

REACH OUT

WYCLIFFE ETHIOPIA MAGAZINE

2026 #2



Reimagining
Bible Translation



**The Missiology
of AI & Mission**
16

**From the Margins
to the Center**
22

**Rooted Locally but
Reaching Globally...**
30



Table of Contents

2026 No. 2

Message from the Executive
Director..... 3

Reimagining Bible Translation
Theologically..... 5

አባ አብርሃም (ሩሚ)
Abba Abraham..... 10

The Missiology of AI
and Mission..... 16

የልብ ቁስል ፈውስ ስልጠና..... 20

From the Margins to the
Center..... 22

A Spark Sent from Heaven..... 26

Rooted Locally but Reaching
Globally with Scriptures for
Every Tongue..... 30

Raising Local Voices..... 32

From Trader to Translator..... 35

Zay New Testament Bible
Dedication..... 37

Preserving the Legacy.....41



Executive Director's Message
Tefera Endalew Yayeh
Wycliffe Ethiopia Bible Translation Association

As we celebrate the achievement of Vision 2025 and look beyond to the future of Bible translation and mission, we give thanks to God for His faithfulness and for the extraordinary progress of ministry across Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. With the support of churches and partners, we have completed eight New Testament translations and five Jesus Film recordings across the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea, bringing Scripture to communities in their heart language. These milestones stand as a testimony to God's grace and the devotion of humble servants who have sacrificed themselves for this great mission. The year ahead will be a year of celebration as we continue to embark on new translation starts, engage in holistic mission initiatives in the Horn of Africa, and press forward with ongoing projects.

Through our affiliate organization, WE-LEAD Ethiopia—a nationally recognized NGO that works in language development, multilingual education, functional literacy, health, food security, peace, and reconciliation—we continue to strengthen communities and ensure

we serve the whole person by implementing a holistic approach. In addition, new initiatives such as the NextVerse Project, which sponsors the children of Bible translators in their education, affirm our commitment to caring for families who bear the weight of this calling. It is also exciting to see the production of SeedPlayer—a solar-powered audio Bible device, now being locally produced in Addis Ababa, preparing to place affordable solar-powered audio Bibles into the hands of thousands who have never had access to Holy Scripture before, expanding Scripture engagement in powerful new ways.

It is also with a humble heart that I mention our collaboration with the Ethiopian Council of Gospel Believers' Churches (ECGBC), which has been another open door to serve the church in Ethiopia significantly. Together, we preserve the Evangelical heritage and document the common history of Ethiopian Gospel Believers. Our desire to serve alongside the church has been proven not only by this significant momentum but also by the fruit of many years of focused and dedicated effort to involve the

African church, particularly the Ethiopian diaspora. Over the last few years, Wycliffe Ethiopia's desire to engage the church in the diaspora has borne fruit. We are now seeing diaspora churches holding mission conferences in collaboration with us and raising awareness of the need for Bible translation in Africa, in particular, and around the world. This has been a turning point in our vision to create worldwide influence in the mission of Bible translation.

We also give thanks for our technical team—consultants and management staff—who have been actively supporting Alliance organizations both in Africa and beyond. We are blessed and encouraged by the impacts we see through their services. Indeed, none of this could be achieved without strong prayers, dedication, and passion for the mission of God, along with a kingdom mindset that transcends political boundaries.

These accomplishments remind us that Bible translation is not only about producing texts but about shaping minds, lives, strengthening communities, and inspiring resilience even in times of political turmoil in the region. And for all these results, we celebrate together—with

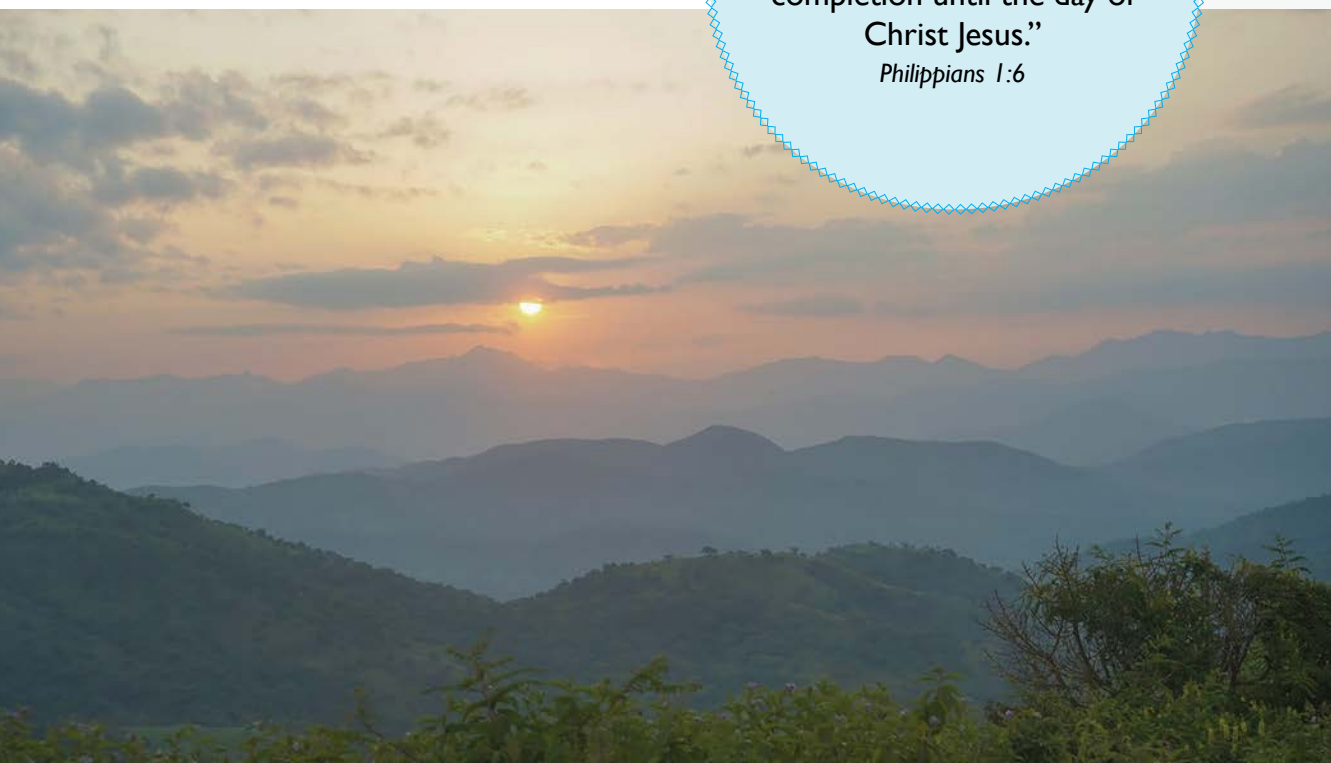
churches, partners, and communities—giving glory to God who has made this possible.

As we celebrate what God has done, we also acknowledge the challenges ahead: ensuring sustainable engagement with vernacular Scripture, embedding translation into the church's theology and mission, and strengthening collaboration across Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. Yet we remain confident that the Spirit of God will continue to guide us.

Reach Out 2026 is therefore both a celebration and a call to renewed dedication. May the articles, testimonies, and reflections shared in this magazine inspire readers with encouragement and fresh perspective, and may the work of Wycliffe Ethiopia move us all to press forward with unity, stewardship, and faithful witness for generations to come.

**“Being confident of this, that
he who began a good work in
you will carry it on to
completion until the day of
Christ Jesus.”**

Philippians 1:6





REIMAGINING BIBLE TRANSLATION THEOLOGICALLY

From Scripture Availability to Vernacular Scripture Engagement¹

Ethiopia is experiencing an extraordinary season of Bible translation. In a relatively short time, many language communities have received Scripture for the first time through partnerships fueled by the momentum of Vision 2025. Yet a quiet reality persists on the ground: availability does not automatically translate into engagement. Although many Ethiopian Evangelical churches are participating in Bible translation, their involvement lacks the depth and theological reflection needed to give translation a home in the church's theology and practice. Churches may applaud and celebrate dedication ceremonies, yet in most cases still fail to own, model, and form sustainable habits of using Scripture in the local language. Studies identify several reasons for this issue, but one less-explored reason, I believe, is theological. This article describes the engagement gap, argues for the theological cause, and proposes a three-pillar framework for sustainable Bible translation and Scripture engagement.

BIBLE TRANSLATION MOMENTUM IN ETHIOPIA AND THE QUESTION IT RAISES

Ethiopia has a long history of Bible translation, as the nation was among the earliest to receive the Scripture in Ge'ez from the 4th to the 6th centuries AD. However, except for translations into majority languages such as Amharic (1818), Oromiffa (1899), and Tigrigna (1928), translation into minority languages is a recent phenomenon.

Translation activities have grown rapidly over the past 50 years, driven by missionary work (Philip Noss, 2020). The most intensive trans-

lation movement in vernacular languages has occurred over the past 25 years, driven by Vision 2025.

The motto was “by the year 2025, a Bible translation project will be in progress for every people group that needs it” (Vision 2025, Wycliffe Global Alliance). The main focus of this “God-sized”² vision, as Wycliffe USA calls it, was to strengthen collaboration among Bible agencies, mission organizations, and national churches. This encouraged churches to deepen their involvement in translation and in engaging with vernacular Scripture. To make this vision a

reality, translation organizations and churches forged partnerships, mobilized resources, and trained translators and translation consultants. As a result, many translation projects were launched in numerous minority languages.

By the grace of God, Ethiopia is one of the countries that has achieved Vision 2025. At the time of writing, Church engagement has begun for the last two remaining languages, and translation has been initiated. Today, in a nation with more than eighty-seven living languages, dozens of language communities have the New Testament, and around twenty have a complete Bible. That is no small achievement. For many communities, it is the first time grandparents and grandchildren can hear the words of God in the language that carries their humor, grief, songs, prayers, and everyday reasoning. We praise God for this incredible achievement.

THE MISSING LINK: THEOLOGY OF BIBLE TRANSLATION

Despite these achievements, significant issues remain. Although many Ethiopian Evangelical churches are clearly increasing participation in Bible translation, this growth has not led to deep, lasting, or theologically grounded ownership and sustained engagement with vernacular Scripture.

The Bible translation ministry in Ethiopia faces two primary challenges:

1. Limited involvement in translation and Scripture engagement across the entire spectrum of Ethiopian Evangelical churches.
2. The lack of sustainable, deeper engagement and ownership among churches that are “involved” in the Bible translation movement.

Much of the current engagement in Bible translation appears to be driven by external motivations, such as the availability of external funding, rather than by internal conviction grounded in the church’s biblical-theological reflection and understanding of its mission. It is striking that Bible translation has been marginalized within theological frameworks, doctrinal commitments, mission policies, ministry priorities, and



ministerial training in Evangelical churches that typically hold a high view of Scripture.

The primary argument of this article is that the church lacks a clearly articulated theology of Bible translation that is integrated into its theology and fundamental mission. It is absent from the church’s mission statement as a guiding principle and a governing conviction. Moreover, most Bible colleges and seminaries have marginalized it in their training curricula. As a result, most church leaders and pastors do not view Bible translation as a biblical mandate on par with the church’s other core ministries, nor do they sufficiently value or support it.

Without the support of local church leaders, conducting effective, sustainable, and ongoing Scripture translation and engagement within a local church becomes challenging. After the dedication and initial distribution, ongoing support from church leaders often wanes, and engagement with the translated Scripture stalls.

Several studies on Scripture engagement confirm this pattern. For example, the ‘Scrip-



ture Use And Research Ministry' (SURAM) in Papua New Guinea found that strong vernacular Scripture use did not automatically follow New Testament dedication; only a minority of communities showed "good" use, and the most consistent factor correlated with usage was support from local church leaders (van den Berg, comp., 2020). That finding fits Ethiopia uncomfortably well. None of our churches resist using the Bible in their local languages. Church leaders simply are not promoting it or encouraging its use.

If pastors modeled the use of the vernacular Bible, taught from it, and encouraged the congregation to use it, people would follow. But because most leaders hesitate, whether out of habit, fear of embarrassment, or a desire to appear educated, most congregations ignore it.

WHY IS THERE LESS SUPPORT FOR BIBLE TRANSLATION FROM CHURCH LEADERS?

The primary factor in this issue is the pastors' and leaders' theological understanding of Bible translation, along with other minor factors. No church leader or pastor hates the Scripture in

the local language; instead, they view Bible translation as peripheral and external because their training did not equip them for it. Theological institutions that play a crucial role in forming church leaders, pastors, and missionaries pay little attention to Bible translation.

Of the hundreds of Bible colleges in Ethiopia, only two train translators, and their translation programs are designed exclusively for translators. Pastors, educators, and mission leaders who play significant roles in promoting Bible translation, modeling the use of vernacular Scripture, and influencing church policies have been excluded from this vital training.

Pastors do not need to become professional translators. They may not need the technical aspects of the training, but they do need a theological framework for Bible translation to help the church embrace and own the ministry and to shepherd congregations as they engage with vernacular Scripture.

While specialized training for translators is necessary and should be maintained, institutions need to recognize that specialists alone cannot significantly influence the church's broader decision-making about its involvement in Bible translation. Therefore, theological institutions should consider making Bible translation programs inclusive across other fields of study.

IS IT NECESSARY TO FORMULATE A THEOLOGY OF BIBLE TRANSLATION?

The church already affirms inspiration, revelation, and mission. Translation naturally follows from these beliefs. Early, medieval, and most modern churches have engaged in Bible translation without explicitly developing a theology of Bible translation.

So, is it necessary to establish a theology of Bible translation to address this issue? Yes, because in the Ethiopian church context, the root of the challenges in Bible translation is theological. Due to a lack of a clear theological foundation,

involvement in translating vernacular scriptures is misunderstood and treated as peripheral rather than embraced as a central mandate of the church. Thus, there is a lack of ownership and sustainable support from church leadership.

Bible translation is a theological enterprise. It is an act of making God known (John 20:21-22; Acts 1:8). Thorough theological reflection and explicit biblical-theological grounding are necessary for the practice to be embraced.

Second, developing a theology of translation enables the church to participate intentionally and faithfully in God's ongoing act of revealing His Word to all peoples, ensuring that translation remains vital to the church's mission of making God known among the nations (Hab 2:14).

The theological importance of translating the message is rooted in the church's nature as God's instrument of self-communication in the world (2 Cor 5:20). As the body of Christ, the church is called to embody and communicate the Word made flesh across all languages and cultures (John 1:14). Therefore, the church cannot separate its missionary identity from its role in translating His message.

Translation is not merely a technical matter or a specialized field outsourced to others but a theological act that church leaders and theologians should undertake as part of their ministry to the church. Kenmogne Michel puts this idea succinctly, saying,

"We need to unlock Bible translation from being an exclusive and specialized field. This will require finding creative ways that allow cooperation with all initiatives in translation, and framing Bible translation as a theological enterprise for outreach, discipleship, theological formation, and identity affirmation." (Michel Kenmogne, 2022)
(Emphasis added)

Unfortunately, in their engagement with the church, translation organizations often empha-

size the technical and managerial aspects of translation while overlooking its theological dimension, which is essential for the church to recognize the importance of translation and to foster ownership.

When the church understands Bible translation missionally and theologically, the ministry finds its place at the core of gospel communication and becomes church-owned and sustainably run by the church.

Harmelink places the question of what translation is and what it does within missiological and theological thinking. He poses the question succinctly: "What place within our theological thinking makes the most sense of what translation is and what translation does?" He then answers his own question, saying, "Answers to this question, I suggest, are not found in statistics, linguistics, or demographics, but rather in missiological and theological thinking about the nature and purpose of language and translation in the mission of God." (Bryan Harmelink 2019)

This theological perspective helps the church embrace Bible translation as integral to the church's core mission and as an act of worship, mission, and obedience to the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20; Rev 7:9).

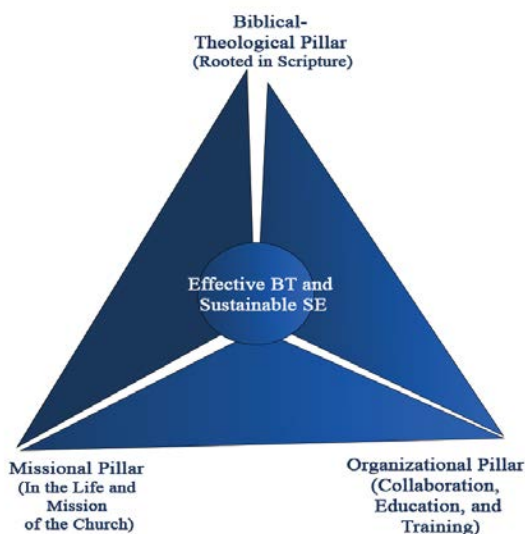
TOWARDS A THEOLOGY-CENTERED FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE BIBLE TRANSLATION AND SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT

As indicated throughout this paper, the challenges Bible translation faces, such as its neglect as the church's core ministry mandated by God, are primarily theological in nature. Therefore, I propose a three-pillar, theology-based framework for effective and sustainable Bible translation and Scripture engagement ministry.

The three pillars for this framework are

1. **Biblical-theological pillar:** Bible translation to be grounded in a strong theological and biblical foundation. For example, a church can adopt a short theology statement.

2. **Missional pillar:** Translation needs to be in the life and mission of the church. For instance, adopt a church policy that requires public reading/preaching from the vernacular text in certain settings.
3. **Institutional pillar:** churches, translation organizations, and Bible colleges and seminaries to collaborate on education, training, ongoing theological reflection, the development of the theology of Bible translation and Scripture engagement, and the production of Scripture engagement materials, including a minimal Bible translation module for pastors/mission leaders in seminaries, not only in translator programs.



Together, these three pillars are intended to provide an integrated framework for examining the relationship among theology, mission, and institutional collaboration in Bible translation and vernacular Scripture engagement.

Conclusion

The Ethiopian Evangelical churches played a significant role in fulfilling Vision 2025. The last minority group in Ethiopia has, or soon will have, at least a portion of the Scripture in its local language. If we measure success by the number of Bibles we have translated, we are, of course, successful. We praise God for this outstanding achievement.

What has been achieved has been possible only by the grace of God. However, a different standard is needed to measure the next phase of the translation movement. We should not judge effectiveness by how many Bibles we translate; instead, we should measure how the church fared with the Bible it spent years producing. Is the church using the Bible it labored to produce? Does Bible translation have a home in the church's theology? Is the church the owner or the invitee?

It should also be judged by the impact the translation had on the church and the community, even though measuring success in terms of impact is challenging, if not impossible. The church has proven it can translate the Bible, and it must also demonstrate its commitment by guiding its congregation to sustainably experience the translated word of God. This commitment becomes a reality only when our theology drives our practice, and it stems from thinking and reflecting theologically about Bible translation.



Dr. Getachew Yohannes
Translation Director and Consultant at
Wycliffe Ethiopia



አባ አብርሃም (ሩሚ)¹ እና የመጀመሪያው የአማርኛ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ትርጉም

መግቢያ

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የግእዝ ሥነ ጽሑፍ በኢትዮጵያ ታሪክ ውስጥ ረጅም ታሪክ ያለው ሲኾን፤ በኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ውስጥ አሁንም የትምህርት እና የቅዳሴ ቋንቋ በመሆን ያገለግላል። ቋንቋው በቤተ ክርስቲያኒቱ ውስጥ ትልቅ የኾነ ስፍራ የሚሰጠው ከመሆኑ የተነሣ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን ወደ ሌሎች ቋንቋዎች ለመተርጎም ትኩረት አልተሰጠውም። በመካከለኛው ዘመን አውሮጳም ተመሳሳይ ሁኔታ ነበር። ጆን ዊክሊፍ የጀርመን ላቲን ቩልጌት በዐሥራ አራተኛው ክፍለ ዘመን ወደ እንግሊዘኛ በተረጎመ ጊዜ፤ ትርጉሙ በካቶሊክ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ዘንድ ተቀባይነትን አላገኘም ነበር። ይኸም የኾነበት ምክንያት እንግሊዘኛ የተራው ሕዝብ ቋንቋ ተደርጎ ይወሰድ ስለ ነበር፤ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን በዚህ ቋንቋ መተርጎም ተገቢ አይደለም ወይም የእግዚአብሔርን ቃል ያራክሳል የሚል ዕሳቤ ስለ ነበረ ነው። መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ለተማሩትና ለአገልጋች ብቻ እንጂ፤ ለተራው ሕዝብ የሚሆን አይደለም።

አማርኛ የግእዝን ቋንቋ ተከቶ የተራው ሕዝብ ልሳን ሲኾን፤ የግእዝ ቋንቋ አገልግሎት በዋነኛነት በቤተ

ክርስቲያን ብቻ እየተገደበ መጥቷል። በዚህም መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን ወደ አማርኛ መተርጎም አስፈላጊ ሆኗል። ለመጀመሪያ ጊዜ ከመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ጋር ተዛማጅነት ያላቸውን ነገረ መለኮታዊ ይዘት ያላቸውን ጽሑፎች በአማርኛ ጽፈው ለማስራጨት የሞከሩት ኢየሱሳዊያን (Jesuits) የተባሉ የካቶሊክ ሚስዮናውያን ናቸው። ይኸ ተግባር በኋላ ላይ የኦርቶዶክስ ቤተ ክርስቲያንም በአንደኛው መልኩ የግእዙን መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ በአማርኛ እንድታብራራ አንዱ ምክንያት በመሆን አገልግሏል። በዐሥራ ስድስተኛው ክፍለ ዘመን ወደ ኢትዮጵያ የመጣው ፒተር ሄይሊንግ፣ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን ወደ አማርኛ የመተርጎም ውጥን የነበረው ሲኾን፣ እ.ኤ.አ. 1640ዎቹ ውስጥ የዮሐንስ ወንጌልን ተርጉሟል። ሆኖም ግን ሙሉውን መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን ለመጀመሪያ ጊዜ ወደ አማርኛ የመለሱት አባ አብርሃም (1742-1811 ዓ.ም.) ናቸው።

አባ አብርሃምን የተመለከቱ ብዙ የጽሑፍ መረጃዎች የሉንም፤ ያሉን ውስን መረጃዎች ሚስዮናዊያን፣ የፈረንሳይ ቆንስላ እና ብሪቲሽ ፎሌይን ባይብል ሶሳይቲ (BFBS) የተለዋወጧቸው ደብዳቤዎች ናቸው። ሌላው ተጨማሪ መረጃ ዊሊያም ጆዌት (1824) የዘገበው ታሪክ ነው። አብዛኛዎቹ እነዚህ መረጃዎች በውጪ አገር ቤተ መጻሕፍት የሚገኙ ናቸው።

የአባ አብርሃም የትውልድ ሥፍራ ጎጃም እንደ ኾነ ይታመናል። በኦርቶዶክስ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ውስጥ የነበራቸው ስፍራ በግልጽ አይታወቅም፤ ምናልባት መነኩሴ ወይም ቄስ ሊሆኑ ይችላሉ። በኦርቶዶክስ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ሥርዐት በአግባቡ የተማሩ ነበሩ። በጆዌት መሠረት አባ አብርሃም የሰር ዊልያም ጆንስ፣ መምህር እንዲሁም በጎንደር የጀምሰ ብሩስ ቱርጁማን በመሆን አገልግለዋል። ሆኖም ግን ይኸን ጉዳይ ብሩስ በመጽሐፉ⁶ ውስጥ አልጠቀሰውም ወይም ሌሎች ያረጋገጡት ጉዳይ አይደለም።⁷ ከዚህም በተጨማሪ ግእዝና ቅኔ (የአማርኛ ግጥም) ሳያስተምሩት እንዳልቀሩ ኤድዋርድ ኡልንዶርፍ ጽፏል።⁸

ወደ ኢየሩሳሌም የተደረገ ጉዞ

ኢትዮጵያውያን ወደ ቅድስቲት ከተማ ኢየሩሳሌም የሚያደርጉት ሃይማኖታዊ ጉዞ በጥንት ጊዜ የጀመረ እንደ ኾነ ይታመናል። ብዙዎች በተለያዩ ጊዜያት ወደ ቅድስቲቱ ከተማ የእግር ጉዞ አድርገዋል። አባ አብርሃም በሃያ ስምንት ዓመታቸው በግብፅ በኩል ወደ ኢየሩሳሌም ሃይማኖታዊ ጉዞን ያደረጉ ሲኾን፣ ከቅድስቲቱ ከተማ በመነሣትም ወደ ሶሪያ፣ አርሜኒያ እና ፐርሺያ ተጉዘዋል።⁹ በጉዟቸው ከተለያዩ ሰዎችና ባህሎች ጋር በመገናኘታቸው፣ የተለያዩ ቋንቋዎችን

እንዲያውቁ ከማስቻሉ በተጨማሪ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን በመተርጎም ሺደት ውስጥ ሳያግዛቸው አልቀረም።

የኢየሩሳሌም ጉዞአቸውን ካጠናቀቁ በኋላ ወደ ኢትዮጵያ ተመልሰው ለተወሰነ ጊዜ ቆይተዋል። ጎምሣ ዓመት ሲሞላቸው ለሁለተኛ ጊዜ ወደ ኢየሩሳሌም ለመሄድ ወደ ግብፅ ተጓዙ። በግብፅ በነበራቸው ቆይታም በጠና ታምመው በሞት አፋፍ ላይ በመሆን በዚያ ለመቆየት ተገድደዋል። በዚያም በነበራቸው ቆይታ የፈረንሳይ ቆንስል ሠራተኛ የነበረው አስሊን (Asselin de Cherville) በማስታወሻ ትልቅ እገዛ አድርጎላቸዋል። ይኸም ከርሱ ጋር ወዳጅነታቸው እንዲጠነክር አድርጓል።¹⁰ የፈረንሳይ ቆንስላ ሠራተኛው የአባ አብርሃምን የቋንቋ ዕውቀትና ችሎታ ከተረዳ በኋላ፣ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን ወደ አማርኛ ቋንቋ እንዲተረጎሙት አበረታቷቸዋል። አባ አብርሃም የብዙ ቋንቋዎች ችሎታ የነበራቸውና በኢትዮጵያ ሥነ ጽሑፍም የተካኑ ነበሩ።¹¹ አስሊን ለአባ አብርሃም ምግብ፣ ማደሪያ፣ ለትርጉም የሚረዱ መርጃ መሣሪያዎችን፣ ሕክምና እና ሌሎች የሚያስፈልጉ ነገሮችን ያቀርብ ነበር።



የትርጉም ሺደቱ

አባ አብርሃምና አስሊን ሁል ጊዜ ማክሰኞ እና እሁድ እየተገናኙ ትርጉሙን ያካሂዱ ነበር። በእንደዚህ ዐይነት ለዐሥር ዓመታት ዘልቀዋል። በ1811 ዓ.ም. የትርጉም ሥራውን አጠናቀቁ። አባ አብርሃም በታላቅ ጥንቃቄ ጥቅስ በጥቅስ (ፉጥር በፉጥር) ነበር የሚተረጎሙት።

አስሊን አስቸጋሪ ቃላትን የዕብራይስጥ፣ የሲሪያክ ቅጂዎችን እና የሰብአ ሊቃናት ትርጉምን መሠረት በማድረግ ያብራራላቸው ነበር። ይኸን የሚያደርገው አባ አብርሃም አገላለጹን በግእዝ ካላገኙት ብቻ ነበር።¹² የአባ አብርሃም ትርጉም የእጅ ጽሕፈቱ 9539 ገጾች ነበሩት።¹³

በተለምዶ እንደሚታወቀው አንድ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ የሚተረጎመው በቡድን ነው። ለምሳሌ፣ የኪንግ ጀምስ ትርጉም በሚተረጎምበት ጊዜ፣ ንጉሡ 54 ሰዎችን ለሥራው መድቦ ነበር።¹⁴ አብዛኞቹ ተርጓሚዎችም በጊዜው በእንግሊዝ ውስጥ የታወቁ ምሁራን ነበሩ። ይኸው ቅጂ በሚከለስበት ጊዜ (1881 - 1881) ዐሥራ ስድስት ሰዎች ሥራውን እንዲቆጣጠሩ 54 ተርጓሚዎች ደግሞ የትርጉም ሥራውን እንዲከውን ተመድበው ነበር።¹⁵ በንጽጽር አባ አብርሃም መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን ለብቻቸው ነው የተረገሙት። ከአስሊን ይደረግላቸው ከነበረው እርዳታ ውጪ።

አብዛኞቹ የአምርኛ ቅጂዎች ከእንግሊዘኛ ወይም ከግእዝ የተመለሱ እንጂ፣ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ከተጻፈባቸው ቋንቋዎች ከግሪክና ከዕብራይስጥ የተቀዱ አይደሉም። አባ አብርሃም መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን ከምን ቋንቋ ነው የተረገሙት የሚለው አከራካሪ ነው። አንዳንዶች የአረቢኛውን ቅጂ፣ ዕብራይስጥና ሲራይክን ከግእዝ ጋር በማመሳከር ነው የተረገሙት ይላሉ።¹⁶ አረን እንደሚለው አባ አብርሃም የግእዝ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን በከፊል በቃላቸው ሳያውቁት አይቀርም፤ ወይም የግእዝ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ቅጂ ነበራቸው።¹⁷ ዶ/ር ምክረ ስላሴ አባ አብርሃም ከንጉሥ ያእቆብ ቅጂ ነው የተረገሙት የሚል አቋም አላቸው።¹⁸ ይኸ ግን ብዙም የሚያስኬድ አመለካከት አይመስልም።

አስሊን እና ጆዌት

የአባ አብርሃም ትርጉም መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ በሚያስፈልግበት ጊዜ የተገኘ ትርጉም ነው። የትርጉም ሥራው ካለቀ በኋላ አባ አብርሃም ኢየሩሳሌም ሄደው በዚያ መዋትና መቀበር ፈለጉ። እ.ኤ.አ. በ1818 መጀመሪያ ላይ ወደ ኢየሩሳሌም እንደደረሱም በዚያ ከተማ ተከስቶ በነበረ ወረርሽኝ (plague) ምክንያት ወዲያው ሞቱ።¹⁹ ሆኖም ግን የአባ አብርሃም ትርጉም አስሊን እጅ ይገኝ ነበር።

በአውሮፓ ከዘመነ ተሐድሶ በኋላ የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ትርጉም ሚስጥራዊና ትልቅ የጥንት ትኩረት የሚሰጡት ጉዳይ ነበር። በዚያ ዘመን የነበሩ ሚስጥራዊ ተቋማት መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን በመካከለኛው ምሥራቅ (ኢትዮጵያን ጨምሮ) በሚገኙ ተለያዩ ቋንቋዎች ማሰራጨት ይፈልጉ ነበር። የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ስርጭት በዚህ አካባቢ ባለ

አብያተ ክርስቲያናት ዘንድ በ16ኛው ክፍለ ዘመን በአውሮጳ የተከሰተው ዐይነት ተሐድሶ ይፈጥራል የሚል ዕሳቤ ነበራቸው።²⁰ The British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) እ.ኤ.አ. በ1804 የተመሠረተ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን በአውሮፓ እና በሌሎች አገሮች ለማሰራጨት የተቋቋመ ተቋም ነበር።²¹ ይኸ ማኅበር መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን ለኢትዮጵያውያን ለማተም ባሰበበት ጊዜ ያገኙት ቅጂ የ1701ቱ ኢዮብ ሎዶልፍ የግእዝ የመዝሙር ቅጂን ነው። ሎጆልፍ ከአባ ጎርጎሪዮስ ጋራ ይሠራ የነበረ ጀርመናዊ የቋንቋ ምሁር ሲኾን፣ በአውሮጳ የመጀመሪያውን የግእዝ ሰዋሰው መጽሐፍ የጻፈ እና የግእዝ ላቲን መዝገበ ቃላትን ያዘጋጀ ነው።²²

እ.ኤ.አ. በ1818 ዊልያም ጆዌት (William Jowett) የተባለ የቸርች ሚሽነሪ ሶሳይቲ ወኪል ወደ ግብፅ በመገኘቱ ከአስሊን ጋር ተዋወቀ። ይኸም መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን በአማርኛ የማሳተምን ዕቅድ ወለደ።²³ የአባ አብርሃም የአማርኛው ቅጂ በአስሊን እጅ ነበረና፣ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ በአማርኛ እንዲሰራጭ ተባባሪ ለመሆን ፈቃደኛ ኾነ። ጆዌትም የኢትዮጵያ ታሪክ ዕውቀት ስለ ነበረው የሚከተለውን ምልክታ አሰፈረ፡- አቢሲኒያውያንን ስለ ጽጵስና (Poper) ከማስተማር ይልቅ፣ ኢየሱሳውያን ሚስጥራዊ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን ወደ የዕለት ተዕለት መግባቢያ ቋንቋ (vernacular) መመለስ ነበረባቸው፤ ይኸ ቢሆን ኖሮ የክርስትና ተልእኮ በአፍሪካ ትልቅ የጥንት ለውጥ ባመጣ ነበር።²⁴

አስሊን ያወጣው ወጪ እንዲከፈለው በጠየቀው መሠረት የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ማኅበር ጥያቄውን ተቀብሎት 1,250 ፓውንድ ተከፍሎታል። ትርጉሙ ወደ ብሪቱን ተወስዶ የአርትኦት ሥራ ተሠርቶለት ከተከተበ በኋላ ለጎትመት በቅቷል።²⁵ በ1824 እ.ኤ.አ. አራቱ ወንጌላት፣ አዲስ ኪዳን 1829፣ ሙሉው መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ 1840 በስዊዘርላንድ በምትገኘው ክሪፕንያ ከተማ ታትሟል።²⁶ እነዚህ ቅጂዎች ወደ ኢትዮጵያ ተልከው የተሰራጩ ሲኾን፣ የተለያዩ ማስተካከያዎች እየተደረገባቸው ንጉሡ ነገሥት ኃይለ ሥላሴ አዲስ የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ትርጉም እስካስተረጎሙበት ጊዜ ድረስ ጥቅም ላይ ውሏል።²⁷

በ1853 ዓ.ም. ይኸ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ኤርትራ ውስጥ ባለ አንድ ኦርቶዶክስ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ገዳም ውስጥ በመሰራጨቱ፣ በዚያ አካባቢ ሃይማኖታዊ መነቃቃትን እንዲቀሰቀስ ምክንያት ኾኗል። የአባ አብርሃም መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ቅጂ በስፋት መሰራጨት ጸዓዘጋ በሚባል ከአስመራ በስተ ምዕራብ በሚገኝ ሐማሴን በሚባል አካባቢ “የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ” እንቅስቃሴን (“Bible Movement”) ፈጥሯል። እንደ ቄስ ሰሎሞን አጽቄ



እና ቂስ ዘራ ጽዮን ሙሴ ያሉ አገልጋዮች የዚህ ውጤቶች ነበሩ። እነዚህ አገልጋዮች ከሲውዲሽ ሚሽን ጋር በመተባበር ይሠሩ የነበሩ እና በኋላም ወንጌልን ወደ ነቀምቴ እና ነጆ እንዲስፋፋ ያደረጉ ናቸው። እነዚህ ሁለት አገልጋዮችና ተከታዮቻቸው “መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ አንባቢያን” በመባል ይታወቁ ነበር።²⁸

የአማርኛ ሥነ ጽሑፍ እየዳበረ የመጣው በዐፄ ቴዎድሮስ ዘመን መንግሥት ነው፤ ከዚያ ዘመን አስቀድሞ ጥቂት ጽሑፎች ብቻ ነበር የሚገኙት። ዐፄ ቴዎድሮስ የአማርኛ ቋንቋ የሥነ ጽሑፍ ቋንቋ እንዲሆን ያበረታቱ ነበር። ሚስዮናውያንም መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን በአማርኛ ቋንቋ እንዲያሰራጩ ፈቅደዋል። ክራፍ እና ፍላድ የተባሉ ሚስዮናውያን የአባ ኦብርሃምን ትርጉም ለዐፄ ቴዎድሮስ በስጦታ መልክ አበርክተውላቸው ነበር። ንጉሡም ከግእዝ ይልቅ ተራው ሕዝብ በሚረዳው አማርኛ ቋንቋ በመተርጎሙ ደስተኛ እንደ ነበሩ ተዘግቧል።²⁹

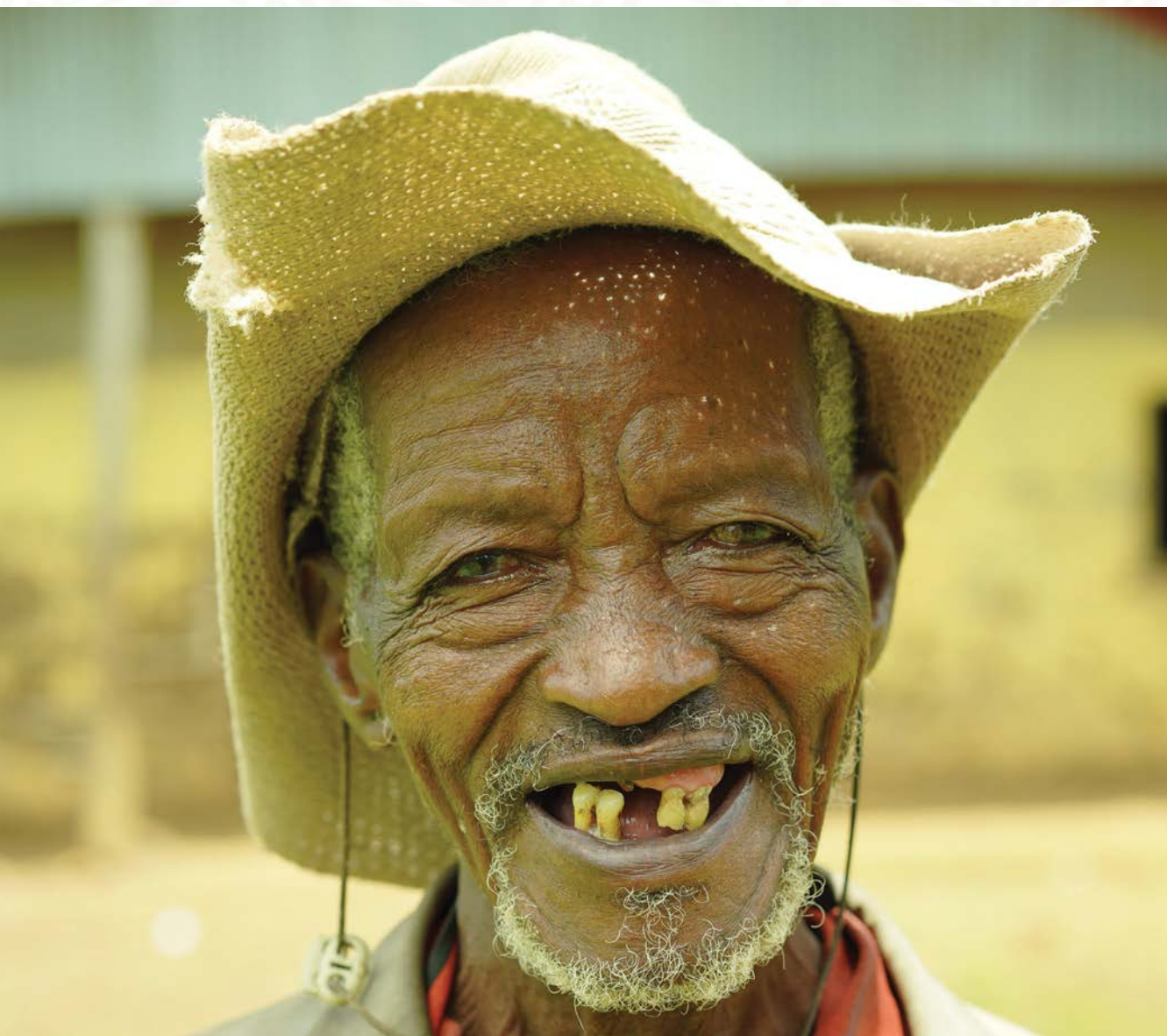
አባ ኦብርሃም መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን ከተረጎሙ በኋላ፤ ትርጉሙ የተለያዩ ማሻሻያዎች ተደርገውበታል። በ1870ዎቹ ሉደዊግ ክራፍ (Ludwig Krapf) እርማት በመሥራት ሙሉ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስን አትሞታል። የፕሮቴስታንት ሚስዮናውያንም ይኸን ቅጂ በስፋት ተጠቅመውበታል። እነዚህ ሚስዮናውያን ቅጂውን በተለያዩ አብያተ ክርስቲያናት ውስጥ አስራጭተውታል። ይኸ በአንዳንዶች ዘንድ ፍርሀትን ፈጥሮ የነበረ ሲኾን፤ ሌሎች ደግሞ ደስተኞች ነበሩ። በ1886 ማርቲን ፍላድ (Johann Martin Flad) የተባለ ሚስዮናዊ ከአለቃ ሚካኤል አረጋዊ ጋር በመሆን (እ.ኤ.አ 1850-1931) በ1886 በአንድ ጥራዝ እንዲታተም አድርገዋል።

አሁን በአማርኛ ቋንቋ የተለያዩ የመጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ቅጂዎች ይገኛሉ። ከአባ ኦብርሃም ትርጉም በኋላ ዐፄ ኃይለ ሥላሴ ያስተረጎሙት ቅጂ ነበር። ይኸ ቅጂ ወደ ብሪቱን ተልኮ ታትሞ ነበር፤ ኾኖም ግን፤ አብዛኛው

ቅጂ ለንደን በሁለተኛው ዓለም ጦርነት በዐምብ ስትደበደብ ተቃጥሏል። ይኸ ትርጉም “የባክስተን ትርጉም” በመባል ይታወቃል። አልፍሬድ ባክስተን የተባለው እንግሊዛዊ ሚስዮናዊ ትርጉሙን በጣሊያን ወረራ ሥር ከነበረችው ኢትዮጵያ ወደ እንግሊዝ እንዲላክ ትልቅ የኾነ ሚና የተጫወተ ነው። በኋላ ላይ ይኸው መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ትንሽ ማሻሻያ ተደርጎበት በአሜሪካ የታተመ ሲኾን፤ ኅትመቱ ስሕተት ስለተገኘበት ቅጂዎቹ እንዲቃጠሉ ተደርገዋል።³⁰ በ1962 በኃይለ ሥላሴ የበላይ መሪነት መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ እንደገና ታትሟል፤ አታሚውም የኢትዮጵያ መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ማኅበር ነው።³¹ ኡሌንዶርፍ በዚህ ትርጉም ኸደት የአባ አብርሃም ትርጉም በሰፊው ጥቅም ላይ እንደዋለ ይገልጻል።³²



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THE MISSIOLOGY OF AI AND MISSION

Artificial intelligence dominates the conversations of every business, organisation and ministry, as we discuss how to use this rapidly emerging technology ethically and responsibly to improve our work and our lives.

In Christian mission, we need to be asking some much deeper questions.

AI'S QUICK ARRIVAL

Normally with technological advances, there is a longer buildup to familiarise ourselves with and to respond to the new. Even the internet took a few years for the world to catch on to its potential and, sadly, its dangers. AI, on the other hand, has moved into widespread public use much more quickly. It requires little technical knowledge to use effectively—just ask any student with a term paper due the next day—and it has the potential to upend our lives and society more radically.

Opinions regarding AI are abundant and diverse, ranging from full embrace to full rejection of AI. From sci-fi movies to futurists to tech leaders to preachers, all have jumped into the conversation about AI's capabilities and its implications on humanity's future. In workplaces, the most pressing question is more practical: "Will AI replace my job?"

Those conversations are important, to be sure. We in the Wycliffe Global Alliance are certainly having them. AI is being used effectively in Bible translation on many levels. We are learning quickly, and we are getting better at it. But rather than use this space to discuss how AI could or should be used in mission, I would like

to look at its underlying missiology. This may, in fact, help inform those other discussions.

In short, missiology is the study of God and people. Its core texts are Scripture and biblical studies, and then every other field of study that impacts humanity. Missiological discussions about AI have been scarce. Our approach in the Alliance is to reflect on theology, anthropology, ethics and the church's global mission, especially as they relate to Bible translation.

THE MISSIOLOGICAL LENS

Our missiological premise is that God created humanity to be in relationship with himself. He created humanity in his image. This image that we reflect has been distorted by sin. God is on mission to restore humanity to himself as he purposed us to be. He established his church to participate with him in this mission. There are numerous ways in which the church expresses this mission, such as evangelism, contextualization, cultural engagement, justice and the holistic transformation of societies.

A missiological critique would ask: How does our approach to mission practice, in this case the use of AI, affect the church's participation



in God's mission? Does it promote or distort the values of the Kingdom of God? How does it influence our portrayal of the image of God? Does it lead to transformation and the dignity of people in every culture?

The vantage point of missiology starts with God creating people in his image. AI, however, blurs traditional boundaries between creator and creation, intellect and algorithm. AI tends to instrumentalize human beings, reducing them to data points and consumers. Whereas, we see all people as image bearers of Christ—relational, incarnational and unique.

In Bible translation, we can easily fall into the trap of merely viewing people as users of a specific language needing a translation of Scripture to communicate with God. In doing so, we could reduce people to data points. We need to guard against the temptations in the use of AI to let efficiency replace empathy, automation replace incarnation, and product replace dignity. We must not confuse speed with being resolute. In mission contexts, the human witness cannot be replaced by algorithms without losing its sacramental nature.

THE MISSION OF GOD AND HOPE

Ultimately, the missiological quest is eschatological: the glory of God among the nations, with people restored in the image of God, representing his fullness. When we consider the mission of God and hope, we acknowledge that AI cannot

save humanity. AI cannot restore people in the image of God. Salvation is not computational. Neither can AI lead humanity to transformation, a place where God's creation flourishes in right relationship with God, others and creation.

Yet, AI can serve God and his mission by, for example, alleviating suffering, improving communication, aiding translation of Scripture or modelling stewardship of creation. The church's role is to discern where AI aligns with God's purposes, and where it violates it. It should use its prophetic voice to address such.

CONTEXTUALIZATION AND CULTURAL POWER

To communicate the gospel meaningfully within each culture, missiology values contextualization. It is well recognised that AI tools are riddled with biases. More often than not, they reflect Western, technocratic and often secular assumptions. Thankfully, efforts are in progress to correct biases, misinformation and outright lack of information among AI tools to be used in Christian ministry, including Bible translation. (A good place to learn about and connect with these efforts is the annual Missionary AI Conference.) This is a monumental task, but a critically important one.

In the course of church history, missionaries worked hard to rid the gospel of cultural and theological imperialism. If, in the mission context, we use AI tools uncritically, we risk export-

ing the biases of dominant worldviews that are intertwined with theology and technology. As Bible translation agencies, we have a unique opportunity to influence AI systems with local languages, worldviews and values in mind, so that in using AI tools mission doesn't replicate colonial hierarchies.

ECCLESIOLOGY AND COMMUNITY

Missiology emphasizes community, fellowship (koinonia) and incarnational presence. Technological advances can erode the need for presence. Yes, technology has opened all kinds of opportunities to work and meet differently. There are also downsides to this. Digital churches, mission from a distance and virtual consultancy are all efficient, but they erode embodied community.

The church's mission involves physical presence among the poor, the marginalized and the suffering. Even though when used thoughtfully, AI may enhance all forms of ministry, AI-mediated connection cannot replace the incarnate solidarity of mission.

ETHICS, JUSTICE AND THE MARGINS

Inherently, mission cares about God's justice and preferential care for the oppressed. On the other hand, AI as it exists today perpetuates global inequality. It largely excludes marginalized, indigenous peoples, refugees and those without technological access. These people are once again accentuated as the recipients of the benevolence of others. How often have I heard the statement, "They may not be able to use AI but they will definitely benefit from it." The church in mission must become a prophetic voice against the idolatry of technological progress when it exploits or dehumanizes. This requires us to be wise in how we use AI in Bible translation.

CONCLUSION

As with all scientific and technological advancements, AI presents advantages and areas of cau-

tion. We need to continuously evaluate and test our practices in light of Scripture, to ensure that we remain faithful to the God we love and the people we serve. From a missiological perspective, we certainly don't reject AI outright, but we do insist on discernment. The church must:

- Engage AI theologically, not just pragmatically.
- Prioritize presence over performance, relationship over reach and justice over convenience.
- Prioritize transformed lives over product.

As these discussions continue among the 100-plus organisations that comprise the Wycliffe Global Alliance, we are asking God to grow our understanding and discernment together. What we learn about the missiology of AI can contribute not only to the success of Bible translation movements, but also to the church's participation in his mission everywhere.



Stephen Coertze is Executive Director of the Wycliffe Global Alliance, an organisation committed to seeing people, communities, and nations transformed through God's love and Word expressed in their languages and cultures. Stephen and his family live in South Africa.

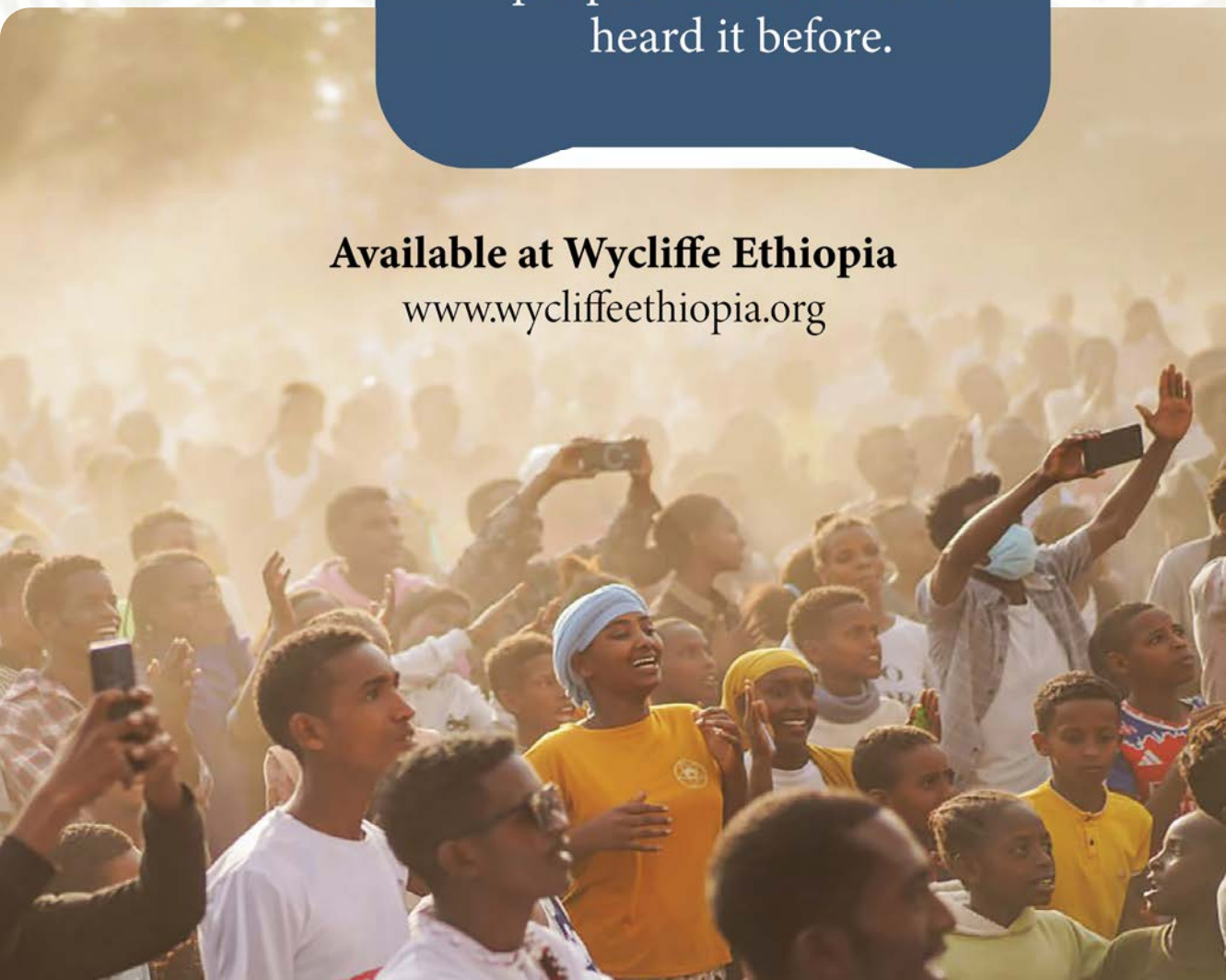


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በእግዚአብሔር ቃል አጠቃቀም ዲፓርትመንት የተዘጋጀ

የልብ ቁስል ፈውስ ስልጠና

ስሜ ዮሴፍ ይባላል። ከአገሪቱ በስደት ምክንያት በመምጣት በአዲስ አበባ እየራሉሁ። በአገሪታችን የኢየሱስን ጌትነት በመመስከሪያ ምክንያት ወደ እስር ቤት ገባሁ። በእስር ቤትም እያለሁ እግዚአብሔር በድንቅ እና በተአምራዊ ምልክቶች ያስፈታኛል በሚል ተስፋ እጠባበቀው ነበር። ይሁንና የእስር ቤት ቆይታዬ ከቀን አልፎ እስከ አራት ዓመታት ተራዘመ። በዚህም ላይ አባቴ እንደነበረው በእምነቴ ወይም በዚህ ምስክርነት ምክንያት እንደታሰረ ሰማሁ። በዚህም ምክንያት ለራሴ መጸለይን ትቼ እግዚአብሔር አባቴን እንዲያስፈታልኝ አጥብቄ መጸለይ ጀመርኩ። በተደጋጋሚ በጾምና በጸሎት በእግዚአብሔር ፊት እተጋ ነበር። በውስጤም አባቴ ይፈታል የሚል ትልቅ እምነት ነበረኝ። ስለሆነም አጥብቄ እጸልይለት ነበር። በዚህ መሐል ግን አባቴ እዛው እስር ቤት እያለ አረፈ። እኔ ግን አልሰማሁም ነበር ጸሎቴንም ቀጥቶ ነበር። አንድ ቀን ግን አብሮኝ የታሠረ ሰው የአባቴን ማረፊያ ይናገር ነበር። የነገረኝ ሰው የአባቴን ሞት እየነገረኝ እንደሆነ አላወቅምም። በጣም ደነገጥኩ! በእግዚአብሔር ላይ ተቆጣሁ። ጸሎቴንና ልመናዬን ችላ ያለ መስሎ ታየኝ።

የእግዚአብሔርንም አባትነትና ፍቅር መጠራጠር ጀመርኩ። በጊዜ ብዛት የእግዚአብሔር ፀጋ በዛልኝ እግዚአብሔር የወደደውን ነገር በወደደው ጊዜና ሁኔታ

ማድረግ የሚችል አምላክ መሆኑ ገባኝ ተፅናኗል። በጊዜው ግን እግዚአብሔርን እንደጨካኝ አምላክ አስቤው ነበር። ነገር ግን በዚያ መከራ ማለፌ፣ ሌሎች ወገኖች በሚያልፉበት መከራ እያለፍኩ እንደሆነ ማወቄ እንድጽናና አቅም ሆነኝ።

ሕመማችንን በመስቀሉ ላይ መጣል

በሕይወት መንገዴ ያጋጠመኝን የልብ ስብራት በክርስቶስ መስቀል ሥር ይገጫል ስቀርብ፤ እንባ ከዓይኖቼ ይፈስስ ነበር። በዚህ ሁሉ ለውጥ የክርስቶስ አብሮነት እና ማፅናናት ከምንጊዜውም በበለጠ ሁኔታ ይሰማኝ ነበር። ከ 20 ዓመት በፊት ክርስቶስ ኢየሱስን እንደ ግል አዳኝ ስቀበል የተሰማኝ በመዳን ውስጥ ያለ ፍፁም ደስታ እና የእግዚአብሔር አብሮነት በዚህ ስልጠና ላይ ዳግም አግኝቼዋለሁ። ዛሬ ኃይሌ ታድሷል፤ ልቤም በታላቅ ምስጋና ተሞልቷል።

እራሴንም ለብዙ ዓመታት በከባድ ቀንበር ተይዞ በመስቀሉ ሥር እንዳለ ሰው አየዋለሁ። አሁን ገብቶኛል፤ ተረድቻለሁ ብዬ ነጻ እንደወጣ ሰው ለመንቀሳቀስ ስሞክር ከእሥራቴ ነጻ እንዳልወጣሁ እረዳለሁ። ቢሆንም በማይመቼ ጊዜዎች ሁሉ ክርስቶስ አብሮኝ እንዳለ አወቃለሁ። እራሴን በመስቀል ላይ ለኔ አሳልፎ የሰጠው፡ “እናንተ ደካሞች ሽክማችሁ የከበደ ሁሉ፤ ወደ እኔ ኑ፤ እኔም አሳርፋችኋለሁ”

ብሎ ሸክሜን የወሰደበት፤ ይህ ጥልቅ የሆነ መንፈሳዊ ዕውቀት በሕይወቴ ላይ ስላመጣ፡ ቃላት በማይገልፀው ደስታ ውስጥ እገባና እንባ ይቀድመኛል።



ወደ ካምፑም እንዳይመለስና ከካምፑ ከመጡት ሰዎች ጋር ቢሄድ ደግሞ ቤተሰቦቹን ዳግም ላያያቸው እንደማይችል እና ቤተሰቦቹ በሕይወት ባይኖሩት ብሎ ያስብ ነበር። እንደ መልካም ዕድል ሆኖ አብረውት ከተሰደዱት መሐል ብቻውን እንደሆነ ያስተዋሉ ሰዎች ከእነርሱ ጋር እንዲሆን ወሰዱት፡ አማራጭ አልነበረውምና ከእነሱ ጋር መጓዝ ጀመረ። ከብዙ ቀናት የእግር ጉዞ በኋላ ወዳሰቡት ስፍራ ደረሱ። ካምፕ አገኙ በአዲሱ ካምፕ ውስጥም ቤተሰቡን አገኘ፤ ቢሆንም ግን አዱ (አብዱ) ቅዠት (የስሜት ቁስል) ሊለቀው አልቻለም። ከቤተሰቦቹ ጋር ያልተገናኘበትን ጊዜ እና ሁኔታውን ሲያስብ ይጨነቃል እና እንዲህም ይላል “ለእኔ የከበደኝ ማንንም አለማወቁ ነበር፤ በወቅቱ ብቸኝነት እና ትካዜ ይሰማኝ ነበር፤ በማላውቃቸው ሰዎች ቤት ለብዙ ወራት ኖሪያለሁ፤ እና ቤተሰቦቹ የት እና በምን ሁኔታ እንዳሉ ምንም መረጃ አልነበረኝም፤ ምን ሊፈጠር እንደሚችልም አላውቅም ነበር፤ በጣም ከባድ እና አስጨናቂ ጊዜ ነበር።” ሲል አዱ (አብዱ) በልጆች ትራኩማ ሂሊንግ ስልጠና በማድመጥ ልምምድ ክፍለ ጊዜ ለአንዱ አሰልጣኝ ያለፈበትን የስሜት ጉዳት አካፍሎታል።

የልጆች የልብ ቁስል ፈውስ ስልጠና

አዱ (አብዱ) የ 11 ዓመት ልጅ እያለ የኢትዮጵያ የስሜት (በስሜን ኢትዮጵያ) ጦርነት ተቀሰቀሰ፡ በሰዓቱ እሱ በስደተኞች ካምፕ ውስጥ እየኖረ ስለነበር ብዙ የሚያሳስበው ጉዳይ አልነበረም። ነገር ግን በዚያ ወቅት የተኩስ ድምፅ በቅርበት መስማት ጀምረ፤ ቤተሰቡ እና የቅርብ ሰዎች መደናገጥ ጀመሩ፤ ካምፑ ከሌላው ቀን በተለየ ሁኔታ በሁለቱም በኩል ባሉ ታጣቂዎች መወረር ጀመረ፤ ታጣቂዎቹም በሰው ሁሉ ላይ መተኮስ ጀመሩ፡ ብዙ የካምፑ ነዋሪዎች ሞቱ፤ የተረፉት ከካምፑ ወጥተው መሸሽ ጀመሩ፤ አዱ (አብዱ) እና ቤተሰቡም ካምፓቸውን ለቀው በፍጥነት ወደ ጎረቤት መንደር መሸሽ ጀመሩ፡ መንገዳቸውም በደኖች መካከል የሆነ ትንንሽ የእግር መንገዶች፤ ብዙ መታጠፊያ እና ብዙ አቋራጭ መንገድ የነበረው ስለሆነ አዱ (አብዱ) ቤተሰቦቹን የተከተለ መስሎት በስህተት ወደ አንዱ መታጠፊያ ገባ፤ ከዚያም ከቤተሰቡ ተለይቶ ሌሎች ስደተኞችን ተቀላቀለ።



ከቤተሰቦቹ የተለየ መሆኑን አላወቀም ነበር። ነገር ግን ቤተሰቦቹ አብረውት እንደሌሉ ብዙ ሳይቆይ ተገዝበ። ግራ ገባው፡ ምን ማድረግ እንደነበረበት አላወቀም ነበር። ይህን ታሪኩን በሚናገርበት ወቅትም ዓይኖቹ በእንባ ተሞልተው እያለቀሰ ምን ያህል ፈርቶ እና ተደናግጦ እንደ ነበር ያስታውስ ነበር። በወቅቱም ወደኋላ እንዳይመለስ ጠመንጃ የታጠቁ ሰዎች አሉ።

ስሜ ጉደታ ጀማል ነው፡ ከልጅነቱ ጀምሮ መስማት የተሳነኝ ነኝ፡ ወላጆቼን በልጅነቱ አጥቻለሁ፡ በዚህም ምክንያት ከልጅነቱ ጀምሮ የጉልበት ሥራ በመሥራት ራሴን ማስተዳደር ጀመርኩ። እንዲሁም ከብዙ ዓመታት ጀምሮ ቤት አልባ ነኝ። ብዙውን ጊዜ የተፈጠርኩት ለከንቱ እንደሆነ ይሰማኝ ነበር፤ እናም እግዚአብሔርን ጨምሮ ማንም እንደማይወደኝ አስብ ነበረ። ዛሬ ግን እግዚአብሔር አብ አንድያ ልጄን ወደ ዓለም የላከው ዓለምን ስለወደደ እንደሆነ በ SUN ቋንቋ በኩል ሲነገር ሰማሁ። በዚህም ኢየሱስ የተላከው ለእኔም እንደሆነ ገባኝ። ኢየሱስ ከብዙ ዓመታት በፊት ወደ እኔ ተልኮ ነበር፡ ነገር ግን እኔ አልሰማሁም ነበር። ዛሬ ግን ይህን ዜና ሰማሁ እግዚአብሔርን አመሰግንኩ። ከአሁን ጀምሮ በእግዚአብሔር የተወደድኩ እንደሆንኩ እና የተረሳሁ ሰው እንዳልሆንኩ ተረዳሁ። ሕይወቴንም ለእርሱ ሰጠሁ።



FROM THE MARGINS TO THE CENTER: RETHINKING THEOLOGY, MISSION, AND EVANGELISM IN A POLYCENTRIC WORLD¹

INTRODUCTION

Global Christianity is experiencing a dramatic shift. The growth of the church in Africa, Asia, and Latin America challenges established Eurocentric assumptions about mission, theology, and leadership. In recent years, partnerships between African seminaries and mission agencies and their founding partners in the Minority World (Global North) have experienced increasing tension. Undeniably, institutions in the Minority World, even those historically evangelical, have been influenced by cultural, social, and liberal pressures, often resulting in the marginalization of biblical fidelity, Spirit-led discernment, and Christ-centric, Trinitarian missional ecclesiology.

This contrast highlights differing convictions and contextual realities between Majority and Minority World partners, generating significant challenges for collaboration, theological formation, and global mission strategy. This article considers how theology, mission, and evangelism might be thoughtfully reconsidered within

this global context, with Africa placed at the center of reflection.

The shifting center of mission invites credible spaces for voices from both Majority and Minority World contexts, moving beyond the unintended dominance of a unidirectional Eurocentric perspective. It seeks to open a global missional conversation that is polycentric, contextually grounded, and relationally attentive. This reflection naturally begins with the heart of mission itself, the *Missio Dei*, grounded in the triune God and expressed through the church's participation in God's redemptive work.

1. *MISSIO DEI*

The heart of authentic mission is rooted in the triune God. This single mission, the *Missio Dei*, unfolds through various expressions within the body of Christ. Nelson Jennings draws an important distinction between God's comprehensive mission and the multiple missions of the church: "It is important to see the difference

between God's comprehensive, singular mission and Christians' various mission activities."²

Mission begins with God's sending of Jesus Christ and continues through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The triune God sends the church to participate in the redemptive work of Christ, empowered by the Spirit. As Bosch observes, mission is "the total task which God has entrusted to the church for the salvation of the world,"³ emphasizing that mission is intrinsic to the church's very being. Mission flows from the church's identity as a sent community rather than being a mere activity, and God's mission "is not a matter of our devising; it is not primarily a human activity. Mission is, first of all, about God and His commitment to redeem His creation."⁴

Missio Dei, properly understood, is trinitarian, Christo-centric, and Spirit-empowered. Its ultimate aim is the salvation of humanity and the establishment of shalom, realized through proclamation, compassionate service, and holistic engagement with the brokenness of the world, always with the eschatological horizon in view. God the Father initiates mission, Christ accomplishes redemption, and the Spirit empowers the church to participate.

In some Minority World contexts, mission has at times been expressed primarily as an ecclesiocentric activity, which can inadvertently narrow its Trinitarian scope and underemphasize the Spirit's ongoing role.⁵ In certain cases, Christo-centrality has been less prominent, creating space for theological ambiguity, inclusivism, or relativistic interpretations. As Newbigin observes, Mission is often confused with social service or human development, and the church loses its proper witness to the gospel when it substitutes activism for faithful proclamation and discipleship.⁶ Furthermore, the broadening of Missio Dei to include social, political, and cultural engagement has contributed to blurring the distinction between mission and social engagement. Consequently, mission in the Minority World has sometimes been rede-

fined primarily by institutional initiatives, often minimizing prayer, worship, proactive evangelism, and Spirit-led discernment.

2. EVANGELISM

Evangelism is central to mission. It is euangelion, the "good news," at the heart of Christian mission, a distinct yet inseparable dimension of missio ("sending"). Flowing from the Missio Dei, the church's participation in God's mission finds one of its clearest expressions in evangelism, where the good news of Christ is proclaimed in word and embodied in faithful witness. Evangelism involves both credible witness and proclamation, inviting people into the transformative work of Christ.⁷ Its content is Christ himself, whose redemptive work gives identity, meaning, and purpose to the church. His messianic identity is inseparably intertwined with his missional identity.

The church is fundamentally and primarily a worshipping presence in the world, rooted in the life-giving reality of the gospel it proclaims. Without credible proclamation and witness, the church lacks a message and loses its *raison d'être*. Authentic evangelism balances verbal proclamation with acts of love, fostering holistic discipleship and the establishment of God's reign in individual and communal life.

It attends to justice, social brokenness, and the personal needs of the lost, reflecting God's love in word and deed. Such an approach guards against reductionism and keeps evangelism grounded in the gospel itself, ensuring both faithfulness to Scripture and relevance within diverse local contexts. It also prevents evangelism from being overshadowed by purely programmatic or institutional strategies, preserving its character as genuine, Spirit-empowered witness.⁸

3. THEOLOGY

Andrew Kirk has argued that the rediscovery of authentic Christian mission must begin with a

deliberate effort to re-engage theology from a missional perspective.⁹ As Bosch emphasizes, “Theology ceases to be theology if it loses its missionary character... It is a matter of life and death that theology remain in direct contact with mission and missionary enterprise.”¹⁰

Twenty-first-century mission therefore calls not only for renewal within the church but also for a reorientation of theological institutions, particularly in the Minority World. In some settings, cultural and intellectual currents, such as radical relativism, have shaped theological discourse in ways that weaken its distinctively Christian witness and its grounding in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Kenneth Carder describes this erosion as “originating in theological amnesia and missional anemia.”¹¹

A renewed theology of global mission requires appreciating God’s work in the Majority World, listening attentively to its voices, and reorienting scholarship and practice toward holistic missional engagement. This entails deep and faithful engagement with Scripture, dependence on the Spirit’s empowerment, and committed application in ecclesial life. While Christianity in the Majority World continues to grow at a remarkable pace, the need for theological depth and disciplined discipleship remains urgent. Together, these dynamics create a *kairos* moment for genuine global partnership, grounded in shared devotion to one Lord, one Body, and one Mission.

4. MISSIONAL ECCLESIOLOGY REINVIGORATED

The church’s mission is grounded in its participation in God’s redemptive work (*Missio Dei*). Mission is not synonymous with all church activity; initiatives detached from the church’s Trinitarian vocation risk becoming secularized or merely human-centered. *Missio Ecclesiae* underscores that the church does not exist for self-preservation but to embody and participate in God’s mission, living out Christ’s kingdom in word and deed. The calling of Israel to be

a light to the nations (Gen. 12:1–3) anticipates the church’s vocation to witness to God’s reign.¹²

Like Israel, the church is fundamentally a sent community. Its identity is shaped not primarily by “sending others” but by being sent into the world as Christ’s witness. *Missio Ecclesiae* affirms that the church exists for mission, not the other way around. This mission is holistic, encompassing proclamation, compassion, and justice, yet always centered on Christ and oriented toward the coming Kingdom. The church stands as a sign and foretaste of God’s reign within a broken world.

As Bosch notes, “in spite of [its] imperfections and failings, [it] occupies a unique position in the world and in the Kingdom. [It] is a foreign body in the world. [It] fits nowhere. The old and the new overlap in [it]. [It] is ‘too early for heaven and too late for the world.’”¹³

This perspective provides a timely framework for African and other Majority World churches as they embrace their calling as communities embodying God’s Kingdom here and now. It affirms Spirit-led discipleship, biblical fidelity, social engagement, and prophetic witness while offering pathways for renewed global partnerships. In doing so, it models humility and faithful witness for Minority World colleagues navigating secularization and cultural liberalism.

5. RE-ENVISIONING MISSION: FROM MINORITY WORLD INFLUENCE TO POLYCENTRIC ENGAGEMENT

Historically, global mission has been shaped predominantly by Minority World institutions. Missionary movements, theological frameworks, and ecclesial practices were largely Eurocentric, often treating Western norms as the standard for understanding Christian vocation.¹⁴ Mission was commonly framed as a unidirectional flow from the West to the “rest of the world,” reinforcing the perception that mission originates in the West rather than emerging from multiple, contextually authentic centers of faith.

Today, however, global mission is increasingly polycentric. Mission flows from and to diverse locations such as Lagos, São Paulo, Seoul, Manila, Nairobi, Accra, Addis Ababa, and Buenos Aires. Africa has become a major center of Christian vitality, demonstrated by the Ethiopian Meseret Kristos Church, the world's largest Mennonite church, and the Mekane Yesus Church, the world's largest Lutheran denomination. These developments underscore that African churches are not merely recipients of missionary activity but vital contributors to global theology, leadership, and missional imagination.¹⁵

A polycentric missiology recognizes that leadership, theology, worship, and missionary initiatives now emerge from numerous cultural contexts. Mission benefits from a global hermeneutic that grants credible and respected voice to African, Asian, and Latin American perspectives in shaping theological discourse and missionary practice. Mission does not originate from a single geographic or cultural center; rather, it flows in multiple directions through a globally dispersed body of believers.

This reality calls for a reorientation in global missional discourse:

1. Mission and theology are no longer unidirectional exports from the Minority World.
2. Majority World churches are active contributors, shaping global strategy, theological reflection, and evangelistic praxis.
3. Minority World institutions are invited to integrate the voices, leadership, and discernment of Majority World churches, acknowledging their essential contributions to faithful, Spirit-led global mission.

Such a perspective repositions the Majority World as both recipient and sender, offering a necessary corrective to Eurocentric dominance. It affirms the global church as a collaborative, multi-centered community participating together in the mission of the triune God.

CONCLUSION

The interplay of theology, mission, and evangelism remains central to authentic Christian witness in the twenty-first century. Grounded in Scripture, empowered by the Spirit, and centered on Christ, mission now flows from multiple centers of faith and practice. The Majority World, particularly Africa, offers a rich treasure of prayer, devotion, evangelism, and holistic engagement, from which Minority World partners can learn, be inspired, and engage meaningfully.

While Christianity in Africa and other Majority World contexts continues to grow, the need for theological depth, disciplined discipleship, and careful contextual engagement remains pressing, guarding against syncretism, false teaching, and superficial practices. Ultimately, partnerships between Majority and Minority World churches and institutions present opportunities for mutual encouragement, dialogue, and global mission renewal. Both worlds bring gifts to share: historical scholarship and faithful labor from the Minority World, and vibrant Spirit-led faith, contextual insight, and growing communities from the Majority World. By embracing a polycentric, Trinitarian, Christo-centric, and Spirit-empowered vision, the global church can thrive together, bearing credible and faithful witness in a rapidly changing world.



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A Spark from Heaven

It all began one evening, when one of our staff members was chatting with fellow guests at her guesthouse. During the conversation, she shared about her literacy work among the Tsaara community, as well as her deep concern over the lack of medical support in the area. She spoke with sorrow about the many women and newborns who had lost their lives due to the inaccessibility of medical ambulances in this remote region of southwest Ethiopia.

Quite unexpectedly, one of the guests responded that a relative of hers was a medical doctor and a member of an association that regularly conducts outreach missions. These missions serve prisons, refugee camps, and remote communities by providing free medical services. Within minutes, she picked up her phone, called him, and handed it over so our staff member could speak directly with the coordinator.

Just months later, a first meeting was held in Jimma, a university town approximately 300 kilometers from Addis Ababa, where the association is based. One member of the Tsaara community also traveled to Jimma to brief the doctors on the situation in Oshka, the main village of the Tsaara people. The coordinator and two of his colleagues listened attentively, carefully noting the living conditions and medical challenges. At the end of the meeting, they

agreed to explore the possibility of a medical outreach, but first decided to send a small team to Oshka to conduct a survey and assess the feasibility of such an effort.

A FIRST SURVEY TRIP

The team traveled to Oshka for this initial survey. They closely examined the area and its infrastructure, spoke with local residents, and assessed accessibility and available facilities. After three days, they returned and reported their findings to the rest of the team.

They had never undertaken a medical campaign under such conditions—without electricity and without any existing health station or equipment. After much discussion, the team designed a funding proposal. A significant portion of the costs was covered personally by team members,



with additional support coming from friends, churches, and individual donors in Germany.

AN ADVENTUROUS NEW MISSION

Following an intense period of preparation and challenges, the team stepped forward in faith as they embarked on this new adventure. A group of medical and support professionals set out from Jimma toward Oshka. They traveled in a bus and a Land Rover loaded with luggage, sleeping mattresses, food supplies for five days, medical equipment, building materials, tools, and school books.

After half a day of travel—approximately 250 kilometers, much of it on rough and partially unpaved roads—they reached Koysha, the last small town before the Tsaara area. There, they met with representatives of the local health authority to receive approval for their mission. Due to heavy rains, the road to Oshka had become muddy and impassable for the bus, which had to be left behind. An additional Land Rover was arranged, transporting the team members to Oshka first and then returning to Koysha to collect the remaining supplies.

Upon arrival, the team immediately began setting up facilities: an emergency room in the church, consultation and treatment rooms in the local elementary school, and a pharmacy. Public outreach services were announced, and a detailed schedule was prepared to ensure that the three days were used efficiently. Meanwhile, the construction team identified two suitable locations for public toilets and began excavation work, while another group renovated a makeshift infirmary—an empty mud hut.

On the first day, the medical team assessed the community's most pressing health concerns. Over the course of three days, general practitioners, a gynecologist, pediatricians, and a dentist treated 630 patients. They cared for wounds, treated malaria and measles, dewormed children, and performed dental procedures and extractions. Although a measles and malaria outbreak had affected the area for several months,

it was already subsiding, allowing the team to focus primarily on treating residual symptoms.

EDUCATION, AWARENESS, AND CARE

A central objective of the outreach was health education and awareness. Daily training sessions addressed hygiene, disease prevention, management of contagious conditions such as scabies, balanced nutrition—particularly for children—and the use of traditional herbal medicine.

In addition, the team offered daily encouragement. One team member also conducted training for several sessions to a group of leaders and the community. Children were not left out. One team member organized educational games, and school children received books as incentives to encourage learning. By the third day, two public toilets had been completed.



These three intensive days brought a wide range of practical interventions to the Tsaara community. The response was overwhelming joy and deep gratitude.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

A few days after returning, members of the WE-LEAD team met with several doctors in Jimma to reflect on the experience. The medical professionals were visibly moved. Compared to their previous campaigns, the conditions in Oshka had been significantly more challenging—no electricity to refrigerate medication, no running water, and poor road access. Yet,

perhaps because of these hardships, they developed a deep affection for the Tsaara people and expressed a desire to return twice each year. The team soon committed itself to working toward permanent medical care for the community.

Discussions with local health authorities and government representatives followed. Advocacy efforts focused on improving road access and constructing a permanent health clinic staffed with trained health workers. After months, a memorial stone was placed in Oshka, officially declaring the future construction of a health clinic. Months later, the foundations were laid—an encouraging sign that negotiations were bearing fruit.

A SECOND CAMPAIGN: CONFIRMING THE VISION

One year after the first outreach, the team returned for a second mission. During this campaign, medical staff treated 512 adult patients and 377 pediatric patients, performed 12 minor surgeries, and dispensed approximately 1,200 pharmacy items. Dentists treated 74 patients, extracting 45 teeth, while eye specialists examined 262 individuals and provided eyeglasses where needed.

In parallel, a team offered counseling. This approach continued to sow seeds of hope. Testimonies of lasting impact were shared by community members months later.

Charitable efforts included donating English textbooks to the school for grades 7 and 8 and recognizing high-achieving students from grades 1–8, with special encouragement given to seven outstanding female students. WE-LEAD also delivered copies of newly developed Tsaara mother-tongue storybooks and a first-ever Tsaara school dictionary containing 1,000 words. Two metal shelves were assembled to establish a future school library.

Additionally, another public toilet was completed and handed over to the community. The renovated health post received a full carton of

medicines and bars of soap to help address scabies infections.

WATER, SANITATION, AND A STORY OF HEALING

During the second campaign, the team conducted a detailed water, sanitation, and hygiene survey covering approximately 100 households. The findings were shared with WE-LEAD to guide future development initiatives, including clean water projects.

Among the many lives touched was Wudinesh, a 12-year-old girl who had lost her eyesight due to an untreated eye infection caused by poor sanitary conditions. Following the second campaign, she was taken to Jimma Hospital for surgery. After extensive examinations and searching, a suitable epithelial replacement was found—an outcome the doctors described as nearly impossible. The surgery was successful, restoring her ability to see up to five meters and walk independently.

Wudinesh remained under medical supervision for several months before returning home. Through this journey, the team reflected on how this project led them to serve hundreds within days—and then to care deeply for one child over many months—affirming the preciousness of every individual life.



GROWING FRUITS AND FUTURE HOPE

Encouraging news arrived: two government health workers had been permanently assigned to Oshka, with regular medical supplies provided by the state. This development now serves

not only Oshka, but also neighboring villages such as Alpha and Gorsha.

Looking ahead, WE-LEAD’s vision focuses on the construction of three protected spring water catchments, already identified by the community and medical team, with implementation pending secured funding.

Through these combined efforts, hope has taken root. The needs of the Tsaara people are now carried in the hearts of many professionals and government officials. We desire that these sparks of hope will continue to grow into a lasting flame—bringing healing, peace, and sustainable transformation to even the most remote Tsaara communities.



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Literacy Consultant and Linguist

WE-LEAD ETHIOPIA

WE-LEAD Ethiopia Literacy, Education, and Development Association (WE-LEAD) is a nationally recognized NGO that specializes in language development, multilingual community-based functional literacy (Education), WaSH program, food security, peace and reconciliation, and health



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ROOTED LOCALLY BUT REACHING GLOBALLY WITH SCRIPTURES FOR EVERY TONGUE

An African adage says the person who weeds his farm and does not care about the neighbors forgets that the animals that shelter in the neighbour's bush can wander where they please. This saying not only warns people who are only concerned about themselves, but it is also an invitation for collaboration within the community. Our well-being is interconnected, and in the Mission of God, we are invited to collaborate. Wright (2006:124) talks about this missional need when he lets us know that the God of Israel had a declared mission to make himself known to the nations through Israel. This missional impulse and the need for collaboration within the community are a compelling call for Wycliffe Ethiopia to turn its attention outward from within Ethiopia to the region on the dawn of the last languages being engaged with a translation in Ethiopia. This is akin to taking care of the neighbor's farm. If left unattended, even the work done in Ethiopia could be affected negatively.

According to ProgressBible¹ there is zero remaining need for Bible translation in Ethiopia. So far, the country has 19 Bibles, 23 New Testaments, 10 other languages with portions of Scriptures, and 12 languages with Bible stories. The remaining number of languages have ongoing work with Wycliffe Ethiopia and other

translation agencies in the country. But Wycliffe Ethiopia is not just concerned about weeding its own farms. It recognizes that the whole world needs to “be filled with the knowledge and glory of God as the waters cover the sea” (Habakkuk 2:14). It takes different organizations involved in missions to position themselves for the mission of God to be accomplished in the whole world. Boch (1991) notes that missions have shifted from the traditional view of “from the West to the Rest” of the world and observes that missions now can go in every direction. “Global Bible translation movement is to enhance the partnership between the global church and the Bible agencies. Such a partnership could leverage the available strengths of both groups in God’s kingdom” (Jones 2015:43). Wycliffe Ethiopia, a national organization, rooted locally, desires to see the whole sub-region of East Africa transformed through God’s love and Word expressed in the intimate languages of the people. The Lord Jesus Christ calls on His disciples to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20). This bold step of stepping out into the regions for the last language initiatives fits well with the Bible translation movement at the close of Vision 2025 (which aimed to see a Bible translation project begin for every language needing one).

“Bible translation is the process of the indwelling of God’s word into a language so that its speakers can participate and live in the fellowship and harmony of the community of believers.² This indwelling comes through the many ways that God reveals Himself, including His Word primarily but also through the life and witness of believers, especially those immediately in relationship with a language community.” No country, no language group, and no community should be left alone. When one group lacks access to Scripture, the mission remains incomplete for everyone.

ProgressBible reports that Translation is ongoing in 786 projects across Africa, with over 122 languages still classified as “Remaining Needs”. Remaining needs are “Languages that are vital enough for communities to sustain and benefit from translation work, which do not have Work in Progress and do not have any Scripture.” This represents a population of over 4 million. Jesus taught in the parable of the Lost Sheep (Matthew 18, Luke 15) about a shepherd who leaves 99 sheep to search for one that is lost. When he finds it, he rejoices more over its return than the 99-safe sheep. The parable emphasizes that every individual is precious and sought after by God in every language community. Wycliffe Ethiopia and other organizations in the Bible translation movement in Ethiopia have taken

care of the 99 languages or so of Ethiopia to the extent that it has zero needs. It is time to go out in search of that one language where there are still people who have not heard or struggle to hear God because God is being mediated to them through another language. This is not necessarily about a translation of a text in any format in a given language; it is more about the text helping people to be transformed by the renewing of their minds as they engage with it.



Dr. Paul Kimbi
Consultant for BT Programs WGA
Translation Coordinator for
Wycliffe Africa Area



Raising Local Voices:

The Strategic Role of Locally Trained Advisors for Effective Bible Translation

Investing in locally trained Bible translation advisors yields measurable, long-term impact. Advisor training empowers national leaders, strengthens translation quality, accelerates Scripture access, and reduces long-term dependence on expatriate consultants. Each trained advisor multiplies impact across multiple translation projects, ensuring faithful and natural Scripture translations for generations to come.

The past century has witnessed a great expansion of Bible translation work in terms of reach and complexity. With improvements in linguistics and translation models and partnerships, thousands of unreached languages have been reached with the word of God. Conversely, with the increase in Bible translation projects in many regions with a shortage of competent consultants, issues surrounding quality assurance have been witnessed.


Traditionally, the translation of the Bible involved the use of foreign missionaries with expertise in translation, linguistics, and theological review in the capacity of translators, linguists, and theological reviewers in the singular capacity of the translator. With the development in the theory of translation, particularly with the development in functional and meaning-centered models, the profession of the translation consultant became recognized in ensuring the matters of fidelity and efficiency in the translation of the Bible. Although this has been beneficial for the movement, the fast growth of the translation in Africa has made the present structure inefficient.

THE ADVISOR'S ROLE IN A GROWING TRANSLATION MOVEMENT

An ever more important course of action in addressing such difficulties is to purposefully cultivate local experts trained in Bible translation consulting. Bible translation consultants are experts in walking with a translation team throughout a translation project. These consultants then continuously guide a team between consultant visits, assist in team mentoring, and

work to overcome exegesis, linguistics, discourse, or style problems before sending a manuscript to a consultant for a consulting visit.

The use of advisors fills a very important void in the translation process. With the demand for consultants far outdistancing the number available, delays are getting longer than ever before for the translation teams before a consultant check. The role of the advisor will help eliminate such delays by covering up any weak areas in draft translations while maximizing the use of consultant time. The advisor will instead complement the role of consultants.



Congratulations
to Mengistu Dilbo
on achieving your
Master of Arts in
Scripture Translation
at CanIL

**From government school
teacher to Bible Translation**

Teaching for years and faithfully serving in the local church, he met people from Wycliffe, who invited him to join the Mursi Bible translation team. In the process his passion for God's Word grew deeply, and he dreamed of studying further. With Wycliffe's support, he pursued.

Today, he serves as New Testament advisor and dreams of becoming a consultant to train others. He gives all glory to God.

Wycliffe Ethiopia Wycliffe Ethiopia Wycliffe Ethiopia Wycliffe Ethiopia

LOCALLY INITIATED ADVISORS AND CONTEXTUAL STRENGTH

Locally initiated advisors have their own qualities that are very important in a multilingual and multicultural environment. Their knowledge of languages, cultures, and discourse patterns allows them to recognize the implicit meaning in statements that may be missed in other approaches. Also, their connections in the local churches make them more accepted when translated versions of scriptures are presented. In terms of sustainability, local translators are an intelligent and informed investment. They are better positioned to stick around in their communities, developing a robust national translation movement, not some isolated project within a region. This, in turn, develops institutional knowledge, local leaders, and independence from expat staff.

ADVISOR TRAINING AS CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

In other words, advisor training programs are necessary to ensure that advisors enter their responsibilities with well-equipped knowledge. Structured training initiatives build foundational competencies in biblical studies, translation theory, linguistics, and mentoring skills. These programs improve immediate translation quality and function as an intentional pathway toward consultant development.

This investment in experienced translators with demonstrated aptitude through advisor training programs helps alleviate the global shortage of consultants sustainably. This is also in keeping with greater capacity development goals within the Bible translation movement, which emphasizes local leadership and contextual expertise leading to long-term impact.

FROM A LOCAL TRANSLATOR TO A GLOBAL CONSULTANT PATHWAY

Mengistu Dilbo started his service as a translator in a local language project in Ethiopia. Having completed the Advisors Training Program through Wycliffe Ethiopia, he showed great competency in translation practice, men-

toring, and academic engagement. He then went on to complete a Master of Arts in Translation of Scripture at the Canada Institute of Linguistics and is currently being coached toward consultant accreditation. His story is a great example of how advisor training can be a strategic means of multiplying leaders while maintaining high standards of translation quality.

CONCLUSION

The future of biblical translation not only requires the initiation of new projects but also the nurturing of local knowledge that will sustain the process. Local advisers are a great contribution to the success of biblical translation. They improve the standard of biblical translation, assist consultants, and help foster a sustainable biblical translation movement based upon local churches. Local advisers are a result of intentional investment by biblical translation organizations in their development.

In terms of impact, investing in the training of Bible translation advisors brings long-term results. Advisor training impacts translation quality positively, eliminates delays associated with translation projects, and enables national leaders to reach several language-speaking communities with their services. Trained advisors multiply their impact on several translation projects and bring fast results concerning access to Scriptures without relying heavily on foreign advisors. This becomes an affordable way to promote Bible translation globally.



Simon Zekewos
Bible Translation Consultant
at Wycliffe Ethiopia





FROM TRADER TO TRANSLATOR

My path to the translation world started from a world of trading. I* was born in Sudan to a family of traders. From the age of ten, my life was in the marketplace; I worked in the milk trade. My future seemed set. But an educational program from the Sudanese government changed everything for children in remote villages like ours. They offered to pay for our schooling, and my family agreed. Because of that opportunity, my three brothers and I were all able to finish school.

My career began with secular translation. I worked as an English-Arabic translator for the media. After that, I became a teacher in Sudan and in Eritrea. That experience with secular translation is what opened the door for me to do this work, helping to bring God's Word to my own people. I currently serve as both a Coordinator and an Advisor for two project areas.

Today, we focused on two major initiatives in some of the most remote and scripture-poor regions. We are going to communities where formal education is limited, and the Word of God in the local language is almost entirely miss-

ing. For them, reading God's Word in their own mother tongue is an absolute necessity, for the truths of the Gospel can truly enter their hearts.

Local language Bible translation is of eternal importance. The conviction that drives everything we do is simple: "Without the Bible, a person cannot fully know the Lord." For the communities we serve, who do not come from a Christian background, the Bible is the primary and often the only path to understanding who Jesus is.

Many of these language groups are "untouched." Other organizations may have started work in the past, translating a single book or a few stories, but then the project would stop. This left people with a broken picture of God's story. Our mission is to finish the work. In these remote areas, Bible translation is not just an aid to evangelism; it is evangelism.

A mission like this always comes with great challenges. Our purpose is clear, but the daily realities require immense faith and perseverance. One of our biggest challenges starts with recruitment. We find translators who are willing

to do the work, not necessarily those who are the most educated. It requires a much greater investment from us in training and support to equip them for the complex task of translation.

I have a very close relationship with our translators, that goes beyond the translation work itself. We are like family. Due to this fact, whenever a personal crisis hits, they come to me for help even before they go to the organization. The budget provides their salaries, but it does not cover these emergencies. I cannot say no. If I have the means, I must help. This creates a significant financial and emotional challenge, born from the very relationships that makes our work so meaningful.

In a long-term project like Bible translation, we do not have to wait until the end to see God at work. Even now, I am witnessing countless changes that prove the Word of God is living and active. I have personally witnessed remarkable spiritual growth in our translators as they immerse themselves in the Scriptures daily; their knowledge deepens, faith strengthens, and lives visibly change, making them the first fruits of their own work. This includes translators from Muslim backgrounds who are privately acknowledging the truth of Jesus while navigating the fear of their community's response, and they have expressed to me their newfound understanding of where the truth lies. Although the Bible is not yet printed, we have successfully translated the script for the JESUS Film and are preparing the

film for community engagement. I believe that when these materials are used, they will create a significant impact as people hear the Gospel in their own language for the first time, paving the way for a great spiritual harvest.

This is an invitation for all to become an active partner in this mission through both prayer and practical help. We ask that you join us in praying for our translators, that their motivation goes beyond their need and is rooted in a deep faith that they are delivering a life-changing message to their own people. Pray for the hearts of the local communities, who largely adhere to Traditional religions, that they would be open and receptive to the scriptures and embrace God's Word for themselves.

Beyond our translation work, we face a critical humanitarian situation that weighs heavily on our hearts. Our most urgent need right now is to provide nutritional support for the malnourished children of Sudanese refugees in local camps. To raise funds from personal contacts, it worries us about starting something we cannot sustain. If the aid begins and then suddenly stops, it causes heartbreak. Thus, we seek sustainable, organizational support to address this pressing need. Consistent, reliable help is essential to care for these vulnerable children without risking the heartbreak that comes from unmet promises. This is more than a project; it is a demonstration of Christ's love to a community in desperate need.

*The name of the individual has not been mentioned to protect identity.





ZAY NEW TESTAMENT DEDICATION

REFLECTIONS FROM PARTNERS

THE CONCLUSION OF A LONG-AWAITED SPIRITUAL MILESTONE FOR THE COMMUNITY

To be present at the dedication ceremony for the Zay New Testament was to stand in the presence of a miracle. I describe the feeling that washed over me that day as joy, and it was overwhelmingly strong. This was not merely the conclusion of a project or a formal gathering; it was the conclusion of a long-awaited spiritual milestone for an entire community. The atmosphere was charged with a sense of divine fulfillment, a tangible feeling that we were witnessing something truly sacred unfold before our very eyes.

I had the privilege of hearing the pure Word of God preached with clarity and power, and on that single day, more than 200 souls came to the Lord. This was a miracle. Yet again, hearing the powerful testimonies shared by believers was the ultimate confirmation of God's work, a beautiful harvest of souls that revealed the deeper, transformative work and the gathering from different denominations to witness as all of us are part of a larger mission.

The power of mother-tongue scripture is central to Bible translation, as exemplified by the Zay community's reaction when receiving their translated Bible, which shows that for the Word of God to truly resonate, it must be in a person's heart language. Translating the scriptures into a community's mother tongue brings God from a distant concept into a personal reality, bridging the gap between an intimate relationship with Him.

Moreover, translation is crucial for discipleship, particularly for new believers, as hearing the Gospel in their own language strengthens their faith, builds them up, and lays a firm foundation for their spiritual lives. For the seeds of community transformation to become more grounded in the Word, they will certainly become more productive, compassionate, and exemplary members of a society.

Listening to the various testimonies of God's work, it solidified in my heart the conviction that God is actively and powerfully at work in our world today. In a long and difficult ministry like Bible translation, this dedication pro-

vided definitive confirmation that the immense amount of time, energy, knowledge, and financial resources poured into a project like this is not only worthwhile but is a divinely endorsed endeavor that yields tangible spiritual fruit.

As the head of the missions department at EKHC, I am deeply committed to our sacred mission. My primary concern is ensuring that the Word is actively engaged within the community. To achieve this, our mission must prioritize making the Bible accessible to every church and fostering a culture that encourages reading and studying the scriptures. We must approach this with the intention to maximize the impact of the message.



Dr. Keleme Kana,
Head of the Missions Department,
Ethiopian Kale Heywet Church

THE JOY WAS CONTAGIOUS

Some days are so deep that they imprint themselves on memory forever. The dedication ceremony for the Zay New Testament was one of those days for me. When I was invited to attend, I was simply happy for the opportunity, but I couldn't have anticipated the depth of what I would witness. Until I was invited, I knew little about the Zay community. For centuries, this community had felt ignored. The dedication of the New Testament was a powerful, definitive end to that long silence, a declaration that they were seen, known, and cherished by God Himself.

The moment the community finally held the New Testament in their hands, I saw an indescribable joy flood them, and it was contagious; I felt it create a great joy in me as well.

A powerful conviction struck me personally. I thought about the Bibles we have, the ones we have always had in our language, and how easily we can fail to appreciate them. "I realized how much we who have the scriptures in our own language take them for granted. To the Zay community, this was everything."

When people hear God's Word in the language of their heart, transformations happen. It moves from being a concept heard through the filter of translation to a living, personal reality. The spiritual barrier of interpretation is removed, and for the first time, they can hear God speaking directly to them. This shift transforms every aspect of their spiritual lives, both for individuals and for the community as a whole.



Witnessing their joy as they received the New Testament in their own language was a heart-touching experience that deeply reshaped my perspective on our mission. Seeing that many of Wycliffe's Ethiopia key leaders and translators are graduates of ETC filled me with immense pride and confirmed that our college is on the right path. Moving forward, I am personally committed to strengthening the Translation Department at ETC and strengthening our partnership with Wycliffe Ethiopia, as I now see more clearly that my role is to cultivate the "faithful servants" and academic resources necessary to ensure every linguistic group in Ethiopia can hear God's voice directly.



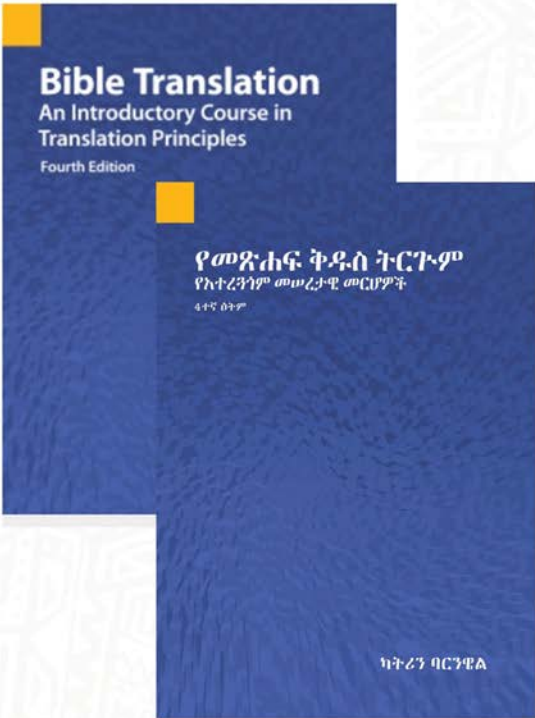
Frew Tamrat (Ph.D.)
Principal, Evangelical Theological College
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

NURTURING LITERACY

One of the significant milestones in preserving cultural heritage is the dedication of the Zay New Testament. More than just a ceremony, it was an act of safeguarding their culture. At its core, this project exemplifies the effective integration of a new orthography with strategic language development. By establishing an authoritative written text, it has created a lasting home for the Zay language, ensuring its use is not only spoken but also formalized for future generations. Hearing elders and youth confidently read the scriptures it demonstrates the success of the new orthography. This achievement offers the community a prestigious literary foundation, transforming years of linguistic work into a shared, lived experience. Ultimately, the Zay New Testament functions as both a spiritual cornerstone and a catalyst for preserving Zay’s cultural identity.



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Katharine Barnwell’s
*An Introductory Course in
Translation Principles*
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Ethiopian Gospel Believer Churches Council

THE IMPORTANCE OF DOCUMENTING THE HISTORY OF GOSPEL BELIEVERS

Documenting the history of Gospel believers goes beyond academic study; it is a vital spiritual duty and a legacy for future generations. The Gospel we share today has been preserved through the faith, sacrifice, unity, and perseverance of those who preceded us. Recording this history ensures their witness continues to educate, inspire, and guide subsequent generations in faith, character, and service.

The Ethiopian Council of Gospel Believers' Churches (ECGBC) is dedicated to protecting this heritage and making it accessible to the Church, scholars, and the global community. Developing the History of Gospel Believers is a strategic effort to reinforce identity, continuity, and influence across generations. It allows the Church to honor its origins, reflect on the sacrifices of ancestors, and establish a strong foundation for current and future ministry.

This project requires detailed research, comprehensive documentation, and careful publication—all demanding resources: human, material, and financial. A booklet has been created to clearly communicate the vision, goals, and importance of this initiative, inviting partners, institutions, and supporters to participate from the outset.

A notable example of collaboration is that of ECGBC with Wycliffe Ethiopia; it preserves and celebrates Ethiopia's rich Evangelical heritage. This partnership aims to document Ethiopian Gospel Believers' significant contributions to the nation's development, producing a comprehensive reference that not only chronicles his-

tory but also highlights the community's unique identity and importance. The project encourages others to join this noble effort, emphasizing unity and support to ensure that future generations recognize and learn from Ethiopia's remarkable spiritual stories. Through partnership, we can protect our shared legacy and empower the voices shaping our spiritual history.

We invite believers, institutions, and friends of the Gospel to help preserve this precious history. Our support—whether through spiritual encouragement, practical help, or financial aid—is an enduring investment in truth, memory, and the future of Gospel ministry. By participating, you become part of passing on a faithful witness, ensuring the story of Gospel believers continues to inspire generations.

Join us in this mission. Together, we can preserve and share the legacy of Gospel believers for future generations.



Dr Getinet Lema
Head of the Council Office

PRESERVING THE LEGACY: WYCLIFFE ETHIOPIA AND EVANGELICAL HERITAGE

This article explores the importance of preserving legacy, with a particular emphasis on the role of the Wycliffe Ethiopia Bible Translation Association (WEBTA) in documenting and publishing Evangelical heritage in Ethiopia. Translating the Bible made Christianity indigenous to Ethiopia and Africa. Wycliffe Ethiopia is a member of the Wycliffe Global Alliance and the Ethiopian Council of Gospel Believers' Churches. (ECGBC). The ECGBC was established by proclamation of the legislative body of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to provide legal personality for the Ethiopian Council of Gospel Believers' churches and their members. The commission given to WEBTA offers the opportunity to research, document, and publish the growth and expansion of Ethiopian Evangelicalism.

PRESERVING LEGACY

Preserving legacy is a vital process of stewardship that demonstrates recognition that there is no future without the past. Legacy comes from the Latin verb *legare*, which originally meant ambassador. In this article, legacy is used to indicate keeping historically significant achievements for future generations. This means documenting historical narratives, values, and experiences that define identities to promote social cohesion and continuity, in order to ensure that these are protected and availed for future generations. In Church and mission history, what is preserved is the story of how God works through people. Advancing to the future properly demands recognizing, preserving, and cherishing the past. It has been known that “The history of missionary expansion of God’s people—mission—simply cannot be told without reference to the translation of the Bible.”¹ Wycliffe Ethiopia could be looked upon as an embodiment of the Wycliffe legacy, ethos, and norms here in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa. Wycliffe is an organization named after John Wycliffe, who is responsible for the first complete English translation of the Bible. The Wycliffe heritage is built and shaped by making the Bible available to people in their own language.

The Wycliffe legacy is preserved globally by an alliance of more than one hundred organizations that comprise churches, networks, and mission organizations that are committed to Bible translation.

EVANGELICALISM IN ETHIOPIA

Global missions’ movement of the second half of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century led to the genesis of the Ethiopian evangelical community. This is a vibrant, diverse, and growing community, which at present comprises a fifth of the Ethiopian population. Ethiopian Evangelicals were less than two percent of the Ethiopian population in the 1960s. The remarkable growth over half a century is part of the expansion of world Christianity in the second-largest population in Africa. Despite its long history of Christianity, in the 20th century, Ethiopia had more Christian martyrs than any other African country.³

Patrick Johnstone observed that “Ethiopia is the first existing country to be mentioned in the Bible. ... Of all the counties that were subjected to Communism, it was Ethiopia’s Church that came out of persecution best revived and eager to send out missionaries.”⁴ And yet, in the Ethiopian national, cultural, political, and social milieu of the twentieth century, evangelicalism has been looked upon as “...outlandish and never understood for what it stands...anti-cultural, anti-nationalistic, and atypical.”⁵ Contemporaneously, Ethiopian Evangelicalism has become a visible and influential religious and social phenomenon in the Ethiopian public space.

LEADERSHIP IN MISSION

Reflecting on the core of missional leadership, it is timely to call for greater theological and

missional exploration of the Christian leader's posture and response to the contemporary world mindset. This meant missional leadership requires understanding that "Living in a (meta-narrative) that focuses on warfare, competition, or building an empire may do more to hinder rather than facilitate. However, living within a journey with God, the Christian leader is better able to respond to God's mission in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous ... world" 6 In projecting the mission in the twenty first century, Kirsteen Kim expounds that, "Christian mission is a form of spirituality and deep discipleship which exercises the alternative form of power which Jesus Christ demonstrated." 7 Ecumenical gatherings of the second decade of the twenty-first century have shown renewal of missional discourses, and "... put the Bible back at the center stage of mission- as the story of God's mission, not only in the past, but as it now unfolds and will unfold in creation and for our salvation. It not only invites us to join, but it accompanies and empowers us."8

Furthermore, in the daily interactions of individual and communal deliberations of ministry, business, or professional engagement, "... the live interaction with the Bible in churches and communities around the world has caused us to recognize and emphasize that mission is God's. (This is in recognition that), The Bible is the common heritage of the church and unites Christians to participate in God's mission with an ecumenical heart and mind."9

This meant "The Bible in its entirety is the story of the people of God and the fuller story of God's mission. As Christ opens the doors to God's kingdom, so the Gospel leads us into the house and the world of Scripture invites us to participate in God's mission."10

Richard Bauckham, in his indication of features of biblical metanarrative, states, "The Biblical metanarrative offers a framework for meaningful living in both the individual and the social dimensions."11 Bauckham, in concluding his review of Bible and Mission in the contempo-

rary context, suggests that "the Bible – its metanarrative, its understanding of freedom and its critique of idolatry- can resource a critical assessment" of some key features of contemporary Western society.¹²

THE COMMISSION OF WYCLIFFE ETHIOPIA

The Ethiopian Council of Gospel Believers' churches (ECGBC), through its representative organ, the Board of ECGBC, resolved to pro-



duce a common history of its constituency. To implement this decision, the ECGBC commissioned Wycliffe Ethiopia to host, organize, and implement the project of common History doc-

umentation and publication of Ethiopian Gospel Believers. It is envisioned that this partnership will develop towards establishing an institution that provides documentation services to the constituency. This commission was codified in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the legal representatives of the two bodies on August 13, 2025. The MOU stipulates the mandate of Wycliffe Ethiopia as managing this project, to ensure the delivery of the expected output. This means Wycliffe Ethiopia



is mandated to preserve the Evangelical heritage here in Ethiopia. The first preservation act is a production of a reference book, which will be documented in five volumes. This is going to

be a researched, evidence-based chronological recount of Ethiopian Evangelicalism, which will serve as the official history of Ethiopian Evangelicals. The first volume is a general introduction to Ethiopian Evangelicalism, which is intended to answer two main questions.

The questions are, first, who are Ethiopian Evangelicals, and second, what is their contribution to Ethiopian national development. The General introduction embarks with presenting and defining Ethiopian Gospel believers (Evangelicals) as a unit with descriptions of their national presence. The contributions of the constituency to national development will be presented through a thematic approach. This will primarily depend on the available research so far in the various thematic areas. In order to cater to the diverse nature of the constituency, production will be done by a team. This requires working together and respect for different views, to serve an informed and intelligent constituency and others. This is vital because the constituency and others want to know what happened in the past. This means the facts should be researched and constructed, and synthesized chronologically, logically, and maintaining unity in diversity.

The focus is the common history of the constituency, as the writers survey the space and time. In the Ethiopian socio-political space, despite the challenges, there was a remarkable growth of the constituency. The study of the historical process of growth of the constituency leads to a better understanding of the progressive nature of God's purpose. This apparently culminates in the incarnation, the revelation of Christ that changed human history and called millions of Ethiopians to join the eternal kingdom. Herodotus, who is given credit as the 'father of history', declared his purpose as embracing the study, "of fact, of value, and of causation", and that allows for the discussion of "questions such as shape, size, and limits of the ... unique or unusual physical phenomena." In essence, the various volumes of the history of Ethiopian Gospel Believers will recount the facts, values, and causations in the constituency. This is done



through taking it as a unit and a phenomenon¹³ that is subjected to a detailed description of its genesis, journey, progress, and contemporary state of affairs.

The last sentence in the description of the mission of Wycliffe Ethiopia explains, “We encourage collaboration with other organizations that align with our goals to create an environment for effective service within language communities.”¹⁴ Preserving the Evangelical heritage aligns with this part of the mission through the creation of an environment that recognizes the past to properly advance to the future.

CONCLUSION

Bible translation has helped to preserve cultures in Ethiopia, and this has made Christianity indigenous. The history of Evangelical Christianity cannot be told without reference to Bible translation. Preserving Evangelical heritage aligns with the mission of WEBTA, as it helps collaboration with other organizations, which align with the goal of creating an environment for effective service with the language communities. Hence, it is appropriate stewardship and an opportunity for the incumbent leaders of WEBTA and ECGBC to preserve the history of Ethiopian Gospel Believers for future generations.



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ZAY NEW TESTAMENT DEDICATION



Endnotes

Reimagining Bible Translation Theologically

¹This article focuses on the Evangelical Churches of Ethiopia, and its claims and findings are based on the author's Doctor of Ministry thesis research, "Integrating the Theology of Bible Translation into the Church Mission and Theological Education: A Framework for Effective and Sustainable Bible Translation and Scripture Engagement.", unpublished 2026.

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¹አባ ናጢ. *ዕረባዊ አጠራር ነው፡ ትክክለኛ ስማቸው አባ አብርሃም ነው።*

²Sebastian Brock, *The Bible in Syriac Tradition*, 7.

³Brock, *The Bible in Syriac Tradition*, 7.

⁴Ullendorff, Ethiopia and the Bible, 33-34.

⁵Ullendorff, Ethiopia and the Bible, 63.

⁶ጀምስ ብሩስ እስኩትላንዳዊ አላሽ ሲኾን *Travel to Discover the Source of Nile የግሊ መጽሐፍ ጽፏል።*

⁷Kleiner, "Abu Rumi" in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopia*, 54.

⁸Ullendorff, Ethiopia and the Bible, 66.

⁹Aren, *Evangelical Pioneers*, 42.

¹⁰Aren, *Evangelical Pioneers*, 200.

¹¹Aren, *Evangelical Pioneers*, 43.

¹²Aren, *Evangelical Pioneers*, 43.

¹³Aren, *Evangelical Pioneers*, 43.

¹⁴Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations: The Origin and Development of the Bible*, 305.

¹⁵Wegner, *The Journey from Texts to Translations*, 305.

¹⁶Sundkler and Steed, *A History of the Church in Africa*, 156.

¹⁷Aren, *Evangelical Pioneers*, 43.

¹⁸Lecture given on the topic of Ge'ez Bible Translation, May 2009.

¹⁹Aren, *Evangelical Pioneers*, 43.

²⁰Rubenson, "The Missionary Factors in Ethiopia: Consequence of a Colonial Context" in *The Missionary Factor in Ethiopia*, 60.

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²²Ullendorff, Ethiopia and the Bible, 55.

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²⁴Crummey, *Priests and Politicians*, 12.

²⁵https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Dictionary_of_National_Biography_1885-1900/Platt,_Thomas_Pell

²⁶Tibebe Eshete, *Evangelical Movement in Ethiopia*, 43.

²⁷Ullendorff, Ethiopia and the Bible, 66.

²⁸The name "Bible readers" was given to the group of Ethiopian Orthodox priests and followers who most

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³⁰Fargher, *The Origins of the New Churches Movement in Southern Ethiopia, 1927-1944*, 291.

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³²Ullendorff, Ethiopia and the Bible, 67.

From the Margins to the Center

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⁴Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), 62–63.

⁵Wright, *The Mission of God*, 20–22.

⁶Lesslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 100.

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⁸John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 30–31.

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¹⁰Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 494.

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¹⁴Guder, ed., *Missional Church*, 4–5.

¹⁵Christopher J. H. Wright, "Polycentric Mission," in *The Lausanne Global Analysis* (2010). Wright notes that global mission today "has no single geographic center but multiple centers of vitality, leadership, and theological reflection," making the church "irreducibly polycentric" in its participation in God's mission.

Rooted Locally but Globally Reaching

¹ProgressBible Dashboard Report, December 2025

<https://www.progress.bible>

²Wycliffe Global Alliance: The Bible Translation

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³ProgressBible Dashboard

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