the spirit of God shall rest upon him, the spirit of understanding and purity, the spirit of wisdom and knowledge.”

The Church (fol. 72v) says about you, “His lips are flower that flow perfect myrrh.”

Behold, you are named the Son of man, being born from the seed of David in flesh. You are the Son of God in your nature; you yourself have told us, saying, “For the Son of man is the Son of God.”

I believe in you, O Son of God, that you are the Savior of the World and requiter for the sin of the children of Adam.

I believe in you, O Lord, that you (fol. 73r) are carrier of your Cross for the salvation of all the children of man.

I believe in you, O Lord, that you are God, the Son of God.

I believe in you, O Lord, that you are light, the Son of light.

I believe in you, O Lord, that you are the stream of pure water of life from a pure well; life from life; and the Only-Begotten Son from one God.

I believe in you, O Lord, that you are equal in Divinity to him who begat you and of united existence with your Father.

I believe in you, O Lord, that you are the strength of faith, (fol. 73v) whose wick of (relation in) your Trinity with your Father and your Spirit will not be cut.

I believe in you, O Lord, that you are the crown of the holy Church and the decoration of the faithful.

\[ \text{fol. 71r} \quad ^1 \text{Jn 1: 6–10} \quad ^2 \text{Jn 6: 48,56. Text, “... lives for my sake.”} \]

\[ \text{fol. 72r} \quad ^1 \text{Cf. Lk 22: 20} \quad ^2 \text{Cf. Jn 6: 54; 8: 51} \quad ^3 \text{Jn 10: 7, 9} \quad ^4 \text{Isa. 11: 1.} \]

\[ \text{fol. 72v} \quad ^1 \text{Song 5: 13} \quad ^2 \text{Cf. Jn 10: 36} \quad ^3 \text{Ps 79/80: 1} \quad ^4 \text{Jn 10: 14–15.} \]
I believe in you, O Lord, that you are fragrant of precious perfume with whom the priests are anointed, with whom Christian kings are anointed and with whom the angels are filled. Do not keep from me the oil of the grace of God which is from you. And fence me with the rampart of your Cross. Say to my soul, “I am your helper. I have sealed you with my mighty hand and with my life-giving Cross.” Do not allow demons touch my body. Protect me with the shadow of your Cross. Embrace me under the shadow of your wings, like a bird that broods over her chicks. And bless me with the blessing of our fathers Adam, Seth and Enoch, with the blessing of Noah, Sem and Japheth, with the blessing of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob Israel, with the blessing of Moses and all the Prophets, with the blessing of Peter, Paul and all the Apostles, with the blessing of the victorious martyrs, with the blessing of the pure virgins, with the blessing of the saints and (spiritual) combatants, with the blessing of the diligent angels, with the blessing of the last community of the holy Church, and more so by the intercession of the holy, pure and blessed Mary, the Mother of God, and with the blessing of your honored and life-giving Cross, the seal of grace, the sign of salvation. May your light be on me, your servant Faššạ Krastos, for ever and ever. Amen.

(fol. 75r) Peace peace to the Cross of the Only One, whose peace We greet on its right and left, Its back and front. Let us kiss the land of peace, Which is the bow of God, Which became the bed of his suffering, And is anointed with his blood. Let us say to it “peace,” without silence, Invoking its name, That deafened the serpent, And tore off its face. And let us say “peace” to his Mother for being his Mother, Who is called, in purity, the hall of his highest heaven. May the power of her prayer be for us a weakener of the enemy. Interpreting her remembrance, I completely failed. Glory (fol. 75v) to God who created us to worship him.

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Summary

One of the many works of Abba Giyorgis of Gassëcha/Sägla (d. 1527) is a Woddase Mäsqäl “Praises of the Cross”, a work which previously was known only from Abba Giyorgis’s Acts (Gädli) and oral tradition. Recently, however, the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa/Collegeville, has discovered and microfilmed a 16th-century copy of the text, EMML 504, edited and translated here. In the work Abba Giyorgis reviews the symbolic prophecies in the Old Testament relating to the Incarnation of the Word. The Woddase Mäsqäl is an exceedingly high quality literary work, even by the author’s famously high standards.