

---

---

# **The Reception of the Book of Joel in Ethiopic Literary Tradition**

Tsehay Ademe<sup>1</sup>  
Mersha Alehegne<sup>2</sup>

## **Abstract**

The Book of Joel, with its vivid imagery of locust plagues and divine pronouncements, has resonated deeply within Ethiopian literary traditions. This paper explores the diverse ways in which Joel has been received, reinterpreted, and woven into the fabric of Ethiopian literary expression. Beyond straightforward commentary, Ethiopian engagement with Joel delves into literary and artistic interpretations. It examines how subsequent texts, both liturgical and homiletic, reference, allude to, and reimagine the book's themes and imagery. By analyzing these echoes, we gain insights into how Joel has inspired and shaped Ethiopian literary tradition. The paper will delve into specific examples, such as, liturgical compositions incorporating Joel's motifs into prayers and hymns; devotional and poetic works drawing inspiration from the book's imagery and messages; and Historical and philosophical writings employing Joel's themes to reflect on Ethiopian experiences. Through this exploration, this paper aims to shed light on the dynamic interplay between biblical text and Ethiopian literary creativity. A comparison between the Ethiopic Old Testament and the Hebrew or Greek versions reveals a largely faithful translation. The process of translation involves both fidelity to the original text and clarity for the new audience. By tracing the echoes of Joel, we gain a richer understanding of how this ancient text has nourished and been transformed within Ethiopian literary contexts.

Key words: Allusion, Ethiopic, Literary, Quotation, Reception and Tradition

---

<sup>1</sup> Lecturer at Academy of Ethiopian Languages and Cultures, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. Email: tsehay.adem@aau.edu.et

<sup>2</sup> Asso. Prof. Addis Ababa University at the department of Linguistic and Philology, affiliated with HLCEES, University of Hamburg. Email: mersha.alehegne@aau.edu.et

## 1. Introduction

The translation of the Bible into classical Ethiopic, known as Gə'əz, stands as a monumental achievement in Ethiopian spiritual history. This translation effort, primarily focusing on the New Testament, occurred during the Axumite period, roughly between the 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> Centuries AD. While the Ethiopian Bible shares most of its content with other Christian traditions, it also uniquely preserves several noteworthy texts. These include the Book of Enoch, the Book of Jubilees, the Book of Maccabees and the Book of Esdras<sup>3</sup>.

The Ethiopian Bible holds a unique place in Christian history, not just for its early translation but also for its inclusion of several additional texts. These non-canonical works, sometimes called "biblical apocryphal books," add a rich layer of local context and interpretation. Some of the most notable, for instance, include a unique story about the events surrounding Jesus' time on earth, was originally written in Greek in the region of Palestinian. It was later translated into Arabic and eventually found its way to Ethiopia, where it's preserved today<sup>4</sup>. Ethiopian Christian literature bursts with liturgical treasures. It boasts at least twenty-one Anaphoras, each offering a unique perspective on the Eucharist. Additionally, vast collections of hymns and prayers called Dəggwa (ደግግዋ) exist for every season of the liturgical year, enriching both monastic and cathedral worship experiences. Ethiopia is a household to a precise brand of Christianity, Tedros Abraha, (2010:1), distinct even from the rest of the sister oriental Churches. What makes these compositions truly special is how they blend influences from other cultures with unique local creativity. Many of the

---

<sup>3</sup> Cf. The Amharic Bible with the Old Testament based on Septuagint, the Bible society Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. (2007).

<sup>4</sup> The transmission of the holy scriptures into the Gə'əz language is processed as early as Latin and other ancient languages. Christianity in Ethiopia can be traced back all the way to the ancient Kingdom of Axum when King Ezana first adopted the faith. Although the religion existed in Ethiopia before then, it did not take hold in the region until it was declared a state religion in 330AD. It is not known when exactly Christianity emerged in Ethiopia, but the earliest known reference is Acts 8:26-38 in the New Testament when Philip the Evangelist converted an Ethiopian court official in the 1st Century AD (although scholars argue that 'Ethiopian' was a term used to refer to a black person, not necessarily an Ethiopian as we know now). Today, Christianity is central in Ethiopia, with many denominations being followed, the largest of which is the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahedo Church which has the largest and most diverse biblical canon in traditional Christendom. Ephrem Isaac, (2012:3).

aforementioned showcase this fascinating fusion, seamlessly weaving together foreign elements with Ethiopian voices and perspectives<sup>5</sup>.

The nature of Old Testament citations and allusions in Ethiopic literature requires thorough study. It may be merely apologetic as in the Book of Mysteries and the Book of Light (both written in the 15<sup>th</sup> century) wherein the *Book of Jubilees* is cited as a text that emphasizes the importance of honouring the Sabbath. It suggests that the Sabbath should be observed with a similar level of dedication as Sunday. This idea connects with the broader theme of Sabbath observance, suggesting a shared practice across spiritual realms (cf. Jubilees 2: 17-19) (CSCO, 1993).

Over two millennia ago the prophet Joel raised his voice in the midst of the crisis in Israel, in Judah, or in the midst of a crisis. He interpreted the crisis in keeping with Israel's faith tradition and prophetic themes with which he is in continuity. But beyond interpretation, he offered a strategy of response based on trust that God is our help and refuge in time of trouble. We can look at his message more closely as it finds expression around the major themes of the Book of Joel. The repentance of the heart, of which Joel speaks, was meant to help alleviate serious societal conflicts. Bruce. C. Brich. (1997:130).

The Book of Joel uses vivid imagery and symbolism to convey its message. For example, locusts can be interpreted both literally as a devastating pest and metaphorically as a powerful force, such as an invading army. This multifaceted meaning adds depth and complexity to the prophet's words. According to Elie, Assis (2013:41), understanding these layers of meaning requires careful consideration of the context and literary devices used. In the case of the locusts, the Book of Joel references the earlier plagues in Egypt (Exodus, 10:1-20), suggesting a connection between the literal and symbolic interpretations. This paper aims to explore how different approaches to interpretation (hermeneutics) can influence our understanding of the Book of Joel in view of exploring the Ethiopian reception of the text.

The Ethiopian interpretation of the Book of Joel reflects a deep interest in biblical exegesis and Christian hermeneutics. Ethiopian scholars, like their counterparts elsewhere, have long sought to uncover the deeper meanings within biblical texts.

---

<sup>5</sup> Isaac of Ninive, Filoxenus of Mabbug, John Saba three fundamental names to Ethiopian monasticism, theology and spirituality. Kottayam, India. Tedros Abraha, (2010:5).

This search, known as *'andəmtā*, involves examining passages, phrases, and even individual words to unlock their theological significance. In the case of Joel, both historical and allegorical approaches find their place. The search for the inner meaning of passages, phrases and words is enriching understanding and appreciation of Christian faith. This article explores how Ethiopian scholars used Joel's words as inspiration for their own beliefs and practices. We'll take a look at some fascinating examples, including liturgical hymns and devotional writings that connect back to the Book of Joel in unique and meaningful ways.

The Old Testament, particularly the book of Joel, prophets are depicted as figures who fulfilled important functions alongside priests within the religious framework of the time. They served as intermediaries, seeking guidance and answers from the Divine on behalf of individuals and communities. These questions often pertained to everyday life, personal choices, or matters of faith. Prophetic elements are woven throughout many liturgical psalms, adding depth and meaning to these devotional texts. These elements can include visions, pronouncements, and even hymns and prayers, creating a rich tapestry of spiritual experience. (Watts.1975: 7).

## 2. The Ethiopic Book of Joel: Content and Variations

In the Ethiopic manuscript tradition, the Book of Joel is positioned among the 12 Minor Prophets following the Book of Daniel. The development of prophetic literature in this tradition can be delineated into three stages. As John, D.W. Watts, (1975: 1-2), States that, the first and longest stage comprises narratives. This would be followed by collections of prophetic oracles in the second stage and finally the role of the prophet in worship in the third and last stage.

As mentioned earlier, the Book of Joel is renowned for its call to repentance and its emphasis on correcting of the interior life during fasting time. Besides it symbolizes the Day of the Lord<sup>6</sup> through vivid imagery such as locust swarms and battles. Furthermore, in a Christian context, based on the Acts of the Apostles, the feast of Pentecost signifying the birth of the Church and pouring out of the Holy Spirit holds

---

<sup>6</sup> The Day of the Lord is common motif in prophetic literature of ancient Israel, expected to be a day of God's intervention in favor of his people. While the people expected relief, peace and prosperity at the coming of the Day of the Lord, prophets were not always reflecting the same idea. They were even warning the people that the Day of the Lord could be a period of suffering if there was injustice, idolatry and the suffering of innocents (cf. Amos 5).

significance in the Book of Joel, encompassing both its spiritual and physical dimensions.

Comparing the Ethiopic Old Testament with its Hebrew or Greek counterparts reveals a predominantly faithful translation. However, there are instances where translations exhibit a more dynamic and creative approach, not confined to literal or word-for-word reproduction. The Book of Joel exemplifies both approaches, showcasing the nuances of translation within this tradition.

For example, when examining Joel 1:15, notable variations emerge among various Ethiopic manuscripts. Besides, the significant variants reflect important differences of meaning, implying an interesting story of the interpretation and reception of the Ethiopic book of Joel.

Table 1

Ethiopic		Hebrew	Syriac	Arabic	Greek
UNES CO 10_34; Joel 1:15	"አን አን አን ስለት አስመ አልቁቻት ስለት አግዴለብዕር",  Alas (3x) for the day! For the day of the Lord is n ear,	אָהָה לַיּוֹם כִּי קָרְבֵּן יוֹם יְהוָה (Joe 1:15 WTT),  Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is near.	መረመረ 7 መመ መመ መመ	لأن ! على الْيَوْمِ يَوْمَ الْأَرْبَعَةِ قَرِيبٌ، Alas for the day! For the day of the Lord is near.	οἵμμαι οἵμμαι οἵμμαι εἰς ήμέραν ὅτι ἐγγὺς ἡμέρα κυρίου (Joe 1:15 BGT),  Alas for day! For the day of the Lord is near.

<sup>7</sup> In Syrac: this day, today, daytime, sun light, time period adv. the absolute from is *yōm/yūm* and the most common pl. is the emphatic for *yawmātā* while the absolute and construct have the masculine plural ending as does the emphatic following numbers; BA אָהָה לַיּוֹם; elsewhere *yaōm*, *yaw/ōmīn*; there appears to be a lexical distinction between the two plurals in the older dialects, with *yawmīn* referring to literal "days," while *yawmātā* refers rather to "time, times," but they can be used interchangeably even in the same text: see *Hugoye* 14(2011:55).

Although two recent Ethiopic versions are equivalent to the Hebrew, the Syriac, the Arabic and the Greek, most Ethiopian versions, including the earliest attested and the *textus receptus*, have preferred to make the text clear and natural by referring to personal pronouns instead of addressing “the day”, as will be explained after the following two tables. The first table shows the correspondence between the two recent manuscripts which follow the readings of the ancient languages.

The beneath table shows the variants reflected within the Ethiopian textual tradition, with readings that exclude “the day” represented among the ancient and original languages. One notices here a conspicuous example of a contextual Ethiopian translation.

EMML 1768; 1:15	D'Abbadie 35; 1:15	IES 0077; 1:15 & AC	EMML 2080; 1:15
“እለ ለተ እለ ለተ ይከተ ዕለተ እስመ እልጋች ዕለተ እግዢእብዕር”, Alas (2x) for me! For the day of the Lord is near,	“እለ ለነ እለ ለነ ይከተ ዕለተ እስመ እልጋች ዕለተ እግዢእብዕር”, Alas (2x) for us ! For the day of the Lord is near,	“እለ ለከመ ይከተ ዕለተ እስመ እልጋች ዕለተ እግዢእብዕር”. Alas for you! For the day of the Lord is near,	“እለ ለመ ይከተ ዕለተ እስመ እልጋች ዕለተ እግዢእብዕር”, Alas for them! For the day of the Lord is near

Table 2

In textual transmission the variant readings might occur due to some reasons.

Interestingly, the above Ethiopic manuscripts (cf. Table 2) manifest, እለ፡ ለተ፡ እለ፡ ለተ፡ እለ፡ ለነ፡ እለ፡ ለነ፡ እለ፡ ለከመ፡ እለ፡ ለመ፡ እን እን እን፡ Alas for me, Alas for us, Alas for you, Alas for them, Alas Alas Alas, five (5) different readings. All these readings show a shift of the objects to whom the woe is addressed. In the Hebrew (MT) and the Greek (LXX), Arabic and Syriac versions as well, the woe is attributed to the “day”. In other words, here “day” is personified. The Ethiopic is here more concrete and helps the reader to see the connection between the oracle of woe and the concerned human beings. The Ethiopic readings, in this case, tried to avoid the implied

audience. In general, Joel 1:15 makes it clear however, that the day of the Lord is a day of woe for the community of the Lord. The land has experienced a terrible locust plague, and the text wants to make it as evidence that the community cannot interpret it as occurring simply due to natural causes.

The samples presented above indicate significant variants. They are found in several other witnesses and are, other whole, widely distributed throughout the entire manuscript tradition. For example,

In UNESCO 10\_34, a reading evoking pain and imminent danger is presented, without specifying the sufferer. Conversely, EMML1768 indicates that the prophet is the one who experiencing suffering. According to d'Abbadie 35, not only the prophet but also the people are suffering with the prophet as community. EMML2080 ruptures the suffering from the community and refers the others for warning and suffering. In IES 0077, and the 'andəmta Commentary, the warning is directed explicitly at the people, excluding the prophet. How can such variations arise if translations originate from a single text or language? Alternatively, could these differences be attributed to diverse source texts and languages such as In Hebrew, Greek, Syriac and Arabic?

The samples presented above indicate significant variants. On the one hand, a critical edition will enable us to identify different families and to trace the textual history of the Ethiopic Book of Joel. How can one explain these significant variants? Do we not also observe Ethiopian innovations in the process of translation and transmission?

They are found in several other witnesses and are, other whole, widely distributed throughout the entire manuscript tradition. So, were they added by scribes who wanted them in or deleted by scribes who wanted them out? It's hard to say on the basis of the manuscripts themselves.

Besides, the significant variants reflect important differences of meaning, implying an interesting story of the interpretation and reception of the Ethiopic book of Joel. For instance, in this connection, it is noteworthy to study, among others, the following verses of the Old Testament that contain quotations and allusions to the Book of Joel with Obadiah, 1:15 with Joel,

1:15. So, again, Zechariah has many similarities of wording and meaning. This will appear at once on a comparison of Joel 2:30-32 with Zechariah 12:2, 9; 14:1, 5-11. One such hint is found in the name, the valley of Jehoshaphat, (Joel. 3:2), which is possibly a proof that Joel.

In this verse (Joel 1:15), unique message is conveyed, wherein locusts and drought symbolize that ‘the day of the Lord is near’. This day is distinctly understood as one of the devastation and judgment. Amos also references ‘the day’ as familiar to the people of his time, noting that on that day, the Lord approached his people with light and the promise of blessing. However, Amos warns that Israel’s sin and triviality would transform the Lord’s visitation into one of judgment rather than approval (Amos 5:18-20).

Joel’s teachings echo a theme found in the celebration of festival days, perhaps suggesting that one of these days is still observed as the day of the Lord’s coming. While some may anticipate blessings and fulfilment of divine promises, Joel uses the locust plague to convey that the Lord’s arrival will bring mighty devastation. Similar to the announcements made by John the Baptist and Jesus (“the kingdom of God is upon you”), Joel’s proclamation of “the day the Lord... is near” transcends tense distinctions in Ethiopic and Hebrew, which represent completed or ongoing actions. This challenges translators to determine the appropriate tense in English based on context. The overarching theme in Joel is the imminence of this dreadful day, requiring a decisive response from the people in the present or immediate future, as noted in the Cambridge Bible Commentary (Watts, 1975: 21-22). According to some scholars, like Elie, Assis, (2013:109), Joel’s prophetic message in the above verse does not solely pertain to future events; rather, it addresses the present reality. While some interpret it as referring to the impending Day of Judgment, Ethiopians, in their manuscript transmission, present variant readings to interpret and contextualize these events.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework used in this *paper* is Hans Jauss' Reception Theory, which encompasses seven key characteristics.<sup>8</sup>

The first thesis challenges "historical objectivism" and emphasizes the "historicity of literature" by considering the experience of readers engaging with a literary work. This perspective justifies the examination of the reception of the Ethiopic Book of Joel. Notably, the transformation of "sweet or new wine" into "honey" serves as a significant example, alongside other variants identified in the philological investigations.

The second thesis posits that the reception and influence of a work should be analyzed in relation to the pre-understandings of both the work itself and its genre. The author's anticipation of reader responses, as well as the reader's horizon of expectation, is influenced in part by earlier works, which the current work can either fulfill or subvert.

The third thesis further develops the concept of a shifting horizon of expectation. The variants in Joel 1:15, as reflected in the Ethiopic witnesses, illustrate these shifts effectively. A reading that conveys a sense of pain and the imminence of danger—without specifying the exact source of suffering—has been observed in UNESCO 10\_34. In contrast, EMML1768 indicates that it is the prophet who suffers. Additionally, the shared suffering of both the prophet and the people is noted in d'Abbadie 35. Research has also revealed that according to IES 0077 and the *'andəmta Commentary*, the warning is directed specifically at the people, excluding the prophet. These discrepancies have been examined, revealing that their causes are internal and not reliant on a single original language.

---

<sup>8</sup> H. Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception. Theory and History of Literature*, Vol. 2, Minneapolis: University Press, 1982, 23-34. See also, R. Evans, *Reception History, Tradition and Biblical Interpretation. Gadamer and Jauss in Current Practice*, London 2014, 10-12.

Jauss's fourth thesis addresses the distinctions between prior and contemporary interpretations of a work, emphasizing the importance of reconstructing the "horizon of expectations" in which a work was created and received. When applying this thesis to the Book of Joel, one can discern the differences between the ostensibly original meaning and the new understanding reflected in Ethiopian literature and tradition.

Jauss's fifth thesis further examines the Formalist theory of "literary evolution," positing that a text should be understood as part of a broader "literary series." Historical changes occur within this system or series in the realm of literature. This study will demonstrate how Ethiopian literature has proposed solutions to issues that were evident in the ancient text of the Book of Joel. Notably, the debate surrounding "the pouring of my Spirit" versus "pouring from my spirit" is significant. The original Hebrew text aligns with the former interpretation, while the Greek and much of the Ethiopian text favor the latter. This interpretation maintains a certain logic, suggesting that God bestows a portion of His spirit rather than the entirety of Himself.

In his sixth thesis, Jauss emphasizes what he terms "epoch-making" moments within a literary series. He explores the understanding of reading a text within a literary series synchronically while acknowledging the importance of diachrony. In this context, the synchronic "cross-sections" will involve an intensive examination of a specific Ethiopic text concerning the issue of reception.

Jauss's seventh thesis pertains to the social function of literature, wherein the literary experience of a reader intersects with "the horizon of expectation of their lived praxis." This aspect is particularly relevant to this study, as various verses of the Book of Joel have been received within the Ethiopian liturgical context, especially during festivities that resonate with the expectations of the Ethiopian Orthodox Christian community.

#### **4. The Ethiopic Book of Joel and Its Reception in Ethiopian Literary Tradition**

The Ethiopic Book of Joel holds a significant place in Ethiopian literary tradition, influencing various aspects of cultural expression and religious discourse. The Book, with its powerful imagery and prophetic messages, has been quoted directly in Ethiopian literary works across different genres. From poetry to historical narratives, Ethiopian writers have drawn inspiration from Joel's text to convey moral lessons, political commentary, and spiritual insights. Scholars of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church have incorporated Joel's teachings into its theological discourse, interpreting the book's prophecies in the context of Ethiopian religious beliefs and practices. Beyond its religious implications, the Book of Joel has also influenced Ethiopian cultural expressions. Direct quotations from Joel often appear in traditional songs, folklore, and oral traditions, reflecting the enduring impact of the biblical text on Ethiopian cultural identity. These quotations and allusions both in the literary and oral tradition of the Church have left an indelible mark on Ethiopian literary tradition, shaping religious discourse, cultural expressions, and societal values. Its messages continue to resonate with Ethiopian writers, artists, and theologians', highlighting the enduring relevance of biblical texts in shaping the cultural landscape of Ethiopia. Therefore, this section of the paper explores the reception of Joel's book in Ethiopian literary tradition, focusing particularly on its direct quotations and allusion in various Ge'ez literary works.

##### **4.1. The Book of Joel as alluded in (መጽሐፈ ባርහን), [Maṣḥafa Bərhan], 'the Ethiopic Book of Light'<sup>9</sup>**

"Maṣḥafa Bərhan," recognized as "The Ethiopic Book of Light," represents a considerable literary exertion by Aṣe Zara Yaəqob, intended at revolutionizing the Ethiopian Church during the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The author properly named his collection of treatises "M.b.," signifying "Book of Light,"

---

<sup>9</sup> In this collection of treatises, or homelier, the Emperor, probably in cooperation with the group of clergymen serving at the royal camp, treats 121 subjects that concern both church and state. Encyclopedia Aethiopica. Vol. I. P.533.

which carries the profounder connotation of "Book of Christ." As (Conti Rossini-Ricci, 1964:15 f.) states, 'this designation arises from the acknowledgment of Christ as the embodiment of light, guiding Christians towards devotion to the Orthodox faith'.

The book is divided into 15 parts (*dərsanat*), with the last one for Passion Week subdivided into six for the six passion days; Monday to Saturday. The "Maşəħafa Bərhan" is a unique source on political and social life in Ethiopia in the 15 cent. What the Emperor adduces as supportive evidence for his order to observe Saturday as the Lord's Day is just one of them. The treatises are lessons as well as lesson-plans for biblical and apocryphal readings. Each treatise brings a wealth of new historical facts and social phenomena worth meaningful.

Allusions to the Book of Joel are apparent in "Maşəħafa Bərhan," offering insight into the interpretation and integration of Joel's teachings into Ethiopian religious discourse. The following example serves to illustrate this point.

ወእንተመኑ፡ የበኩ፡ በዓለመ፡ ለነበረት፡ ከመ፡ ትንሥኬ፡ ዕሚተመ፡ ለነበረት፡ በከመ፡ ይበ፡ እግዥኬ፡ በወንለ፡ ማቻወስ፡ (10:41-42) ከተወከሬ፡ ነበያ፡ በሰመ፡ ነበይ፡ ዕሚተ፡ ነበይ፡ ይኋላ፡ ወበዓለመኑ፡ እውእቱ፡ እመ፡ ተ፡ ለመሰከረም፡ መ-በ፡ እመ፡ ተ፡ የዳቻ፡ ወእመ፡ ተመቻ፡ መበት፡ እመ፡ ተመቻ፡ የኋስ፡ እመ፡ ተመቻ፡ እየእል፡

And you should make the remembrance of the prophets to take the reward of the prophets as our Lord said in the gospel of Mathew (10:41-42), 'whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward. And their festive is as follows: on September 17, [Maskaram 8], Moses; on September 20, [Maskaram 12], Edith; on September 28, [Maskaram 20], Tobit; on October 10, [Maskaram 30], Jonah; on October 25, [Təqəmt 16], Elsa (Elisha); on November 02, [Təqəmt 21], Joel.

In the above quoted text, the author of "Maşəħafa Bərhan" lists Prophet Joel among the prophets whose annual commemorative day falls on Təqəmt 21. Therefore, the book confirms that the blessings of the Prophet are continually sought in the church, aligning with what is stated in the Scriptures (Matthew 10:41-42). Mentioning the Prophet Joel with Moses and Elisha shows the

importance given to Joel in Ethiopian tradition. Having said that, here, one is not dealing with quotations or allusions to passages or verses inside the Book of Joel. The Lord's Day is just one of the themes in the book of Joel the prophet as well as in the book of light as we have seen above.

**4.2. The Book of Joel as alluded in (መጽሐፈ አስርቸ ወከልኬቸ አድኔቸ), [Maṣəḥafa 'sartu wa-kəletu 'ənaqu] 'The Book of the Twelve Pearls<sup>10</sup>,**

"The Book of the Twelve Pearls" holds a revered place in Ethiopian religious literature, offering insights into various biblical texts including the Book of Joel illuminating the dynamic interplay between biblical texts and Ethiopian religious literature.

አቶኬል: ነበረ: ወልደ: ቦታል: ከነ: እምነገድ: ይበል: ወበ: እይበ: እምነገድ: በንግም: ወሰም: እመ: ርማል: እምሃገድ: ባርን: ተንበቃ: ይበ: ወቻለ: መንፈሰየ: ሌላ: ክላ: ስጋለ: መደተኑበ: ደቁቅዕመ: ወአዋልዳክመ: ወአለናረክመ: ከልመ: የከልመ: ወበደኬት: ዕለት: ይዥልም: ብተደ: በመንፈቀ: መዓልት: ወይከዥ: ድልመት: ወብት: ክላ: የድር: ወድናራሁ: ይሁርቁ: በርሃን: ዕለት: ወይከዥ: ደልቀልቁ: በተኑ: ወንድኬት: ይተለ: የዥነሁ:: መዓል: ይበ: እግዢአብዕር: የሰምድ: ቅለ: ወይከልሁ: እምጽያን: ወደድለቀልቁ: ስማይ: መምድር: ወይከዥ: መብረቁ: ወነድናድ: ይዥልመ: ብተደ: ወውርት: ወለከዋብበት: የዥብ: በርሃናመ:: ወእግዢአብዕር: የሰንድ: ከዝቦ: እስከ የለዓለም:: ካን: ተንበቃ: ከነ: እንከ: ቅድመ: ለምጽዓት: እግዢአብ: በሥር: በዥርቁ: ወንድኬት: ዓመት:: ተዘክና: እመ: እሥራ: ወአማና: ለተቀምት::

Joel the prophet is the son of Pethuel from the Robel tribe. There are also those who say it is from Benjamin's side. His mother's name is Rimel from the land named Baron. In his prophesy the prophesying spirit rests upon all people, your children say; your elders are dreaming a dream, he said. On this day the sun darkens at noon; all over the earth will be dark after that light comes out;

---

<sup>10</sup> The Book begins with the following words: "In the name of Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit one God's help, we will begin to read the prophecies of our Lord Jesus Christ, which have been spoken by the prophets and their countries, saying that there is one God in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. From the great and the small, their blessings and thanks from ..... He will be with forever." There is an unpublished version of the book of the Twelve Pearls (መጽሐፈ አስርቸ ወከልኬቸ አድኔቸ) at the National Archives. In the manuscript the text is not chaptered. The interpretation divided it into chapters and verses; but not yet publication

At the end of the day, it will be a great exchange. After him silence follows/comes; heaven and earth shake there will be lightning and thunder; sun and moon darken; God his people forever. Hence, before the Lord came in the flesh, it was 1000 years. The memorial is October 21. (P. 54).

The "Book of Twelve Pearls" provides significant information about Joel, including his tribal lineage. However, this contradicts the assertions made in the 'andəmta Commentary of the Book of Joel. In the commentary, there is evidence suggesting that Joel is from the tribe of Robel, with his mother's name recorded as Mersla. Conversely, another interpretation states that Joel is from the tribe of Benjamin, with his mother's name given as Rəmel. Additionally, the "Book of Twelve Pearls" places Joel's prophesies approximately one thousand years before the birth of Christ.

#### 4.3.1 ስንክስር, [Sənkəssar] 'Synaxarium'<sup>11</sup>

The Synaxarium is one of the most important literary works of the Ethiopian Church. It offers an almost complete catalogue, remembrance and salutation of saints and holy men and women commemorated by the Church and is one of the most widespread texts, almost every church possessing a copy of it. Catalogues mention at least 100 extant manuscripts of the S. (cp. Colin 1988: 294f.). The reading of major episodes from the life of the daily saints is traditionally done before the priest pronounces the closing words of the service. Likewise, in the Ethiopian tradition there is hardly any other text of the same length, the S. normally appearing in the form of two or four codices.

The work largely consists of translations from Arabic, in turn relying on Coptic and/or Greek texts, and betrays the contribution of more Arabic collections through complex transmission processes: in particular, a Copto-

---

<sup>11</sup> Sənkəssar (Marie-Laure Derat), The S. from Gr. *synaxárlon*, in turn from *sýnaxis*, 'religious service', with reference to the memorial section of it) is a hagiographic work consisting of commemorations in the form of short Vitae, or mentions of name and death day only of saints and martyrs of the Ethiopian Orthodox (Tawahədo) Church. Encyclopedia Aethiopica. Vol. IV. pp. (622-23).

Arabic collection seem to have merged in the S. not later than the 14<sup>th</sup> cent., as it is apparent from documents extant in the textual tradition.

The text contains a minimum of three narratives that discuss the life and actions of Prophet Joel. The narrative designated to be recited on ተቅዕምት 21 (October 31), for example, honors the life of the Prophet Joel. According to this account, Prophet Joel passed away on ተቅዕምት 21 (October 31) after fulfilling his mission of preaching to the people and delivering prophecies:

መበካ፡ ዕለት፡ አዕራዳ የበር፡ ነበር፡ አየኬል፡ የድቃ፡ ወልደ፡ ባተኬል፡ ወተኑበ፡ በመዋልሁ፡ ለአበበ፡ ወልደ፡ ርብጥም፡ ወልደ፡ ለላምና፡ ጉተማ፡

**፩** ወመህርመ፡ ለአዝብ፡ ወንመም፡ ወተኑበ፡ በአንተ፡ ጉድሬቱ፡ ለእግዥለብኬር፡ በድግኝ፡ መበኩት፡ አማማቃሁ፡ ለእግዥለኩ፡ ወበአንተ፡ ልደት፡ መንፈሰ፡ ቁጥሳ፡ ድረቅለመሳ፡ ለእለ፡ አዋርያት፡ ወከመ፡ ይትኑበ፡ አዋርያይመ፡ ወውላድመ፡ ወከዕናንይመ፡ ወውራዝኩመ፡ ወእንስ፡ አለ፡ ይኑበ፡ የስለመመ፡

**፪** ወይበ፡ በወለት፡ ተንበት፡ አገመዳ፡ አምና፡ መንፈሰበ፡ ለዕለ፡ ከተ፡ ለብለ፡ ወእግዥአ፡ በእንበለ፡ ለዕለ፡ አዋርያት፡ ተንቀበ፡ በቱ፡ ተርጋሚያት፡ አስመ፡ አዋርያት፡ ቁጥሳ፡ በአንተ፡ አመኝቱ፡ ከተ፡ ፍድማኑ፡ በገበረ፡ የድቃ፡ ለመዋመ፡ ለብለ፡ አስመ፡ እክከነ፡ ፍድመ፡ በገበረ፡ የድቃ፡ አይሰመይ፡ ለብለ፡

**፫** ወደማመ፡ ተርጋሙ፡ አስመ፡ አምኑአዋርያት፡ ጉሙቦ፡ መንፈሰ፡ አለምር፡ ለዕለ፡ ከተም፡ ቁጥሳ፡ መግረምና፡ አምኑዘ፡ ለብለተመ፡

**፬** ወተኑበ፡ በአንተ፡ ብግኑ፡ አገ፡ ወንኩል፡ አምድያን፡ ለቦ፡ ይበ፡ ይውጥ፡ ካቃ፡ አምበት፡ እግዥለብኬር፡ ለበጥ፡ ወይመቁ፡ ልለት፡ የምሥጫር፡

**፭** ወከመተ፡ ከመ፡ አምድኝ፡ ምጽእቱ፡ ለእግዥለኩ፡ ይትኑበ፡ ብብል፡ ወለት፡ ምድር፡ ወተናገ፡ በአንተ፡ ዕለት፡ ተንሣኑ፡ ወይበ፡ ብብይ፡ ይጋልም፡ ወውርኑ፡ ደመ፡ ይከውን፡ ወለከዋብት፡ ይትኑበ፡ በርሃምመ፡

**፮** ወተኑበ፡ አምቁድመ፡ ምጽእቱ፡ ለእግዥለኩ፡ በጥ፡ ዓመት፡ ወከኩ፡ ብንቱ፡ አምኑገድ፡ ርብል፡ መበጽሐ፡ እሰከ፡ ሪሳድ፡ ለኩይ፡ ወእግዥመር፡ ለእግዥለብኬር፡ ወእርራዳ፡ በሰላም፡ ወተቀበረ፡ ወለት፡ ገሆቱ፡ በረከተ፡ አምለከ፡ የሁለ፡ የስለኩ፡ ለዓለመ፡ ዓለም፡ አምኝ፡

ሰላም ለከ ነበር የምህር ወማማኑ  
መልደ ባተኬል አየኬል በለተ ለሳን አምኑ ማኝኑ  
ከመ ተብል አንተ አስመ ነልቀ ወርሱ ይንጋጌ  
በረከተ ቅመ በከርስቶስ እሳደበ ተግባ  
ህየንተ አበልዱ ቁድመ አንበብ ወዳዲ፡

And on this day died the great [prophet] Joel. This righteous man prophesied in the days of 'Abya (Abijah) the son of Jeroboam, the son of Solomon the king. He taught the people, and admonished them, and prophesied concerning the dwelling of God of Zion, and concerning His Passion, and concerning the descent of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, upon the holy Apostles on the day of the festival of Pentecost. And he revealed that they would prophesy, their daughters, and their sons, and their old men, and their young men, and the women who dwelt with them. "And if there be a prophet who prophesies, I will pour out My Spirit upon all men" (Joel ii. 28); and I will not pour except [on] the Apostles. Now of this passage there are two interpretations; I, Because the holy Apostles were perfect in working righteousness, he called them "men," for he who is not perfect among men in doing the good pleasure of God is not called a "man"; II, From the Apostles the Holy Spirit was poured out upon all the believing saints from the time of their preaching to the day of the Resurrection. And this prophet prophesied also concerning the going forth of the Law of the Gospel from Zion, when he said, "A stream of water shall flow forth from the house of God, and it shall water the valley of Shittim" (Joel iii.18). And he made known that after the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ war should break out on the earth, and he spoke also concerning the day of the Resurrection. And he said, "The sun shall become dark, and the moon shall become like blood, and the light of the stars shall be hidden" (Joel ii. 31). Now this prophet prophesied more than a thousand years before the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. This righteous man belonged to the tribe of Reuben, and he arrived at a good old age, and he pleased God and died in peace, and was buried in the fields. Salutation, to Joel the prophet, the son of Batuel, whose tongue was sharper than a razor.

Peace be to the prophet of teaching and wrath;  
Joel the son of Petuel, your tongue sharper than a razor;  
As you say for ending of the terrible month;  
Blessing stopped by Christ who has not gapped;  
Because of them who have eaten earlier locust and worm.

### **4.3.2 Tahəsas 29, (January 07)**

Conversely, the narrative intended to be read on Tahəsas 29 (January 07) also cites and recounts the words of Prophet Joel as follows:

**፩፭. ወእየከልኝ፡ ይበ፡ "ርእከ፡ ወለተ፡ ድንግል፡ እምነገድ፡ ይሁዳ፡ ወእምዕርእ፡ ዓዋት፡ ወይእቴ፡ ታልሆነ፡ ከመ፡ እሳት፡**

**፩፮. ወተስከልከም፡ ለከራብ፡ በእንተእሱ፡ ወእበለው፡ መተ፡ ይእቴ፡ ብቴ፡**

**፩፯. ወይበለኝ፡ ብቴ፡ መንበሩ፡ ለእግዥለብዕር፡ ወኔሬት፡ እምእዋልድ፡ እዳም፡ ወበቴ፡ ይእግኑ፡ እሳሁበ፡ ነውራን፡ ወይእቴ፡ ለእከት፡ መወያን፡ ለእግዥ፡ ብቴ፡**

And Joel the prophet prophesied, saying, “I see the virgin daughter of the tribe of Judah and of the seed of David become a seat for God, and she shall burn like fire. And I asked the Cherubim concerning her, and I said unto him, ‘who is this [virgin]?’ And he said unto me, ‘This is the virgin, the seat of God, chosen from among the sons of Adam, and by her He shall redeem the abominable nations, and she shall be a helper and a support of him that shall believe on her.’

### **4.3.3 Gənbot 18 (May 26)**

Another similar report is also included in the text designated to be read on Gənbot 18 (May 26):

**፩፪. አብ፡ ከመ፡ ትተክብዕዱወመ፡ እንተመ፡ የከራብ፡ እመንካ፡ ብተብለ፡ እስመ፡ ነማህ፡ ብእኔር፡ ለበሆ፡ ለለሰተ፡ ለቀጥ፡ አለ፡ ብወእቱ፡ ከይ፡ እየከል፡ ነበይ፡**

**፩፫. ወይእወን፡ እምድናንረዘ፡ ይበ፡ እግዥለብዕር፡ እወወጥ፡ እምነ፡ መንፈሰያ፡ ይበ፡ ከለ፡ እሥራ፡**

**፩፬. ወይእኔበየ፡ ዓቃቀዕመ፡ ወእዋልዳዕወመ፡ ወወራዕተዕወመ፡ ለእየ፡ ይፈእየ፡ ወለቁወንተዕወመ፡ ካልመ፡ የተልመ፡**

**፩፭. ወለዕለ፡ እግብርትየ፡ ወእለማትየ፡ እወወጥ፡ እምነ፡ መንፈሰያ፡ ይእተ፡ እማረ፡ ይተኔበየ፡**

**፩፮. ወእሁበ፡ ትእምርተ፡ በስማይ፡ በለዕለ፡ ወመንከለ፡ በምድር፡ በታሳቱ፡ ዓመ፡ ወእሳት፡ ወጠስ፡**

**፩፯. ብተክና፡ ይፈልም፡ ወወርነ፡ ዓመ፡ ይከወን፡ እእንበለ፡ ትብጽሕ፡ ዕለተ፡ እግዥለብዕር፡ ለበይ፡ መግምት፡**

**፩፱. ወተተለ፡ ከወወዕ፡ ለመ፡ እግዥለብዕር፡ ይእግኑ፡**

This is what the prophet Joel said, “And it shall come to pass after this that I will pour out my spirit upon all souls, and your sons and you daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men dream dreams” (Joel 2, 28). “And upon my slaves and upon my handmaidens I will also pour out my spirit, and they shall prophesy, and I will give a sign in the heavens above, and wonders on the earth beneath” I will make miracles in the sky above and on earth below: blood and fire and the vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord comes. (Joel 2: 29, 30).

On the day, **Təqmət** 21 Festival of the Virgin Mary, Translation of the body of Lazarus, Archbishop John, Joel the Prophet, Deliverance of Matthias by the Virgin Mary respectively. Joel has been remembered three days in one year in the *synaxárlon* (the book of Saints). **Təqmət** 21 (October 31), **Tahəsas** 29 (January 07) and **Gənbot** 18 (May 26) are the day of the Great Joel the prophet. **Təqmət** 21 (October 31), is the day of the remembrance of Joel. In that quotation his prophesies are stated thematically. On **Tahəsas** 29 (January 07) symbolically by virgin Mary in the text. The festive of descent of the Holy Spirit, Abba Ga’argi and Sinoda are on the day **Gənbot** 18 (May 26) related to out poring of the Holy spirit in Pentecostal day.

This direct quotation in this huge book indicates the value of the text in the Ethiopic book of Joel in the history of biblical reception in Ethiopians literature. Almost all the themes in the book of Joel have been incorporated into the book of Saints, which is celebrated three times a year. Therefore, we can argue that the book of Joel has been well represented in literary works.

#### **4.4. The Book of Joel as alluded (ከበራ ነገሥት), [Kəbra Nagašt], 'The Glory of the Kings<sup>12</sup>**

This text is a type of "historical novel" that, according to most scholars, aims to justify and glorify the Ethiopian Solomonic dynasty by showcasing its Israelite lineage. While the work itself is untitled, it has been referred to as Kəbra Nagašt since the 15th century, taking its name from the heading of the first Ba 'Einta Kəbra Nagast, 'On the Nobility of the Kings', which consists of 117 chapters, each with its own title. Additionally, the term Kəbra Nagašt is sometimes used to refer to other later compositions that touch upon the history of Ethiopia, incorporating only excerpts or summaries from the actual content of the Kəbra Nagašt.

The text makes intriguing references to the prophecies of Joel, incorporating some notable modifications. The following example can justify this:

በዚህ: ተነበሮ: እየአል: ካበረ: ወይበ: እማነእል: ስማምዎ: ወመድኬ: ወይድኬን: ተግባር: ኮላክክዎ: በአድሙ: እምኬድ: ዓይነለዎ: ተወጋለ: ወእግዢኬሁ: መስከተኞቸዋል 145.

As Joel the Prophet prophesied and said, "The heavenly Emmanuel shall come and shall deliver the work which He hath fashioned with His own hand from the hand of the devil, the deceiver, and his devils which led astray."

In the quoted text from the Kəbra Nagašt, the name Amanuel is utilized in contrast to the reading found in the Book of Joel. This suggests that the author(s) of the Kəbra Nagašt interpreted the Book of Joel as a prophetic text foretelling the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Besides, both the Book of Joel and the Kəbra Nagašt are characterized by their strong emphasis on eschatological expectations. Here the verbs ወመድኬ (He will come) and ወይድኬን (He will save) are among the most common terms when it comes to

---

<sup>12</sup> The 'Glory of the Kings', or, better, 'Nobility of the Kings') is a kind of "historical novel", intended, according to the majority of scholars, to justify and glorify the Ethiopian-Solomonic dynasty by demonstrating its Israelite descent. The work is in fact untitled, but at least since the 15<sup>th</sup> cent. it has been known as K.N, from the heading of the first, Baənta Kəbra Nagast, 'On the Nobility of the Kings') of its 117 chs., each one with a title of its own. Otherwise, the title K.N. is also sometimes used to denote other, later compositions dealing with the history of Ethiopia and incorporating only excerpts or summaries of the K.N. proper (e.g., mss. EMML 1515, 3081). Encyclopedia Aethiopica Vol. III. p. (364).

the reference of a future divine intervention in favour of the people of God. The eschatological salvations promised in the Book of Joel might have inspired, together with other biblical texts, the Kəbra Nagašt as far as the special role of Ethiopia at the end of history. Ethiopia as undistinguishable Israel; the Ethiopians as the chosen people (Bazakəbr 130) and the Ethiopian kings' supremacy (Bazakəbr 171) offered the people a sense of shared cultural identity and shaped their mentality. An affiliation to Solomon/biblical Israel was also claimed for some other ethnic group, the respective narratives being connected to the legend of the Queen of Sheba and Minilik the I, and, ultimately, to the Kəbra Nagašt.

The Kəbra Nagašt has proven to be significant in the political, religious and social life of the Ethiopians. Regardless of the original purpose of its composers, it provided the legal foundation for both the Solomonic monarchy's claim to political power and the institution of divine kingship at least from the 14<sup>th</sup> Century.

#### **4.5. The Book of Joel as alluded in መጽሐፈ ሰዓታት, (Maṣḥāfa Sa‘at), ‘The book of hours’<sup>13</sup>**

The Book of hours, known as the ‘Horologium’ in Ethiopic or simply called ‘ሰዓታት’, is structured to be recited at specific hours throughout the day and night. This liturgical service consists of psalms, biblical passages, and hymns. There are three varieties of ‘ሰዓታት’, with the first two being predominantly Ethiopic.

---

<sup>13</sup> Book of hours is a church service made up of psalms, biblical readings and hymns. Encyclopaedia Aethiopica, Vol. V. p.(501).

**The Reception of the Book of Joel in Ethiopic... Tsehay & Mersha**

Book of Hours	Joel and Psalms
<p>አይ-ቁ፡ ወ-አቁ፡ አምላክመ፡ ካሙ፡ አ-ይበለ-ነ፡ አ-ኩ-ብ፡ የ-አ-ለ-፡ ስ-ማ-ለ-፡ አ-ም-ለ-ከ-፡</p> <p>Lest nations/gentiles say where is their God? Hear, our God our supplication.</p>	<p>Joel 2:17 ወይበለ መ-አ-ኩ እ-ግ-ብ-ኩ አ-ኩ-ብ-ኩ ወ-አ-ቁ፡ አ-ም-ለ-ከ-፡</p> <p>And they say, “have pity on your people, O Lord, and do not afflict your inheritance to the nations’ reproach, and lest nations/gentiles say: ‘Where is their God?’</p> <p>78:10 ካሙ አ-ይበለ-ነ ነ-ይ-ቁ ወ-አ-ቁ ሁ-፡<sup>14</sup></p> <p>Lest nations/gentiles say where is their God?</p> <p>113:10 ካሙ አ-ይበለ-ነ ነ-ይ-ቁ ወ-አ-ቁ ሁ-፡</p> <p>Lest nations/gentiles say where is their God?</p>

Table 3

As one can see from the above table, the Book of Hours contains an expression attested both in the Psalms and the Book of Joel. In other words, the acts of Abba Georgis of Sagla who might have quoted Joel the Prophet or Psalm 78:10 or Psalm 113:10, as a composer in his work named the ‘book of hours’. Which biblical text has been used in the Book of Hours? Was it taken from the Psalms or from the Book of Joel? At this stage, it is difficult to judge in favour of the Psalms or the Book of Joel. Even if one may tend in favour of the Psalm, because of their popularity, it does not exclude the possibility of a reference to the Book of Joel, as far as the author of Book of Hours is concerned. One should also appreciate the intertextual relationship between

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Masmura Dawit (’ndəmta); አ-ኩ-ብ፡ አ-ኩ-ኩ-ኩ ወ-አ-ቁ፡ እ-ለ-ን ይ-ለ-ለ-፡ ወ-አ-ቁ ካ-ለ-ቁ-ወ-ሙ-ማ ለ-መ-ቁ  
ይ-ኩ-ኩ-ቁ-ል-፡ አ-የ-ድ-ኩ-ወ-ሙ-? እ-ን-ዳ-ለ-ን-፡ አ-የ-ደ-ለ-፡ የ-ት-ቁ-፡

The Gentiles; Israel say we have a creator, but if they have a creator, when will He be to them or not save them? Joel: 2:17.

the Psalms and the Book of Joel whereby the above quotations reflect a plea to be saved from the humiliating perception of the nations/gentiles regarding the suffering of the people of God.

In this connection, Elie Assis (2013:33) has an interesting explanation whereby other nations are governing over the people triggering them to be a 'mockery' among the nations. This 'mockery' does not properly define a natural disaster, but rather is entirely suitable for the humiliation of a people subjected to the impulse of their human enemy. One sees here an interesting case of actualization. The Ethiopian literature is applying the verse that expresses the plea and the invocation of ancient Israel to their God into a new context, namely the situation of affliction of Ethiopian Christians.

#### **4.6 The Book of Joel as alluded in in ቅዱሳስ ማርያም, (Qəddase Maryam, 'Anaphora of Mary' and መዓዛ ቅዱሳስ (Ma‘āzā Qəddāse, 'Anaphora of Fragrance')**

The Anaphora of Mary, also known as the Anaphora of Fragrance, was composed by Abba Georgis the Gasça, a prolific writer in the middle age of Ethiopian literature. This composition is dedicated to St. Mary and is recited alternatively during the monthly remembrance of St. Mary in a shorter form. The term "Qəddase" is derived from Gə'ez and means "sanctification" or "hallowing," similar to the Arabic term "al-quddas." It refers to the Eucharistic liturgy of the Ethiopian Orthodox (Tawahedo) Church, which is seen as a process of transforming a community into the body of Christ through the growing communion facilitated by the Holy Spirit. This liturgy is equivalent to the Eucharist practiced in Roman, Byzantine, Syriac, Armenian, and Coptic Churches, and is believed to continue the tradition established by Jesus Christ himself. The Anaphora of Fragrance is one of the fourteen Anaphoras used in Ethiopia.

Now, in the Anaphora of Mary, the prophet Joel is mentioned in the Anaphora of Mary, with some unique themes and expressions, like "Elda" and "honey" absent from other original versions.

ንፃ፡ መግያም፡ ገኑ፡ ዕዕ፡ ለወለምንፃ፡ መምድ፡ አፍራም፡ ዘመኑ፡ መምድ፡ አንቀሳ፡  
ለአቶናል፡ ካብ፡ አልፃ፡ መመኑ፡ የቃወጥ፡ በይሁም፡ ምስለ፡ ወልድ፡ አየሰ፡ ክርስቶስ፡ ካቃ፡  
አለምር፡ መጥበብ፡

Come, Mary the Tree of Paradise of Silondis, and the land of Ephrata of Micah, and the Land of Spring of Joel, Prophet of Elda and the pure honey of Judah; with your Son Jesus Christ the source of mind and wisdom. (Joel. 3:18).

It is interesting here to see how the prophet Joel is associated with garden Elda, the place of Adam and Eve. Is the term Elda related with the garden of Eden?

As far as textual variants concerned the Ethiopic “honey” deserves particular attention. It is attested neither in the MT (the Hebrew Text), nor in the LXX, which have “new or sweet wine”. Note that one of the signs of the being the richness of the one land vowed to the sons of Israel is that it would be “flowing with milk and honey” (Num. 13:27; Deut. 6:3). David. W. Baker, (2006:137), the NIV application commentary.

#### **4.7 The Book of Joel as alluded in ደንብ, (Dəggʷa, ‘Antiphonary’)**

The Ethiopian Antiphonary called "ደንብ" Dəggʷa is a daily service of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tawahedo church. It is attributed to St.Yared (6<sup>th</sup> century) who is the composer of spiritual music of the church. Many of the Church services have been derived from this huge text. It is divided in to three branches mainly. Seasons are the leading substances to classify the text. The Dəggʷa is the liturgical book of the Ethiopian Church which contains the hymns for the Divine Office; it is arranged in calendar order and divided according to the seasons of the liturgical year (Calendar).

The book provides the orders of service for various celebrations the daily Divine Office, the feasts, Sundays, the saints, the martyrs, the angels as well as for special occasions. Thus far attempts to provide a solution to these questions have not been satisfactory. Even its antiquity is doubted. According to Ethiopian tradition, St. Yared, who came arise from Aksum, is considered the author and the singer of at least some of the liturgical books used in the

Ethiopian Church<sup>15</sup>. The origin of the term Dəggʷa is not clear, nor is the relationship which exists between this book and its function as a book of hymns.

In the same way as the development of the many Anaphoras of the Ethiopian liturgy proves to be related to theological controversies that stirred up the country, one can hypothesize that the evolution of the Dəggʷa was, at least in the beginning, a product of the same controversies concerning the Sabbath and other issues. This is confirmed by the existence of offices dedicated to St.Yared, and to other post Aksumite saints, an indication of later developments throughout the centuries.

Table 4

ፈጽ, Antiphonary	Joel
1. ንጽኑ ቁርን በጽዋን ወሰብከ በደብረ መቁድስያ:: ገጽ 43o.	Joel 2:1 ንጽኑ፡ ቁርን፡ በጽዋን፡ ወሰብከ፡ በደብረ፡ መቁድስያ፡ ወይደንጂዥ፡ ካለመው፡ እለ፡ ይነበሩ፡ ወሰት፡ የወጪ፡ Blow a horn in Zion; and make proclamation on my holy mountain!
2. ንጽኑ ቁርን በጽዋን ቁድስ ዋሙ ወሰብከ የምህለ ወቁድስ ማኑበረከመ:: ገጽ 344. Blow the horn in Zion; sanctify a fast; and proclaim a solemn service; and sanctify assembly.	Joel 2: 15-16 ንጽኑ፡ ቁርን፡ በጽዋን፡ ቁድስ፡ ዋሙ፡ ወሰብከ፡ የምህለ፡ እስተዋዕስ፡ እነበ፡ ወቁድስ፡ ማኑበረከመ፡ Blow the horn <sup>16</sup> in Zion; sanctify a fast; and proclaim a solemn service;

<sup>15</sup> See. Encyclopaedia Aethiopica. Vol.II. p. (123).

<sup>16</sup> The Ethiopic has “horn” instead of trumpet. The primary theological OT text for the blowing of trumpet is put in Num 1:1-10. The function of the trumpet is to gathering the cultic community, for use at time of war and at time of sacrifice. As Milgrom put it the blowing of the trumpets, whether for religious purposes or for battle, serves as instruments of prayer Num 10: 9-10. Therefore, the sounding of the trumpet serves for three purposes according to Jewish culture. 1) a call for alarm for forthcoming war to the citizen of Israel/Jerusalem. 2) an announce the approaching the Lord’s day and heavenly army. 3)

**The Reception of the Book of Joel in Ethiopic... Tsehay & Mersha**

	16 And gather the people. Renew your assembly.
3. የፋዳ ቅርኑ በፊጥና ወሰብኩ በደብረ መቅደሰ ካንወ ተንሣኑኩ ለዘምኑ በየ:: ገጽ 412.	Joel 2:1 የፋዳ ቅርኑ በፊጥና ወሰብኩ በደብረ መቅደሰ Blow a horn in Zion; and make proclamation on my holy mountain!
4. የፋዳ ቅርኑ በፊጥና ስብኩ በየአ እራቅለመ ካንወ ዕርገቶ ለከርስቲስ:: ገጽ451.	Joel 2:1 የፋዳ ቅርኑ በፊጥና ወሰብኩ በደብረ መቅደሰ Blow a horn in Zion; make proclamation the feast of Peraclite; let you talk the ascension of Christ.
5. የፋዳ ቅርኑ በእለት ወርቃ በእምርቻ እለት በየልኩ ስበ ተዘዘርና ለፊጥና:: 212/387 Blow trumpet on the dawn of the day of sign our feast while we remember zion.	

Therefore, many reasons lead to conclude that, with the exception of its original core, the Dəggʷa is a collection of hymns that has been elaborated over the centuries by different authors and adjusted to the needs of varying historical circumstances.

---

it is the cultic use. Cf. Joel's use of scripture and scripture's use of Joel; Appropriation and resignification in second temple Judaism and early Christianity. Strazicich, John. (2007:116-17). Some Ethiopic manuscripts, including the text of Andemta, have the word "renew" instead of "sanctify," which is found in the MT and the LXX.

The words, phrases and sentences which are treated in the table as exemplar, have quoted fifty-nine times in antiphonary but unlike form of the words; sometimes, future and past tense. In this demonstration the verbs are in past from. In the Book of Joel (2:1 and 2:15-16) found two times.

The sounding of the horn is frequently mentioned as an integral part of the God's presence and His special visitation on behalf of His people in both ways for judgment and blessing. The horn has been blown and alarm sounding in Zion, in my holy mountain. Usually, warning of any approaching enemy would be sounded along the boarders and from the highest hills. The same happens in our days we use for announcing and alarming issues in day to day our life in Ethiopia.

Here, one can perceive an expression of the Book of Joel applied in the antiphonary. The allusion to the Book of Joel is obvious for Ethiopian scholars.

#### 4.8. The Book of Joel as alluded in ማኅለታ ጥና, (Mahleta ሽገ, ‘Canticle of the Flower’)

Mahleta ሽገ (‘Canticle of the Flower’) is one of the most popular hymns extolling St. Mary that is considered one of the most beautiful genuine poetic works of Ge’ez literature. The Mahleta ሽገ comprises 156 stanzas of five lines each. The work praises St. Mary, contemplating her nature and dealing with her miracles and her life, including the Dormition (erafta) and the Assumption (Fələsata), etc., as well as with the life of Jesus. The author of the M. ሽ. must have been an outstanding writer and learned theologian. Besides, the erudition of the author of the Mahleta ሽገ shows through references and allusions to a number of works of Ge’ez literature. There is a disagreement concerning the author of the Mahleta ሽገ. It is traditionally ascribed to a certain Abba ሽገ Dəngəl.

The following poem or effigy indicates allusions to the Book of Joel.

ማኅለታ ትንበት ማርያም አመት ድን እንዳደብ  
መአመት ፍቅር ድጋብ አካመት ለቻብ ፍቅር

በዚ. ታክምረ ሊደበ እየከል ነበያ እልካ፡

የንጂረጋፍ እምካድ-ባረሁ ወእምሳው-ማረሁ ለይሁ-ካ፡

ወቃወ-ወ መዓር ትድወ- ወከለ-በ ብዓ-ካ፡፡

The fulfillment of prophecy Mary, an unfamiliar blossom

And the season of harvest of fullness which the age of suffering

In you there is a miracle who said Joel the prophet of Elda

From the mountain and hill of Jude pour out the pure honey and white milk  
which is fetched.

As mentioned earlier, prophetic literature can be divided into three stages. The nature of prophetic literature includes liturgical elements that were practiced in Israelite communities. These elements drew from both ancient prophetic materials as well as contemporary compositions. This tradition heavily influenced the thinking of those who collected, composed, read, or edited the prophetic books.

In the Ethiopian tradition, the flower (ሰገ) is a common symbol used to represent Mary among various literary devices in the Mahleta Säge, there is a wide range of similes and descriptions applied to Mary, many of which are based on floral elements. Examples include "flower of Aaron," "flower of the faith," "flower of the resurrection," "perfume of the flowers," and "flower of the king." The writers also introduced the prophets, such as Abba Säge Dəngəl, who clearly noted Joel and the time period in which they worked. Sometimes, the circumstances surrounding the original spoken oracle are also documented. To interpret the liturgies, one must keep in mind the overall purpose of the ritual within the existing prophetic liturgies.

Watts (1975: 6-7) demonstrates that the liturgies, as a whole, are not less significant than individual oracles in terms of their historical, social, and religious relevance to the times and people who have heard and performed them in worship. Therefore, the quotation and allusion to the Ethiopic book of Joel in the above texts are worthwhile.

## 5. Conclusion

A philological analysis helps to explore significant variants and detect important differences in meaning, which reveals an interesting story of the interpretation and reception of the Ethiopic Book of Joel. It is noteworthy to study verses in the New Testament that contain quotations and allusions to the Book of Joel, among other things. The Ethiopic Book of Joel is quoted or alluded to in the aforementioned Ethiopic texts. In the Book of Joel, different symbols have their own symbolic emblems to be interpreted. For example, locusts symbolize the Babylonian army, and the blowing of a trumpet is used to drive away the army or the real locusts, if they exist traditionally. This entire still applied in Ethiopia today.

It has been examined that the translation of the Book of Joel into Ethiopic paid attention both to issues of fidelity and clarity. On the one hand, we have seen that tried to reproduce the message from the original versions. On the other, the Ethiopian translators have struggled to offer an intelligible text to the Ethiopian readers. In this connection, the research has given particular attention to Joel 1:15, whereby significant differences between several Ethiopic manuscripts have been detected. Thus, while UNESCO 10\_34, reads “አነ አነ አነ ዕላት እስም አልያቀት ዕላት እግዢአብተሮር” EMML1768, has “አለ ላት እለ ላት ይእት ዕላት እስም አልያቀት ዕላት እግዢአብተሮር”. When we come to d’Abbadie 35, one gets “አለ ላነ እለ ላነ ይእት ዕላት እስም አልያቀት ዕላት እግዢአብተሮር”. As for IES and the *’andəmta Commentary*, we remarked another reading, namely, “አለ ላከም ይእት ዕላት እስም አልያቀት ዕላት እግዢአብተሮር”.

Like other biblical commentaries, the Ethiopian interpretation of the Book of Joel reflects a thorough interest in literary tradition. Both historical and allegorical exegetical methods are given space as long as they help uncover the mystery of Christian teaching. The search for the inner meaning of words, phrases, and passages is done in order to explore and appreciate Christian theology. This paper provides a glimpse into the most interesting theological,

liturgical, or devotional texts that offer comments, references, and allusions to the Ethiopic Book of Joel. In doing so, it highlights the significance of textual history as a source of inspiration in Ethiopian literature or commentary on Joel, as well as the use of biblical passages in subsequent liturgical and non-liturgical texts.

As far as reception is concerned the work has quotations and allusions have been identified in Ethiopic literature. Through the identification of quotations and allusions from Ethiopic Book of Joel in Ethiopic literature, the research has demonstrated that Ethiopic version of Joel has been widely received in Ethiopic literature. Sənksar, in liturgical texts like the Dəggʷā, Anaphora. The research has demonstrated the presence of various meanings of the original biblical text throughout the Ethiopian literary and liturgical history. Thanks to Jauss' Reception History Theory, we have been able to appreciate the value of Ethiopian hermeneutics through the texts as well as the interpretations of the Book of Joel in Ethiopian liturgy.

## References

Barton, J. (2001). *Joel and Obadiah: A Commentary*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press.

Bruce, C. Brich. (1997). *Hosea, Joel and Amos*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press.

Budge, E. A. Wallis. (1928). *Synaxarium The Book of the Saints of The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Translation*. Printed by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Debre Meheret St. Michael Church Garland, TX USA.

Cowley, Rojer. W. (1974). “*The Old Testament Introduction in the አንድወምታ Commentary Tradition*,” in *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. XII, No. 1.

Crenshaw, J. L. (1995). “*Joel: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*” in *The Anchor Bible Series*. New York: Doubleday Publishers.

Dibia, Emmanuel. O. (2017). “*An Exegesis and Reflection on Joel Chapter 1: 13-18*” Santa Clara: Santa Clara University Press.

Elie, A. (2013). *The book of Joel A prophet between calamity and hope*. Bloomsbury, New York, USA.

Encyclopaedia. Aethiopica. (2003). Vol.I.P.569. (vol. 1: A-C). Eisenbrauns, Germany.

Hiebert, T. (1992). “*Joel, Book of*” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary Vol.3 (H-J)*. David N. Freedman (Ed.) New York: Doubleday Publishers.

John. D.W. Watts. (1975). *The Cambridge Bible Commentary New English Bible: Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

Jauss, H. (2014). *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception. Theory and History of Literature*, Vol. 2, Minneapolis: University. Press, 1982, 23-34. See also, R. Evans, *Reception in Current Practice*, London.

\_\_\_\_\_, (1982). Toward an Aesthetic of Reception. Theory and History of Literature, Vol.1. Minneapolis: University, Press, 23-34

Knibb, Michael. A. (2015). “*The Ethiopic Book of Ezekiel. A Critical Edition*.” Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Maxey, A. (2017). “*The Minor Prophets: Joel*” in <http://www.zianet.com/maxey/proph6.htm>.

---

**The Reception of the Book of Joel in Ethiopic... Tsehay & Mersha**

---

Maṣəḥafa 'sartu wa-kəletu 'ənaqu; [The Book of the Twelve Pearls]. Academy of Ethiopian Languages and Cultures. Unpublished.

Strazicich, John. (2007). *Joel's use of scripture and scripture's use of Joel; Appropriation and resignification in second temple Judaism and early Christianity*. Leiden: Brill.

Stuart, D. (1987). "Joel" in *Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 31 (Hosea - Jonah)*. Bruce M. Metzger (Ed.) (et.al) Texas: Word Book Publishers.

Sweeney, M. A. (2000). "The Twelve Prophets" Vol. 1 (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah and Jonah) in *Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry*, Cotter, David W. (Ed.). Collegeville: The Liturgical Press.

The Catholic Study Bible, New American Version. (2017). The Minor Prophets in <https://bible.org/seriespage/7-minor-prophets> Accessed May.

Wolff, H. W. (1977). "Joel and Amos: A Commentary on the Books of the Prophet" in *Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible*. McBride, Dean S. (Ed.) Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Wood, G. E. (1968). "Joel, Obadiah" in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Raymond E. Brown (Ed.) (et. al). New Jersey: Princeton Hall.

---

---

## Notes to Contributors

### 1. Form of the Article:

- It should be **30 pages** long (maximum) all in all.
- It should be typed in **1.15 line spacing, 12 font size**, and **Times New Roman font face**. If the text is written in Ethiopic, it should be written with **Nyala font face**.
- Margins should be fully **justified**.
- Use **1.7-inch (4.318cm) margins** on all four sides of the page.
- All pages should be consecutively numbered at the bottom of the page in Plain Number, at the center.
- The first page should contain the **title of the article, author's name, abstract** and **key words**.
  - ❖ First letters of the words in a title should be typed in **capital letter**. If there is a subtitle, it goes under the main title in *italic*. And it should be **aligned to the center**.
  - ❖ Author's name should be **aligned to the right**. The academic title(s), institutional affiliation and email address of the author should be typed in the footnote.
- The article should be divided into **sections and sub-sections**, and each should be **numbered and given title**.

### 2. Abstract:

- The article should contain an abstract between **150 and 200 words**.
- It should be a **single paragraph** in block format (without paragraph indentation).

- It should be typed in **1.0 line spacing, 11 font size and Times New Roman font face.**
- The word ‘Abstract’ should be **aligned to the center.**
- It should end with a list of no more than **five key words or phrases** that will be noted in brackets [ ].

### 3. The Body (Text):

- It should include: Introduction, literature review, theories, research methods, data analysis and discussion, conclusion, and references.
- It should come immediately after the abstract.
- There should be a space between paragraphs. Paragraph spacing should be applied automatically via formatting instead of inserting manual line breaks.
- Following each quotation or a statement specific enough to need a reference, the **citation** is placed in parentheses, with the author's name, followed by the year of publication, and the page(s) cited. (Doe 1968:122), (Rowe 1893:115-119), or (Smith et al. 1961:21-22).
- **Direct quotations** exceeding **three** manuscript lines of typing should be set off from the text by **indenting five spaces from the left and right margins**; and omitting quotation marks. **Single-spaced** typing must be used.

### 4. Figures, Maps, and Tables:

- Figures and photographs (plates) should be **numbered consecutively** throughout the article and not numbered according to the section in which they appear.
- Figure captions should appear **below** the figure (**Font size 11**).
- Use the word ‘Figure’ in full, rather than Fig or F.

- All figures should be **centered** on the page.
- Number all tables **consecutively** with Arabic numerals and give it its own **title (Font size 11)**.
- Create tables using the **table option** of your word processing package. Do not use tabs and spaces.
- If your table runs over two pages, make sure that the **headings** are also carried over.

#### 5. Footnotes:

- Footnotes should be **numbered consecutively** throughout the text generated automatically, and presented in the **same page**, i.e., typed at the foot of the page.
- Footnotes should only be used for **briefing**. They should not be used for references or for the sole purpose of giving bibliographic information.
- It should be written in **single line spacing, 10-font size, Justified, and Times New Roman font face**.

#### 6. References:

- It continues immediately after the body part; and **center** the word 'References' and it should be **bolded**.
- **Alphabetize** references by the author's last name (If there is no author, use the first letter of the title).
- Use **single-spacing, Justify and 11 font size** throughout the references section.
- The first line of every entry is flushed left. Subsequent lines are **indented 0.5" or 5 spaces**.

## Notes to Contributors

---

- Amharic references should come first in the ‘References’ list.

### APA style<sup>1</sup>:

Keith, T. (2020). *The bro code: The fallout of raising boys to objectify and subordinate women*. Routledge.

Winston, S., & Parekh, G. (Eds.). (2020). *Critical perspectives on education policy and schools, families, and communities*. Information Age.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2020). Who’s black? Hybridity, complexity, and fluidity in 21<sup>st</sup>-century racial identity. In R.T. Teranshi, B. M. D. Nguyen, C. M. Alcantra, & E. R. Curamerg (Eds.), *Measuring race: Why disaggregating data matters for addressing educational inequality* (pp. 15-28). Teachers College Press.

Cross, R. (2010). Language teaching as sociocultural activity: Rethinking language teacher practice. *The Modern Language Journal*, 94(3), 434-452. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2010.01058.x>

### NB:

- ❖ Manuscripts that do not adhere to any of the submission guidelines will not be considered for review.
- ❖ Papers submitted must not be under consideration for publication elsewhere, either in electronic or printed form.

---

<sup>1</sup> Other than the points indicated about the ‘References’ section, use: Lida, P., Ruegg, R., Boer, M., Araki, N., and Agnello, M. (2020). *The Concise APA Handbook* (7<sup>th</sup> Edition). Information Age Publishing, INC. <https://et1lib.org/book/11347353/3c6c56>

**ISSN 2222-6028**

**प्र - 95.65 रु**