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**Article**

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## Water — The Nile — And the *Tä'amrä Maryam*. Miracles of the Virgin Mary in the Ethiopian Version

VERONIKA SIX<sup>1</sup>

The Nile had been and still is a connecting tie between the two countries, Ethiopia and Egypt. Each country is aware of the importance of the Nile water and also aware of its respective dependency. When for example in the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, for nearly seven years (1066-72 A.D.) a famine caused by the failure of the annual flood of the Nile struck Egypt, the Khalif sent an embassy equipped with valuable gifts to the Ethiopian king who, he thought, was withholding the water. The Ethiopians accepted the gifts, they did not clarify the error, and also received in future years tribute (the Egyptians in response charged the Ethiopians for sending the Abunä).<sup>2</sup> For centuries they had kept alive the idea of diverting the Nile and this is also a topic in one miracle of the corpus of the *Tä'amrä Maryam* [= Miracles of Mary].

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church observes 32 annual feasts which are dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and a special commemoration is made to her by reading from the *Tä'amrä Maryam* three miracles during Sunday liturgy. This ritual was introduced by emperor Zär'a Ya'eqob (1434-68 A.D.) in the year 1441 A.D.<sup>3</sup>

During the reign of his father Dawit II (1380-1412 A.D.), it already had become clear that the Virgin would obtain a position of pre-eminence amongst the Saints of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, because he initiated the translation of the miracles of the Virgin from Arabic into Gə'əz.<sup>4</sup> His action is mentioned

<sup>1</sup> Paper held at the conference in Tel Aviv (Israel): The Nile – Civilizations, History, Myths. May 19-22, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. for example E.A.W. BUDGE, *A History of Ethiopia* (London 1928), p. 279; TTCh p. 262; CEtP vol. I p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> See for example *African Zion. The Sacred Art of Ethiopia*. RODERICK GRIERSON (ed.) (New Haven 1993) p. 51, 71-75 and 142.

<sup>4</sup> See CLEt p. 82 and CLMM p. 3.

and incorporated as a story in the *Tä'amrā Maryam* reporting of the preparation of golden ink to write the miracles.<sup>5</sup>

The origin of the nucleus of the legends of the Virgin lies in France. In the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century — from 1128-29 A.D. — a serious epidemic raged in France and vast areas were devastated and depopulated. On pilgrim sites which were consecrated to her name, legends about the aid of the Virgin sprang up and became very popular.<sup>6</sup> They were soon spread all over Europe and due to the narrative and entertaining character of these stories poets and minstrels felt encouraged to compose new ones according to what they had heard and the environment where they lived. The tales were rendered into the languages and idioms of the respective countries and therefore it happened that by the route of the Crusaders, the stories eventually reached Palestine. And from the Holy Land it was then just a short way to Egypt, where the Arabic version which later was taken as the „Vorlage“ for the Gə'əz text, was produced.

In his unmatched analysis, *Il libro etiopico dei miracoli di Maria*<sup>7</sup> ENRICO CERULLI has described in detail the different sources and cycles which led to the creation of the Ethiopic version of the collection of miracles, for example, stories concerning the miraculous events in the monasteries or secular places in France and Italy, the numerous miracles which happened in the famous and for Ethiopia important sites of Egypt: Däbrä Məṭmaq (as it is called in Ethiopic) or Däbrä Qwəsqwam<sup>8</sup>, and others in the Holy Land, to name just a few. And there is of course a significant corpus of the miracles which have an Ethiopian background.<sup>9</sup>

As already stated it was emperor Zär'a Ya'əqob who promoted the cult and veneration of Mary. This was not accepted by the entirety of the Ethiopian clergy. In fact it almost led to a schism in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which

<sup>5</sup> CLMM p. 87f. EMMML vol. 5 (no. 1606.259) p. 107.

<sup>6</sup> See CLEt p. 81-83.

<sup>7</sup> Roma 1943.

<sup>8</sup> The importance lies first of all in hierarchical considerations involving the Coptic and the Ethiopian Orthodox Churches and the election of the Abunä. But it was also very common for Ethiopian monks to visit monasteries in Egypt, for example in the Scete, as witnessed by remarks in manuscripts. Cf. M. COHEN in: *Mélanges René Basset* (1923) X = vol. I p. 144. C. CONTI ROSSINI, Notice sur les manuscrits éthiopiens de la collection d'Abbadie = Extrait du *Journal Asiatique* (1912-1914) (Paris 1914) p. 70f.

<sup>9</sup> See CLMM p. 80-128.

is also recorded in the *Tä'amrä Maryam*.<sup>10</sup> The veneration of the Virgin became more and more significant and consequently – beside the production of icons for the cult – there emerged a literary activity with the corpus of miracles being enlarged with the time to a total of 316 miracles.<sup>11</sup>

So the miracles underwent the same procedure in Ethiopia as in the Mediterranean area in the centuries before as additional stories in Gəʿəz were composed and included. These tales are in many ways an authentic source for local, historical or ethnographic information, even though they are written to document first of all the supporting intervention of the Virgin. The certainty about Mary's help for those who invoke her name is the topic of the so-called *Kidanä məḥrät* [= treaty of mercy] which was concluded between the Virgin and her son; it is also embodied in the *Tä'amrä Maryam*.<sup>12</sup> A second confirmation for this fulfilment lies in the belief and conviction that the Holy Family stayed a while in Ethiopia after they escaped from Herod. And therefore the Ethiopians regard themselves and their country as a chosen nation. The stay of the Holy Family in Ethiopia is recounted in numbers 32-47 of the collection of 270 miracles (first part) which was compiled and edited by TÄSFA GÄBRÄ ŠĪLLASE from Bulga in Nāḥase 1963 A.Mis. = 1971 A.D.<sup>13</sup>

In number 41<sup>14</sup> one finds an enumeration of places which the Virgin saw when flying over Ethiopia on a cloud and an abbreviated description of the Christian country, including lakes and rivers, for example the Tākazze crossing the northern part of Ethiopia. This river plays a role in miracles when people are hindered from traversing it. And there is mentioned a big river, *fäläg abiy*, later called *fälägä Gəyon*, i. e. the river Geyon, which is the Nile. The Ethiopic name *Gəyon* (the Amharic equivalent is *Abbay*) is a reminiscence of the Old Testament book Genesis 2,13 which describes Paradise and the source of the

<sup>10</sup> For example CLMM p. 18f. EMMML vol. 5 (no. 1606.208f.) p. 103; vol. 6 (no. 2058.73f.) p. 76f.

<sup>11</sup> CLet p. 83-85. CLMM p. 26. It is said that nowadays there exist more than 600 miracles; cf. *African Zion ...* p. 51.

<sup>12</sup> For the 16<sup>th</sup> of Yäkkatit; see no. 72 (p. 271-275) of TÄSFA GÄBRÄ ŠĪLLASE's edition or EMMML vol. 5 (no. 1606.298) p. 111. C. CONTI ROSSINI, Il convento di Tsana in Abissinia e le sue laudi alla Vergine = *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia nazionale dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche* vol. XIX, ser. 5: Ferie accademiche. Luglio-ottobre 1910 (Roma) p. 581-621.

<sup>13</sup> In Gəʿəz and Amharic. Whether the second volume has been edited is unknown to me.

<sup>14</sup> p. 158-161 of TÄSFA GÄBRÄ ŠĪLLASE's edition.

four rivers, one of these being the Geyon, which flows round the land of Kush.<sup>15</sup> Here we have another underlining of Ethiopia's image being elected among the nations.

When the Holy Family received the order to return to the Holy Land via Egypt they left Ethiopia on an overland route, followed by camels and horses loaded with precious gifts received from the Ethiopian people, as described in number 46.<sup>16</sup> They then had to cross the Tākazze<sup>17</sup> and reached Elephantine, the southernmost village of Egypt situated on the banks of the Nile<sup>18</sup>. It seems that this route corresponds approximately to one of the trade routes the pilgrims followed to get to Egypt and further on to Jerusalem.<sup>19</sup> Another route had been by sea, a perilous venture, which too has references in the *Tä'amrā Maryam*.<sup>20</sup>

Alongside the course of the Nile which has its source in Lake Tana, an area where the Holy Family is explicitly said to have stayed and therefore is considered as exceptionally holy (even today the water of the Gəš Abbay is used for healing<sup>21</sup>) there was another route leaving the country in a westerly direction<sup>22</sup>. As on a string of pearls important monastic sites are situated in this

<sup>15</sup> See IOBUS LUDOLFUS, *Ad suam Historiam Aethiopicam antehac editam Commentarius* (Francofurti ad Moenum 1691) p. 119f.

<sup>16</sup> p. 181 (verse 30) of TÄSFA GÄBRÄ ŠĪLLASE's edition: ... ተንሢአሙ ፡ እምብሔረ ፡ ኢትዮጵያ ፡ ወበጽሑ ፡ ብሔረ ፡ ግብፅ ፡ ዲበ ፡ የብሳ ፡ ... [... having left the land of Ethiopia they then reached the land of Egypt on the dry land ...]; and here it is added that the Queen of Sheba has used this route too: ... ጎበ ፡ እንተ ፡ ሐረት ፡ ንግሥተ ፡ ሳባ ፡ ኢየሩሳሌም ...

<sup>17</sup> Described in no. 47 of TÄSFA GÄBRÄ ŠĪLLASE's edition, p. 182-184.

<sup>18</sup> See *Der Kleine Pauly. Lexikon der Antike* vol. I-V (Stuttgart-München 1979); vol. II p. 242f.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. for example EMMML vol. 6 (no. 2058.25) p. 73: Story of an Ethiopian monk who first went to Egypt and then continued to Jerusalem. Or the route used by ʿEzra of the monastery of Gunda Gunde which is described in detail in his *gädl*; see A. CAQUOT, Les Actes d'Ezra de Gunda-Gunde = *Annales d'Éthiopie* vol. 4 (1961) p. 69-121; particularly p. 75-79 (= Text) and p. 98-103 (= translation).

<sup>20</sup> See for example EMMML vol. 5 (no. 1606.39 and 309) p. 90 and 111f. = O. LÖFGREN, *Katalog über die äthiopischen Handschriften in der Universitätsbibliothek Uppsala. Sowie Anhänge über äthiopische Handschriften in anderen Bibliotheken und in Privatbesitz* (Acta Bibliothecae R. Universitatis Upsaliensis XVIII; Uppsala 1974) (no. 30.56) p. 73 = H. ZOTENBERG, *Catalogue des manuscrits éthiopiens (gheez-ambarique) de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris 1877) (no. 62.58) p. 70b.

<sup>21</sup> See R. KRISS – H. KRISS-HEINRICH, *Volkskundliche Anteile in Kult und Legende äthiopischer Heiliger* (Wiesbaden 1975) p. 56-61. Cf. I. LUDOLFUS, *Ad suam Historiam* ... p. 116.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. also TTCh p. 81.

large area, for example Märṭulä Maryam, Däbra Wärq, Däbrä Dima and Däbrä Marqos.<sup>23</sup> Monks on their itinerary could either stay there or spend time in the wilderness of the gorges where they would practise the ascetic part of their life<sup>24</sup> and then move on to fulfil the pilgrimage.

It should have become evident that the collection of the miracles of Mary, *Tä'amrä Maryam*, is a mirror of behaviour, belief, events and attitudes. There is on the one hand the idea of being chosen, then the idea and certainty that Mary will intervene and there are finally the geographical and historical elements.

And there is particularly one miracle which makes evident all the above mentioned elements. The summarised content of the miracle which has the number 268<sup>25</sup> in the edition of TÄSFA GÄBRÄ ŠĪLLASE, is as follows:

The Christians whom the Muslims are threatening ask Emperor Dawit for help. After reading their letter he goes into a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and there he takes refuge with her. During night-time the Virgin appears and gives him the advice to fight against the Muslims, also saying that God has given him wisdom to divert the Nile. So he leaves his country, accompanied by many soldiers and meets the Muslims in Sennar. The Muslims, being scared because they cannot harvest without water from the Nile, send a letter to the Christians, declaring that they no longer will be their enemies and therefore they would request Dawit to return the water. When Dawit hears the news about the peaceful co-operation between Muslims and Christians, he praises the Virgin and returns into his country according to their petition.

Though the sentences of the text are vague, they nevertheless reveal several facts:

There is mentioned a mutual correspondence about Christian–Muslim concerns. During the reign of Emperor Dawit II Ethiopia was involved in a conflict between Christian Europe and the Muslims. Christian rulers of Europe tried to reconquer the Holy Land which had been lost with the fall of Jerusalem in the year 1187 A.D. Looking for allies they had the idea that the legendary Prester John, who was thought to rule Ethiopia, might be the right partner.

Ethiopian pilgrims in Egypt and the Holy Land were transmitters of the news about Ethiopia spreading in the Mediterranean world. When Dawit's campaign

<sup>23</sup> For a description of these places see, for example, G.W.B. HUNTINGFORD, *The Historical Geography of Ethiopia* (Oxford 1989) p. 168. M. COHEN, Dabra Warq = *Mélanges René Basset* X vol. I (Paris 1923) p. 143-63.

<sup>24</sup> For the trade route from Wälläga into Sudan see for example BAHRU ZEWEDE, *A History of Modern Ethiopia 1855-1974* (Addis Abäba 1992) p. 24.

<sup>25</sup> p. 795-799.

against the Mamelukes, which he successfully undertook in the year 1381 A.D., became known<sup>26</sup>, the information about Prester John became more reliable and the king was considered to be the representative of a powerful and extraordinary nation. And for a second reason the Ethiopians had a good reputation and started to play a role in the strategic reflections. After the fall of Jerusalem the Muslim ruler Salah ad-Din granted them parts of the Holy Places in Palestine and they were allowed to stay there, unlike the treatment accorded to the Templers and their followers who lost their residence permit and had to leave.<sup>27</sup>

In the year 1400 A.D. King Henry IV of England, searching for an ally, sent a letter to the Ethiopian King in which he asked for support in the Crusade to liberate the Holy Places.<sup>28</sup>

A letter was dispatched from the Muslim side when Dawit started his above-mentioned offensive against Egypt in Aswan. The Coptic Patriarch Matthaïos I (1378-1408 A.D.) had been forced by the Egyptian ruler to intervene and write a letter.<sup>29</sup>

It seems that the author of the miracle was not particularly interested in the precise historical data. For his purpose it is only important that there exists a conflict between Christians and Muslims, and the Ethiopian side is the one which is able to solve the problem. Consequently he merges many events, i. e. the Crusade, the situation of the Coptic Patriarchate under Islamic rule, Dawit's campaign into Sennar (which is not at all a consequence of the Crusader idea, but a need to strengthen the Ethiopian empire) into one story: the menace to the Christian nations and their call for help, and as reaction happens Dawit's campaign into Sennar blessed by the Virgin, who informs him about his wisdom in diverting the Nile.

Since that time it was commonly accepted, not only by the Egyptians but also by European rulers<sup>30</sup>, that the Ethiopians were the masters of the Nile.

Moreover, in the *Tä'amrä Maryam* there are additional stories about influencing the course of water. To cite just one, we have the washerman who is

<sup>26</sup> Cf. TTCh p. 255.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. CEtP vol. I p. 31-37. For miracles which happened at these places see for example CLMM p. 130-147.

<sup>28</sup> See the essay in TTCh p. 257.

<sup>29</sup> See TTCh p. 255. During the time of the said patriarch Egypt had to suffer from a famine as is reported in the *Tä'amrä Maryam*.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. for example CEtP vol. I p. 118f.

praying to the Virgin so that the flow of the river goes in another direction.<sup>31</sup> Ethiopian imagination therefore takes for granted that fiction may turn into reality, because it is established in the *Tä'amrä Maryam*.

At this point it must be said that the miracle concerning Dawit and diverting the Nile exists — so far as I know — in just two copies. One is the printed version of TÄSFA GÄBRÄ ŚĪLLASE which was at my disposal, and the other one is part of a *Tä'amrä Maryam* from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century which seems to offer a slightly different version.<sup>32</sup> (Older manuscripts, for example from the Ṭana collection, containing the complete corpus of 316 miracles do not include the story<sup>33</sup>).

Now, the question arises why at this time, i.e. the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was a need for such a tendentious story.

Roughly it can be said that the political situation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century is comparable to that of the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century, namely the Egyptian victory over the Funḡ Kingdom in Sennar (1821 A.D.) and Egypt's reinforcement to gain influence in the bordering area and which became a severe threat when Məṣṣəwa was occupied in 1841 A.D.<sup>34</sup>

Then, Kasa Ḥaylu, who later became Tewodros II had to face the Egyptians in 1848 A.D. and he — like Dawit II — dreamed the dream of liberating Jerusalem.<sup>35</sup> He had always to include in his strategic considerations the Ethiopian dependency on the Coptic Patriarchate, which itself was dependent on the favour of the Muslim ruler.

Finally, as a last example of a parallel situation Khedive Ismael of Egypt should be mentioned. When he announced his interest in the resources of the Nile waters, the Western colonial states were asked to declare their solidarity with the Ethiopian King Yohännəs IV.<sup>36</sup> So one may talk again of the idea of a

<sup>31</sup> See EMMML vol. 5 (no. 1606.57) p. 91.

<sup>32</sup> EMMML vol. 6 (no. 2337.93) p. 392: 1869-76 A.D.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. for example ṬS 16 = Kəbran 16: 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century = E. HAMMERSCHMIDT, *Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland* vol. XX 1 (Wiesbaden 1973) p. 120; ṬS 127 = Daga Əstifanos 16: 17<sup>th</sup> century = V. SIX, *Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland* vol. XX 3 (forthcoming).

<sup>34</sup> See BAHRU ZEWEDE, *A Modern History ...* p. 26.

<sup>35</sup> See BAHRU ZEWEDE, *A Modern History ...* p. 28 and 36.

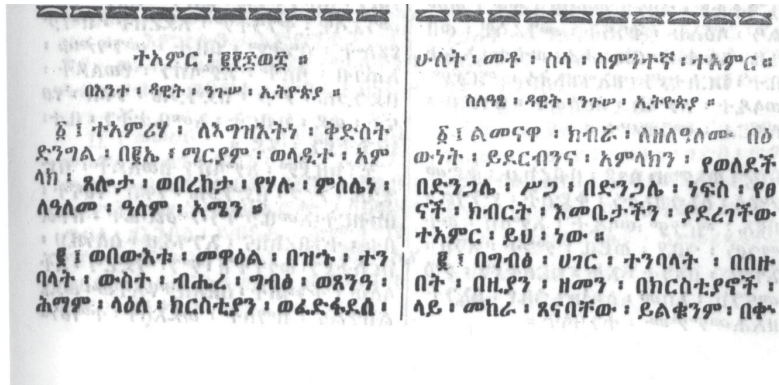
<sup>36</sup> A similar situation occurred again during Mənilək's time; cf. for example BAHRU ZAWDE, *A Modern History ...* p. 50 and 82f.



Christian alliance, this time initiated by the Ethiopians, which was challenged by the Muslims.

These events may have inspired the anonymous author to compose the story of King Dawit, which obviously was not recorded before the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As remarked in the introduction this literary genre was always used as a suitable means to react to current events. And therefore the miracle concerning Dawit can be seen as a parable, fitting the actual situation. It may have strengthened the Ethiopian belief that the Nile is Ethiopia's rightful property, sanctioned by heavenly power. Their security and superiority were laid down by events in the past which were supervised and protected by the Virgin Mary.

Edition<sup>37</sup>



<sup>37</sup> This is TÄSFA GÄBRÄ ŚĒLLASE's text.

በጎበ ፡ እለ ፡ በቀሰጥንጥንያ ፡ ወበኢየሩሳሌም ፡ ወእለ ፡ በሶርያ ።

፫ ፡ ወሶበ ፡ ርእዮ ፡ ዘንተ ፡ ግፍዓ ፡ ሰብአ ፡ አፍርገጊ ፡ ተጋቢአሙ ፡ ደርገ፡ መከሩ ፡ ውግበሩ ፡ ቃለ ፡ ወጸሐፉ ፡ ጦማረ ፡ መልእክት ፡ ወለአኩ ፡ ጎበ ፡ ሄር ፡ ወጸድቅ ፡ ዳዊት ፡ ንጉሠ ፡ ኢትዮጵያ ።

፬ ፡ ወይቤሉ ፡ እ ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ፍቁረ ፡ ማርያም ፡ ድንግል ፡ ወፍቁረ ፡ ወልዳ ኢየሱስ ፡ ክርስቶስ ፡ ፍጡነ ፡ ነዓ ፡ ለአድግኖትነ ፡ እምባእስ ፡ እስመ ፡ ተንሥኡ ፡ ላዕሌነ ፡ ወግፍትወነ ፡ ሰብእ ፡ ተንባላት ፡ ከመ ፡ ኢንጾውዕ ፡ ስሞ ፡ ለኢየሱስ ፡ ክርስቶስ ፡ ወከመ ፡ ኢንስግድ ፡ ለመስቀል ፡ ዘቦቱ ፡ ተሰቅለ ፡ መድኃኔ ፡ ዓለም ፡ ወለእሙ ፡ ቅድስት ፡ ድንግል ፡ ማርያም ።

፭ ፡ ወይእቲኒ ፡ ጦማረ ፡ መልእክት ፡ ትርኩስ ፡ ሞገስ ፡ በቅድሚኩ ፡ ወበቅድመ ፡ ከሎሙ ፡ አኃዊነ ፡ ሰብአ ፡ ኢትዮጵያ ብመታስተፋጥን ፡ መጺአ ፡ ጎቤነ ፡ ወትርድአነ ፡ ወትባልሐነ ፡ እምእደ ፡ እኩያን ፡ አጽራሪነ ።

፮ ፡ እስመ ፡ አንተ ፡ ተአምር ፡ ከመ ፡ ንሀነ ፡ ነጎብር ፡ ወሱቱፋኒሆሙ ፡ ለሰብአ ፡ ኢትዮጵያ ፡ በበይነ ፡ ፍቅራ ፡ ለእግዝእትነ ቅድስት ፡ ድንግል ፡ በ፪ኤ ፡ ማርያም ፡ ወላዲተ ፡ አምላክ ።

፯ ፡ ወሶበ ፡ ሰምዓ ፡ ዘንተ ፡ ዳዊት ፡ ንጉሠ ኢትዮጵያ ፡ ጎዘነ ፡ ወተከዘ ፡ ጥቀ ፡ ወመልዓ ፡ ላዕሌሁ ፡ ቅንዓት ፡ መንፈሳዊ ፡ ወበጊዜ ፡ ጸሎተ ፡ ሠርክ ፡ ሖረ ፡ ውስተ ፡ አሐቲቤተ ፡ ክርስቲያን ፡ ዘእግዝእትነ ፡ ማርያም ፡ ወላዲተ ፡ አምላክ ፡ ዘሀለወት ፡ በጥቃሁ ፡ ለጽርሐ ፡ መንግሥቱ ።

፰ ፡ ወእምዝ ፡ ሰገደ ፡ በብረኪሁ ፡ ቅድመ ሥዕላ ፡ ለእግዝእትነ ፡ ቅድስት ፡ ድንግል ፡ በ፪ኤ ፡ ማርያም ፡ ወላዲተ ፡ አምላክ ፡ ወተማገፀነ ፡ ጎቤሃ ፡ ወይቤ ፡ ምንተ ፡ እንከ ፡ እገብር ፡ በእንተ ፡ እሉ ፡ ክርስቲያን ፡ ምዕመናንኪ ፡ እስመ ፡ ለአኩ ፡ ጎቤየ ፡ በእንተ ዘአሕመምሆሙ ፡ ተንባላት ።

ስጥንጥንያ ፡ በኢየሩሳሌምና ፡ በሶርያ ፡ በሚኖሩ ፡ ምዕመናን ፡ ላይ ፡ ሥቃይ ፡ በዘባቸው

፫ ፡ በአፍርገጊያ ፡ የሚኖሩ ፡ ክርስቲያኖችም ፡ ይህን ፡ ግፍ ፡ በተመለከቱ ፡ ጊዜ ፡ ስብሰባ ፡ አድርገው ፡ መክረው ፡ በአንድ ፡ ቃል ፡ ተስማምተው ፡ ቸርና ፡ ጸድቅ ፡ ለሚሆን ፡ ለኢትዮጵያው ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ለዳዊት ፡ የመልእክት ፡ ደብዳቤ ፡ ላኩ ።

፬ ፡ የተወደደ ፡ ልጅዎ ፡ የኢየሱስ ፡ ክርስቶስና ፡ የቅድስት ፡ ድንግል ፡ ማርያም ፡ ወዳጅ ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ዳዊት ፡ ሆይ ፡ ከጥፋት ፡ ታድነን ፡ ዘንድ ፡ ፈጥነህ ፡ ድረስልን ፡ የክርስቶስን ፡ ስም ፡ እንዳንጠራ ፡ መድኃኔ ፡ ዓለም ለተሰቀለበት ፡ መስቀልና ፡ ለእመቤታችን ፡ ቅድስት ፡ ድንግልም ፡ እንዳንሰግድ ፡ ተንባላት ፡ ተጋፍተውናልና ።

፭ ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ሆይ ፡ ወደኛ ፡ በመፋጠን ፡ መጥተህ ፡ ትረዳንና ፡ ከጠላቱቻችንም ፡ ጎጆ ፡ ታድነን ፡ ዘንድ ፡ ይህች ፡ የመልእክት ፡ ደብዳቤ ፡ በአንተና ፡ በወንድሞቻችን ኢትዮጵያውያን ፡ ዘንድ ፡ መከበርን ፡ ባለሟልነትን ፡ ተቀብይነትን ፡ ታግኝ ።

፮ ፡ እኛ ፡ ከኢትዮጵያ ፡ ሰዎች ፡ ጋር ፡ አምላክን ፡ የወለደች ፡ በድንጋሌ ፡ ሥጋ ፡ በድንጋሌ ፡ ነፍስ ፡ የፀናች ፡ ክብርት ፡ እመቤታችንን ፡ በመውደድ ፡ አንድ ፡ እንደ ፡ ሆን ፡ ታውቃለህና ፡ አሉት ።

፯ ፡ የኢትዮጵያው ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ዳዊትም ፡ ይህን ፡ በሰማ ፡ ጊዜ ፡ ፈጽሞ ፡ አዘነ ፡ ተከዘ መንፈሳዊ ፡ ቅንዓትም ፡ አደረበት ፡ በማታየጸሎት ፡ ሰዓትም ፡ በቤተ ፡ መንግሥቱ ፡ አጠገብ ፡ ባሉች ፡ አምላክን ፡ የወለደች ፡ በድንጋሌ ፡ ሥጋ ፡ በድንጋሌ ፡ ነፍስ ፡ የፀናች ፡ ወደ ፡ ክብርት ፡ እመቤታችን ፡ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ፡ ሄደ ።

፰ ፡ ከዚያም ፡ አምላክን በወለደች ፡ በድንጋሌ ፡ ሥጋ ፡ በድንጋሌ ፡ ነፍስ ፡ የፀናች ፡ በክብርት እመቤታችን ሥዕል፣ፈት ፡ በጉልበቱ ፡ ተንበረከከና ፡ እንግዲህ ፡ ስለነዚህ ፡ ክርስቲያን ፡ ወገኖችሽ ፡ ምን ፡ ማድረግ ፡ እችላለሁ ፡ ተንባለት ፡ ስለአስቃዩአቸው ፡ ወደደልክዋልና ፡ በማለት ፡ ወደእስከ ፡ ተማፀነ።



፱ ፤ ወካዕበ ፡ ጸለየ ፡ ወይቤ ፡ አ፡ እግዝእ ትዮ ፡ እሙ ፡ ለፈጣሪ ፡ ትምክህቶሙ ፡ ለክርስቲያን ፡ ሞገሶሙ ፡ ለነገሥታት ፡ ወአክሊሎሙ ፡ ለሰማዕት ፡ ስአሊ ፡ ነበ፡ ወልድኪ ከመ ፡ ያብሐኒ ፡ እሑር ፡ ብሔረ ፡ ግብፅ ፡ ወእፅብዖሙ ፡ ለተንባላት ፡ በእንተ ፡ መራዕዩ ፡ አባግዲሁ ፡ ለፍቁር ፡ ወልድኪ ፡ ወሀብኒ ፡ ኃይለ ፡ ወመዊዓ ፡ ለገብርኪ ።

፲ ፤ ወእምድኅረ ፡ ጸለየ ፡ ዘንተ ፡ ወዘይመስሎ ፡ ተመይጦ ፡ ወቦአ ፡ ውስተ ፡ ጽርሐ ፡ መንግሥቱ ።

፲፩ ፤ ወበይእቲ ፡ ዕለት ፡ ጊዜ ፡ መንፈቀሌሊት ፡ አስተርአዮት ፡ ለዳዊት ፡ ንጉሠ አትዮጵያ ፡ እግዝእትነ ፡ ቅድስት ፡ ድንግል በጄኤ ፡ ማርያም ፡ ወላዲተ ፡ አምላክ፡ ወትቤሎ፡ አ፡ ፍቁርየ ፡ ወፍቁረ ፡ ወልድዮ ፡ ኢየሱስ ክርስቶስ ፡ ወነዋ ፡ ስአልክዎ ፡ ለወልድዮ ፡ በእንቲአክ ፡ ከመ ፡ ትሑር ፡ ወታድኅኖሙ ለሕዝብየ ፡ ክርስቶሳውያን ፡ ወበእንተዝሠምረ ፡ ለከ ፡ ወጼሐ ፡ ፍኖተከ ፡ ተንሥእ ፡ ወሑር ፡ ወውአቱ ፡ ይገብር ፡ በእድዊከ ፡ ተአምራተ ፡ ብዙኃ ።

፲፪ ፤ ወሶበ ፡ ነቅሐ ፡ እምንዋሙ ፡ ዳዊት ንጉሠ ፡ ኢትዮጵያ ፡ ፈድፋድ ፡ ተፈሥሐ ፡ በእንተ ፡ ዘነገረቶ ፡ ወመልዓ ፡ ላዕሌሁ ፡ ኃይለ እግዚአብሔር ፡ ወሶበ ፡ ኮነ ፡ ጽባሐ ፡ አዶዶ አዋዶ ፡ ወእስጋብእ ፡ ነሎ ፡ መስተቃትላን ሐራሁ ፡ እምነሎን ፡ አድያማተ ፡ ኢትዮጵያ ፡ ወሐረ ፡ ከመ ፡ ይፅብዖሙ ፡ ለተንባላተ ፡ ግብፅ ፡ ወበጽሐ ፡ ውስተ ፡ ስናር ።

፲፫ ፤ ወወሀቦ ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ ጥበብ ፡ ወከተረ ፡ ፈለገ ፡ ግዮን ፡ ከመ ፡ ኢይረድ ፡ ውስተ ፡ ብሔረ ፡ ግብፅ ፡ እስመ ፡ አልቦ ፡ ክረምት ፡ ውስተ ፡ ብሔሮሙ ፡ ለሰብእ ፡ ግብፅ ፡ ዘእንበለ ፡ ይብጸሕ ፡ ሎሙ ፡ ማየ ፡ ግዮን ፡ ዘይውኅዝ ፡ እምኢትዮጵያ ፡ ኢየሩሳሌም ፡ ኢይዘርዑ ፡ ዘርዓ ፡ ወኢይረክቡ ፡ ማየ ፡ ምንተኒ ።

፱ ፤ ዳግመኛም ፡ የአምላክ ፡ እናት ፡ የክርስቲያን ፡ መመኪያቸው ፡ የነገሥታት ፡ ክብራቸው ፡ የሰማዕታት ፡ ዘውዳቸው እመቤቱ ሆይ ፡ ስለ ፡ ተወደደው ፡ ልጅሽ ፡ የበጎች ፡ መንጋ ፡ ወደ ፡ ግብፅ ፡ ሀገር ፡ ሄጄ ፡ ተንባላትን ፡ እንደአጠፋቸው ፡ ያሰናብተን ፡ ዘንድ ወደልጅሽ ፡ ለምኻልኻ ፡ በጠላቶቼም ፡ ላይ ፡ ለአገልጋይሽ ፡ የድል ፡ አክሊል ፡ አቀዳጅኝ ፡ እያለ ፡ ጸለየ ።

፲ ፤ ይህንና ፡ የመሰለውንም ፡ ጸሎት ፡ ከጸለየ ፡ በኋላ ፡ ተመልሶ ፡ ወደቤተ ፡ መንግሥቱ ፡ ገባ ።

፲፩ ፤ በዚያችም ፡ ዕለት ፡ መንፈቀሌሊት በሆነ ፡ ጊዜ ፡ አምላክን ፡ የወለደች ፡ በድንጋሌ ፡ ሥጋ ፡ በድንጋሌ ፡ ነፍስ ፡ የፀናች ፡ ክብርት ፡ እመቤታችን ፡ ለኢትዮጵያው ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ለዳዊት ፡ ተገለጸችለትና ፡ ወዳጄ ፡ የልጅም ፡ ወዳጅ ፡ ሆይ ፡ እነሆ ፡ ወደ ፡ ግብፅ ፡ ሀገር ፡ ሄደህ ፡ ወገኖቼ ክርስቶሳውያንን ፡ ልታድናቸው ፡ ትሄድ ፡ ዘንድ ፡ ልጄን ፡ ስለአንተ ፡ ለምኔልሃለሁ ፡ ስለዚህም ፡ ፈቅዶ ፡ መንገድህን ፡ ጠርጎልሃልና ፡ ተነሥተህ ፡ ሂድ ፡ ልጄም ፡ በአንተ ፡ እጅ ፡ ብዙ ፡ ተአምራት ፡ ያደርጋል ፡ አለችው ።

፲፪ ፤ የኢትዮጵያው ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ዳዊትም ፡ ከዕንቅልፍ ፡ በነቃ ፡ ጊዜ ፡ እመቤታችን ፡ ስለነገረችው ፡ ነገር ፡ ሁሉ ፡ ፈጽሞ ፡ ተደሰተ ፡ በነጋም ፡ ጊዜ ፡ በመላዋ ፡ የኢትዮጵያ ፡ አውራጃ ፡ ክተት ፡ ሠራዊት ፡ ምታ ፡ ነጋሪት ፡ በማለት ፡ አዋጅ ፡ አናግሮ ፡ የጦር አለቆቼንና ፡ ሠራዊቱን ፡ አስከትቶ ፡ የግብፅን ፡ ተንባላት ፡ ይዋጋቸው ፡ ዘንድ ፡ ገሰግሶ ፡ ሄይ ፡ ስናር ፡ ደረሰ ።

፲፫ ፤ ከዚያም ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ ጥበብን ሰጠውና ፡ የዐባይን ፡ ወንዝ ፡ ገድቦ ፡ ውሃው ወደግብፅ ፡ አገር ፡ እንዳይወርድ ፡ መለሰው የግብፅ ፡ ሰዎች ፡ በአገራቸው ፡ ክረምት ፡ ስሌለ ፡ የዐባይ ፡ ውሃ ፡ ካልወረደላቸው ፡ አዝመራ ፡ አያዘምሩም ፡ ዘር ፡ አይዘሩም ፡ ውሃም ፡ አያገኙምና ።

፲፩

ተአምረ ማርያም ፪፻፳፰

፲፩ ፤ ወእምድኅረዝ ፣ ለአከ ፣ ዳዊት ፣ ንጉሠ ፣ ኢትዮጵያ ለኅብ ፣ እለ ፣ በኢየሩሳሌም ፣ ወአፍርንጊያ ፣ እንዘ ፣ ይብል ፣ አፍቁራንዮ ፣ ለክሙ ፣ በጽሐ ፣ ንጉሥ ፣ ምስለ ፣ ሠራዊቱ ፣ ወከተርኩ ፣ ፈለገ ፣ ግዮን ፣ ከመኢይረድ ፣ ብሔረ ፣ ግብፅ ፣ አኮኑ ፣ ተነግረ ፣ ቀዳሚ ፣ ከሊዓ ፣ ማይ ፣ ከመ ፣ ወጢነ ፣ ጸብፅ ወእቱ ፣ ባሕቱ ፣ ለይኩን ፣ ፈቃደ ፣ እግዚአብሔር ፣ አምላኮሙ ፣ ለክርስቲያን ።

፲፪ ፤ ወሶበ ፣ ሰምዑ ፣ ዘንተ ፣ ምዕመናን ፣ እለ ፣ ሀለዉ ፣ በኢየሩሳሌም ፣ ወአፍርንጊያ ተፈሥሑ ፣ ዐቢየ ፣ ፍሥሐ ፣ ወይቤሉ ፣ እግዚአብሔር ፣ ይርድእ ፣ ወየሀቦ ፣ ኃይለ ፣ ወመዊዓ ፣ ለዳዊት ፣ ንጉሠ ፣ ኢትዮጵያ ፣ ርቱዓ ፣ ሃይማኖት ፣ ወያርትፅ ፣ ሎቱ ፣ ተሎ ፣ ፍናዌሀ ፣ ዘአድኅነነ ፣ እምእደ ፣ አጽራሪነ ፣ ወበሀየ ፣ ገብሩ ፣ ቀኖና ።

፲፫ ፤ ሶበኒ ፣ አእመሩ ፣ ተንባለተ ፣ ግብፅ ምጽአቶ ፣ ለዳዊት ፣ ንጉሠ ፣ ኢትዮጵያ ፣ በዐቢይ ፣ ግርማ ፣ በፈቃደ ፣ እግዚአብሔር ፣ ወበረድታ ፣ ለእግዝእትነ ፣ ማርያም ፣ ወአልጸቀ ፣ ምስለ ፣ ብዙኃን ፣ ሐራሀ ፣ ዘኢይትኅለቀኅ ፣ እንዘ ፣ ያተሉ ፣ መስተፅዕናነ ፣ አፍራስ ፣ ወአግማል ፣ ወበጽሐ ፣ ግብተውስተ ፣ ስናር ፣ ሶቤሃ ፣ ተጋብኡ ፣ ወመከሩ በእንቲአሆሙ ፣ ምክረ ፣ ዘይሄይስ ፣ ወይሄኒ ።

፲፬ ፤ ወእምዝ ፣ ለአኩ ፣ መልእክተ ፣ ኅብ ምዕመናነ ፣ ኢየሩሳሌም ፣ እንዘ ፣ ይብሉ ፣ እምይእዜሰ ፣ እንከ ፣ ኢንበጽሐክሙ ፣ ዳግመ ፣ ከመ ፣ ንግሥሥ ፣ ሠርዓተክሙ ፣ ወአልብነ ፣ ጸብእ ፣ ምስሌክሙ ፣ ወኢንሚንን ፣ ሃይማኖተክሙ ፣ ዘሀሎ ፣ እምትካት ፣ ምስለ ፣ አበዊክሙ ፣ ወባሕቱ ፣ ተማኅፀነ ፣ ብክሙ ፣ ከመ ፣ ይትመየጥ ፣ ብሔሮ ፣ ንጉሠ ኢትዮጵያ ።

፲፭ ፤ ወበእንተ ፣ ዝንቱ ፣ ነገር ፣ ምዕመናነ ፣ ኢየሩሳሌም ፣ ወአፍንጋርጊ ፣ ሰብሕዎ ለእግዚአብሔር በዐቢይ ፣ ሰብሐት ፣ እስመ አርአየ ፣ አድኅኖቶ ፣ ላዕለ ፣ ዳዊት ፣ ወበቅድመ ፣ አሕዛብ ፣ ከሠተ ፣ ኪዳኖ ።

፲፩ ፤ ከዚህም ፣ በኋላ ፣ የኢትዮጵያው ፣ ንጉሥ ፣ ዳዊት ፣ በኢየሩሳሌምና ፣ በአፍርንጅ ፣ ላሉ ፣ ክርስቲያኖች ፣ የተወደዳችሁ ፣ ወንድሞቼ ፣ ሆይ ፣ ንጉሡ ፣ ከነሠራዊቱ ፣ ደረሰላችሁ ፣ የዐባይንም ፣ ውሃ ፣ ወደ ፣ ግብፅ ፣ እንዳይወርድ ፣ ገደብኩላችሁ ፣ ውሃ ፣ መከልከል ፣ የጸብ ፣ መጀመሪያ ፣ ነው ተብሎ ፣ አስቀድሞ ፣ ተጽፍዋልና ፣ ነገር ፣ ግን ፣ የክርስቲያን ፣ የእምላካቸው ፣ ፈቃድ ይሁን ፣ የሚል ፣ ደብዳቤ ፣ ላከላቸው ።

፲፪ ፤ በኢየሩሳሌምና በአፍርንጅ ፣ ያሉ ክርስቲያኖችም ፣ ሁሉ ፣ ይህን ፣ በሰሙ ፣ ጊዜ ፈጽሞ ፣ ደስ ፣ አላቸውና ፣ ከጠላቶቻችን እጅ ፣ ያዳነን ፣ ሃይማኖቱ ፣ ለቀና ፣ ለኢትዮጵያው ፣ ንጉሥ ፣ ለዳዊት ፣ እግዚአብሔር ኃይልን ፣ ሰጥቶ ፣ በጠላቱ ፣ ላይ ፣ ድልን ፣ ያቀዳጀው ፣ ጎዳናውን ፣ ሁሉ ፣ ያቅና ለት ፣ በማለት ፣ በዚያ ፣ ቀኖና ፣ ያዙ ።

፲፫ ፤ የግብፅ ፣ ተንባላትም ፣ የኢትዮጵያው ፣ ንጉሥ ፣ ዳዊት ፣ በእግዚአብሔር ፣ ፈቃድና ፣ በእግዝእትነ ፣ ማርያም ፣ ረዳትነት ፣ ሥፍር ፣ ቁጥር ፣ የሌለው ፣ በፈረሰና ፣ በግመል ፣ ጦሩን ፣ አስከትቶ ፣ በታላቅ ፣ ግርማ ፣ ሆኖ ፣ ስናር ፣ እንደደረሰ ፣ በሰሙ ፣ ጊዜ ፣ ተሰብስበው ፣ ስለራላቸው ፣ የሚሻላቸውን ፣ ምክር ፣ መከሩ ።

፲፬ ፤ ከዚያም ፣ በኢየሩሳሌም ፣ ላሉ ፣ ክርስቲያኖች ፣ ከእንግዲህ ፣ ዳግመኛ ፣ አንደርስባችሁም ፣ ሥርዓታችሁንም ፣ አናፈርሰም ፣ ከእናንተም ፣ ጋር ፣ ጸብ ፣ አይኖረንም ከጥንት ፣ ከአባቶቻችሁ ፣ ጀምሮ ፣ ካለው ፣ ሃይማኖታችሁ ፣ አናናውጃችሁም ፣ ነገር ፣ ግን የኢትዮጵያው ፣ ንጉሥ ፣ ወደሀገሩ ፣ እንዲመለስ ፣ አድርጉልን ፣ ሲሉ ፣ የመማፀኛ መልእክት ፣ ላኩ ።

፲፭ ፤ ስለዚህም ፣ ነገር ፣ የኢየሩሳሌምና ፣ የአፍርንጊያ ፣ ክርስቲያኖች ፣ እግዚአብሔርን ፣ በታላቅ ፣ ምስጋና ፣ አመሰገኑት ፣ የማዳኑን ፣ ኃይል ፣ በዳዊት ፣ ላይ ፣ አሳይቷልና የቃል ፣ ኪዳኑንም ፣ ምልክት ፣ በአሕዛብ ፈት ፣ ገልጽዋልና ።



፲፱ ፤ ወወደሰዋ ፡ ለእግዝእትን ፡ ቅድስት ፡ ድንግል ፡ በጄኤ ፡ ማርያም ፡ ወላዲተ ፡ አምላክ ፡ ወይቤሉ ፡ ቡርክት ፡ አንቲ ፡ እም አንስት ፡ ወቡሩክ ፡ ፍሬ ፡ ከርሥኪ ፡ እስመ ፡ ከንክነ ፡ አንቲ ፡ መርሶ ፡ ሕይወት እሙስና ።

፳ ፤ ወሶቤሃ ፡ ምዕመናን ፡ ኢየሩሳሌም ፡ ወሰብእ ፡ አፍርንጊ ፡ ለአኩ ፡ መልእክተ ፡ ጎበ ፡ ዳዊት ፡ ንጉሠ ፡ ወመልእክቱሂ ፡ ዝንቱ ፡ ወ-እቱ ፡ አንሥእ ፡ ለነ ፡ ቀርነ ፡ መድኃኒትን ፡ እምቤተ ፡ ዳዊት ፡ ገብሩከመ ፡ ያድኅነን ፡ እምእደ ፡ ፀርነ ፡ ወእምእደ ፡ ኩሎሙ ፡ እለ ፡ ይደልኡን ፡ እስመ ፡ ተዘከረ ፡ ኪዳና ፡ ቅዱስ ፡ መሐላሁ ፡ ዘመሐለ ፡ ለአብርሃም ፡ አቡነ ፡ ያድኅነን ፡ ናምልኮ ፡ በጽድቅ ፡ ወበርትዕ ፡ ወአንተኒ ፡ ዳዊት ፡ ንጉሠ ፡ ኢትዮጵያ ፡ ትሰመይ ፡ ርቱዓ ፡ ሃይማኖት ።

፳፩ ፤ ወይእዜኒ ፡ ንስእለክ ፡ ወናስተብቀዓክ ፡ ከመ ፡ ትኅድግ ፡ ተጸብዖት ፡ ወተቃትሎተ ፡ ምስለ ፡ ተንባለት ፡ እስመ ፡ ጎደጉእከያቲሆሙ ፡ ወሚጥ ፡ ሎሙ ፡ ማየ ፡ ግዮንከመ ፡ ቀዳሚ ፡ ወግባእ ፡ ወስተ ፡ ብሔርክ ፡ በሰላም ።

፳፪ ፤ ወሶበ ፡ አንበበ ፡ ዘንተ ፡ መልእክተ ዳዊት ፡ ንጉሠ ፡ ኢትዮጵያ ፡ ተፈሥሐ ፡ ወተሐሥዩ ፡ ወይቤ ፡ ይትባረክ ፡ እግዚአብሔር አምላክ ፡ እስራኤል ፡ ዘገብረ ፡ ዐቢዩ ፡ ወመንክረ ፡ ባሕቲቱ ።

፳፫ ፤ ወቡርክት ፡ ይእቲ ፡ ማርያም ፡ ድንግል ፡ ፈጻሚተ ፡ ኩሉ ፡ ጎሊና ፡ በጸሎታ ፡ ወበስእለታ ።

፳፬ ፤ ወእምድኅረዝ ፡ ቦእ ፡ ብሔሮ ፡ በሰላም ።

፳፭ ፤ ወክሀሉ ፡ ይንበሩ ፡ በሰላም ፡ ምዕመዕናን ፡ ኢየሩሳሌም ፡ ወአፍርንጊያ ።

፳፮ ፤ ጸሎታ ፡ ወበረከታ ፡ የሃሉ ፡ ምስሌን ፡ ለዓለመ ፡ ዓለም ፡ አሜን ።

፲፱ ፤ አምላክን ፡ የወለደች ፡ በድንጋሌ ሥጋ ፡ በድንጋሌ ፡ ነፍስ ፡ የፀናች ፡ ክብርት እመቤታችንንም ፡ ድንግል ፡ ሆይ ፡ ከሴቶች ፡ ሁሉ ፡ ተለይተሽ ፡ አንቺ ፡ የተባረከሽ ነሽ ፡ የማጎፀንሽም ፡ ፍሬ ፡ የተባረከ ፡ ነው አንቺ ፡ ከጥፋት ፡ ወደሕይወት ፡ መሸጋገሪያ ፡ ሆነሽናልና ፡ እያሉ ፡ አመሰግኗት ።

፳ ፤ በዚያም ፡ ጊዜ ፡ የኢየሩሳሌምና ፡ የአፍርንጊ ፡ ክርስቲያኖች ፡ ለኢትዮጵያውንጉሥ ፡ መልእክት ፡ ላኩ ፡ መልእክቱም ፡ ይህ ፡ ነው ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ሆይ ፡ ባንተ ፡ ብዙ ፡ ክብር ፡ አግኝተናልና ፡ ሰላምታ ፡ ይገባሃል ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ ከጠላታችንና ፡ ከሚጠሉንም ፡ ሁሉ ፡ እጅ ፡ ያድነን ፡ ዘንድ ፡ ለአብርሃም ፡ የማለውን ፡ መሐላ ፡ አስቦአልና ፡ ይኸውም ፡ ባለ ፡ ዘመናችን ፡ ሁሉ ፡ በምግባር ፡ በሃይማኖት ፡ ፀንተን ፡ እናመልከው ዘንድ ፡ ነው ፡ አንተም ፡ ዳዊት ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ሃይማኖቱ ፡ የቀና ፡ ምግባሩ ፡ የፀና ፡ ትባላለህ ።

፳፩ ፤ አሁንም ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ሆይ ፡ ከተንባላት ጋር ፡ ስለኛ ፡ መዋጋትክን ፡ ትተህ ፡ እንደቀድሞው ፡ የዐባይን ፡ ውሃ ፡ መልሰላቸውና ወደ ሀገርህ ፡ በሰላም ፡ ትመለስ ፡ ዘንድ ፡ ፈጽመን ፡ እንለምንሃለን ፡ ተንኩላቸውን ፡ ትተዋልና ፡ ሲሉ ፡ ማለዱት ።

፳፪ ፤ የኢትዮጵያው ፡ ንጉሥ ፡ ዳዊትም መልእክቱን ፡ ባነበበ ፡ ጊዜ ፡ እሱ ፡ ብቻውን ተአምራትን ፡ ያደረገ ፡ የእስራኤል ፡ አምላክ ፡ የተባረከ ፡ የተመሰገነ ፡ ነው ።

፳፫ ፤ በጸሎቷና ፡ በአማላጅነቷ ፡ የልቡናን ፡ ሃሳብ ፡ ሁሉ ፡ የምታስፈጽም ፡ ድንግል ፡ ማርያምም ፡ የተባረከች ፡ ነች ፡ ብሎ አመሰገነ ።

፳፬ ፤ ከዚህም ፡ በኋላ ፡ ወደሀገሩ ፡ በሰላም ፡ ተመለሰ ።

፳፭ ፤ የኢየሩሳሌምና ፡ የአፍርንጊያ ፡ ክርስቲያኖችም ፡ ሁሉ ፡ በሰላም ፡ ለመኖር ቻሉ ።

፳፮ ፤ ልመናዋ ፡ ክብሯ ፡ ለዘላለሙ ፡ በዕውነት ፡ ይደርብን ።

Water–The Nile–And the *Tāʿamrā Maryam*. Miracles of the Virgin Mary in the Ethiopian Version

Translation of the Gəʿəz version on page 795a–799a from: ተአምረ ፡ ማርያም ። [= Miracles of Mary] አንደኛ ፡ መጽሐፍ ። [= first book]; Addis Abāba 1967 A. Mis. = 1974–75 A.D. (according to bookcover); Nāḥase 1963 A.Mis. = August 7 to September 5, 1971 A.D. (according to the introductory note of TĀSFA GĀBRĀ ŠĪLLASE)

Miracle 268.  
Concerning Dawit, King of Ethiopia

1. Miracle of Our Lady Mary, the holy twofold Virgin, bearer of God. May her prayer and her blessing be with us in eternity — Amen.
2. And in those days, the Muslims in the land of Egypt were numerous and the distress against the Christians became severe, particularly those [Christians] from Constantinople and in Jerusalem and from Syria.
3. And when the people of the Franks saw this oppression, being assembled jointly they decided and advised unanimously and wrote a letter with a message and sent to the good and righteous King of Ethiopia, Dawit.
4. And they said: O King, beloved of the Virgin Mary and beloved of her son Jesus Christ, come quickly for our salvation from the conflict, because the Muslim people rose against us and subverted us not to invoke the name of Jesus Christ and not to pay homage to the Cross on which the Redeemer of the world was crucified and [not to invoke the name] of His mother, the holy Virgin Mary. (See TTCh p. 257, note 3).
5. And may this letter with a message gain benevolence in front of you and in front of all your brothers of the people of Ethiopia, that you will hasten coming to us and that you will help us and liberate us from the hand of our wicked enemies.
6. Because you know that we are associated with and companions of the people of Ethiopia for the sake of the love of Our Lady Mary, the twofold Virgin, bearer of God.
7. And when Dawit, King of Ethiopia heard this, he was sad and deeply distressed and the spiritual ardour filled him and at the time of the evening prayer he went into one church of Our Lady Mary, the bearer of God, which was nearby his royal palace (lit.: palace of his kingship).
8. And then he prostrated himself on his knees in front of the image of Our Lady Mary, the holy twofold Virgin, bearer of God, and he took refuge with her and said: And so, what shall I do on behalf of these Christians, believers in you, because they have sent to me because the Muslims distressed them?

9. And furthermore he prayed and said: O my Lady, mother of the Creator, glorification of the Christians, grace of kings and crown of the martyrs, pray to your son that He will give me power to go into the land of Egypt and make war against the Muslims on behalf of the flock of sheep of your beloved son, and give me, your servant, power and victory.
10. And after he had prayed thus and something like this (lit.: what is similar) he returned and entered the royal palace (see above no. 7).
11. And on this day at midnight Our Lady Mary, the holy twofold Virgin, bearer of God, appeared to the King of Ethiopia Dawit and she said to him: O my beloved and beloved of my son Jesus Christ, and now I have asked my son on behalf of you that you will go and rescue my nation, the Christians, and thus He has granted and made even for you your way. Get up and go. And He will perform through your hand many miracles.
12. And when Dawit, King of Ethiopia, woke up from his sleep, he was very pleased about what she had told to him, and the power of God filled him. And when it became daybreak he sent around a herald and he assembled (! for: አስተጋብኦ ፣) all his warriors of his army from all the provinces of Ethiopia and he went to make war against the Muslims of Egypt and he arrived in Sənnar.
13. And God gave him wisdom and he stopped [cf. W. LESLAU, *Concise Dictionary of Ge'ez: Classical Ethiopic: Ge'ez-English*. (Wiesbaden 2989) p. 154b] the river Gəyon (see above p. 55f.), so that it did not descend into the land of Egypt, because there are no rains in the land of the people of Egypt; unless the water of the Gəyon, which flows from Ethiopia, reaches them, they do not plough, they do not sow seed and they do not get water at all.
14. And afterwards Dawit, King of Ethiopia, sent to those who were in Jerusalem and the Franks, saying: O my beloved, the king with his soldiers has reached you and I stopped the river Gəyon, so that it does not descend to the land of Egypt. Was it not said once: To restrain the water is like beginning a war, but the will of God, the Lord of the Christians, may come about.
15. And when the faithful who lived in Jerusalem and the Franks heard this, they were pleased with great joy and said: God will help and give power and victory to the orthodox King of Ethiopia, Dawit, and He may straighten all his paths for him who rescues us from the hand of our enemies and there they observe the rule.

16. Then the Muslims of Egypt realised the coming of the King of Ethiopia, Dawit, in great majesty by the will of God and with the assistance of Our Lady Mary and he approached with many of his soldiers, who were countless, while riders on horses and camels followed, and he arrived suddenly in Sənnar. Immediately they came together and devised on behalf of them a plan which would be better and appropriate.
17. And then they sent a message to the faithful of Jerusalem saying: Thus from now on we will not fight against you [! corrupt for: **ኢንጸብአክሙ ፣** com-pared with the Amharic version] again to touch your order and we have no war with you and we do not disdain your faith which exists since ancient times with your fathers, but we appeal to you for protection that the King of Ethiopia may go back to his country.
18. And because of this the faithful of Jerusalem and the Franks praised God with great glory because He made visible his guarantee for Dawit, and in presence of the nations He revealed His Covenant.
19. And they praised Our Lady, the holy twofold Virgin, bearer of God, saying: Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb (Lk 1,42) because you became for us the harbour of life from desolation [= echo of **ሙጽሐፈ ፣ ኪዳን ፣**; cf. S. EURINGER, Übersetzung der „Preces officii matutini“ in DILLMANN'S „Chrestomathia Aethiopica“ = *Orientalia* NS 11 (1942) p. 359 = A. Dillmann, *Chrestomathia Aethiopica* (Lipsiae 1866) p. 47].
20. And then the faithful of Jerusalem and the people of the Franks sent a message to Dawit, King of [Ethiopia], and the message of this was: The trumpet for our salvation raised up for us from the house of Dawit His servant, that he will save us from the hand of our enemy and from the hand of all who are hating (Amharic version has: **ከሚጠሉንም ፣** therefore Ge<sup>c</sup>ez: **ጸልኦ ፣**) us, because He remembered the holy covenant of His oath which He swore to Abraham, our father. He will save us so that we worship Him in justice and righteousness and you Dawit, King of Ethiopia, will be called the Orthodox.
21. And now we beg you and beseech you that you may abandon the attack and the warfare with the Muslims, because they have abandoned their evil things. And return back for them the water of the Gəyon as [it was] before and return into your country in peace.
22. And when Dawit, King of Ethiopia, read this message, he was glad and happy and said: Blessed be God, Lord of Israel, who alone has performed great and wonder.



23. And blessed be the Virgin, perfect in all thinking by her prayer and her petition.
24. And afterwards he entered his country in peace.
25. And the faithful of Jerusalem and the Franks were able to live in peace.
26. Her prayer and her blessing be with us in eternity – Amen.

### Abbreviations

- CetP ENRICO CERULLI, *Etiopi in Palestina. Storia della comunità etiopica di Gerusalemme* vol. I-II (Roma 1943-47)
- CLEt ENRICO CERULLI, *La letteratura etiopica*. Terza edizione ampliata. Con un saggio: L'oriente cristiano nell'unità delle sue tradizioni (Firenze-Milano 1968)
- CLMM ENRICO CERULLI, *Il libro etiopico dei Miracoli di Maria e le sue fonti nelle letterature del medio evo latino* (Roma 1943)
- EMML GETACHEW HAILE, *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts Micro-filmed for the Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Collegeville* vol. 1-10 (Collegeville 1975-1993)
- TTCh TADDESSE TAMRAT, *Church and State in Ethiopia 1270-1527* (Oxford 1972)

### Summary

Starting with the biblical Gəyon (= the Gəʿəz name for the Nile) the river Nile plays an important role in Ethiopian perception.

The corpus of the miracles of Mary [*Tä'amrā Maryam*] particularly during the reign of emperor Zär'a Ya'əqob (1434-68 A.D.) was enlarged with stories reflecting a local background and Ethiopian history. And suddenly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the 'idea of diverting the Nile' which since early times was a challenging topic in the relationship between Egypt and Ethiopia, again turned up in a miracle of the Virgin Mary, referring to the time of the Crusaders and the resulting diplomatic activities. This article wants to evaluate how far the Ethiopians regard themselves as masters of the Nile waters and to what extent they derive their legitimacy from divine sources.