ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

(GRADUATE PROGRAMME)

THEMATIC SIGNIFICANCE OF BIBLICAL ALLUSION IN CONTEMPORARY AMHARIC SONGS

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THEMATIC SIGNIFICANCE OF BIBLICAL ALLUSION IN CONTEMPORARY AMHARIC SONGS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF THE MASTER OF ARTS IN LITERATURE

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Abstract

Biblical allusion has varied literary significances in poetry, particularly in songs. For example, it serves as thematic strengthening. Many of the world famous artists use Biblical allusion in their lyrics as a means of theme development. As a result, they are successful in transferring their message to song listeners understandably. This trend of alluding to the Holy Bible is also becoming a common trend in most contemporary Amharic songs. Because using Biblical allusions makes theme in songs stronger. Moreover, bringing Biblical allusion into songs enables listeners to comprehend the subject matter, the lyrist want to transfer.

In this paper, analysis is made on selected Amharic songs by describing how Biblical allusion served to amplify theme of songs through stimulating ideas, associations, and extra information. The main intention of the study is listeners as well as scholars in the fields would have clear understanding about the relevance of the Holy Bible in Amharic songs. To do that, the study attempts to demonstrate the effect of Biblical allusion in Amharic songs and its contribution in the thematic context of Ethiopian culture, social, economic and political system.

A typical method like purposive sampling is used to analyze about twenty five songs that are more readily accessible and appears to be representative of all contemporary Amharic songs.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Songs are sub genres of poetry that employ Biblical allusion. Several of the world renowned songs indirectly recall figures from the Old and New Testament. Some are easily recognizable; others are more subtle in their construction. For Example; the Jamaican Reggae music singer Bob Marley, the American rock fame Bob Dylan and the Irish music band U2's are instances of artists who use Biblical allusion in their lyrics as a means of theme development (Kuelker 1999).

The trend of alluding to the Holy Bible is also becoming a common tendency in most Amharic songs; among the known artists for instance Tewodros Kassahun, Tibebu Workieye, Aster Awoke, Shewandagne Hailu, Abeba Desalegn and other lyrists can be taken as instances of artists who exhibiting the use of Biblical allusion in their songs. This paper therofore tries to analyze the thematic significance of Biblical allusion in the works of these Ethiopian singers and lyrists.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although Amharic songs abound in Biblical allusion, there has been no attempt to explore the pattern and significance of Biblical allusion. There has been no theoretical and practical discussion on the topic. In addition, listeners of the songs are not aware of the issue intended to be transfer unless and otherwise well defined significance of Biblical allusion in the Amharic songs presented to them.

By observing these problems, this paper aimed at analyzing the thematic significance of the Bible in contemporary Amharic songs to make a clear understanding about the topic.

1.3 Objectives of the Research

The main objective of the research is to examine the thematic significance of Biblical allusion in some contemporary Amharic songs. It examines how Biblical allusion is woven into Amharic songs. In addition the research tries to:

- Look at the effect and contribution of Biblical allusion in the thematic context of Ethiopian culture, social, economic and political system through contemporary Amharic songs.
- Investigates the influence of the Bible in the style of Ethiopian lyrists.

Generally, the study tries to show how Biblical reference is crucial as a tool for thematic significance in contemporary Amharic songs.

1.4 Research Methodology

This paper uses analysis and description as basic methods through collection, selection.

The basic data of this study are songs collected through purposive sampling methods, songs that are more readily accessible and appear to be representative of all Amharic songs, which exhibit Biblical allusion. These songs are those contemporary songs specifically found within the past ten years (from the year 1997-2007).

Prior to analysis, collection of data and translation task has been done. The translation has been from Amharic to English language so that the task of finding parallel Biblical stories will be the subsequent task.

Attempts of translation have been made to pass the meaning of the poem into the English language by respecting and honoring its spirit.

The study clarifies its goal in the analysis part by taking those selected Amharic songs. And at the end of the study, attempts have been made to forward conclusion and recommendations carrying weight on the significance of Biblical allusion to thematic strengthening of Amharic songs.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

The study chiefly focuses on the thematic significance of Biblical allusion in selected Amharic songs. It attempts to present important features of Biblical allusion by addressing simple issues in relation to contemporary Amharic songs as brought forth in the statement of the problem. It addresses areas like theoretical background of allusion in general, types of allusion and Biblical allusion in particular and its influence in the genres of literature. It does not incorporate other topics similar to Biblical allusion in detail like historical, mythological and literary allusion in detail. But it tries to illustrate their correlation with Biblical allusion in the review of related literature section.

This paper does not consider all the Amharic songs which exhibit Biblical allusion because of two reasons. The first constraint is shortage of time. Due to the duration of research, it could not gather classic Amharic songs composed a decade ago and beyond. The second constraint is lack of financial budgeting. The budget gained for the research is limited. As a result, in some parts of the analysis, only few or one song are taken as a reference, from deliberately selected artists only of songs which exhibit Biblical allusion.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Though this paper is just an attempt at the first glace with the expectation that it paves a road for further research on the same topic, it has the following significances. It can give a good perception on the relevance of Biblical allusion in the contemporary Amharic songs through describing ideas like the thematic implications of Biblical allusion in Amharic songs.

Moreover it solves the problem that most Amharic song listeners raise concerning the significance of Biblical allusion. Especially for those song listeners who lack understanding or complete perception about the use of Biblical allusion in songs.

The research can also create awareness in referring to the Bible. In other words it serves as a grounding factor to Amharic song lyrists, who are not conscious of the significance of Biblical allusion.

Generally, the research possibly serves as a reference material to other studies which focus on similar topics. And it serves as a resource material in the library database and thus scholars will understand what makes contemporary songs more interesting in terms of thematic strengthening.

Chapter Two

A Review of Related Literature

This section of the paper discusses the concept of allusion comprehensively. It begins with the definition, and tries to present its classification from the view of different scholars in the field. And at the end, more emphasis is given to the major topic of discussion Biblical allusion in the different genres of literature by taking examples. From all the genres of literature again Biblical allusion is reviewed in particular reference to the works of some renowned artists who used the Bible as implicit reference in their works. In general, this section provides as a stepping stone to the third chapter.

2.1 The Concept of Allusion

The word *allusion* comes from the Latin word *alludere*, meaning: *to jest, mock, play with.* (Irwin 2002:287).

Allusion is related to the literary concept intertextuality (the relationship that exists between different texts). It differs from the similar broad abstract idea intertextuality in that it is done on purpose on the author's part (Orr 2003). The former, however, may well come to pass in the absence of the writer's conscious (Beer 2005).

Thus, what is allusion in its own? According to William Irwin (2001) in the article What is an Allusion? It is defined as "a reference to someone or something from literature, history, religion, mythology, politics, sports, or another field or branch of culture" (Irwin 2002:288). Accordingly allusion is the real act of citing undetermined areas of references *(Refer to section 2.4, Types of Allusion).*

In the Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory allusion is defined as: "A figurative or symbolical reference" (Cuddon, 1998:8). And in the same mentioning, it is defined as "a reference to something

supposed to be known, but not explicitly mentioned; a covert indication; indirect reference; a hint" (Ibid). These two definitions are stating the mark of allusion is not obvious or straightforward in its approach rather present in a literary work having a no literal sense of a word or words. It is rather the responsibility of the reader /hearer/ to understand the intended meaning.

The Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English defines allusions as, "an expression designed to call something to mind with out mentioning it explicitly; an indirect or passing reference" (Soanes, 2005:14). Similarly A Handbook to Literature asserts this notion defining it as "a figure of speech making casual reference to a famous historical or literary figure or event" (Holman). The Glossary of Literary Terms also defines allusion as "a brief reference, explicit, or indirect to a person, place or another literary work or passages" (Edgar and Jacob 2001:11). Therefore allusion is as an informal reference to a figure or event in history or literature designed to create a mental image in the mind of the reader.

There are many other definitions stated by different books concerning the notion of allusion. All the above definitions give generalized thought of allusion to grasp the full meaning of allusions. They are applicable to the framework of this paper. From those definitions, therefore, four important collective facts of allusions can be identified.

The first fact is that allusion creates an image of thought by the memory or imagination of the readers. When readers come up with an idea (image) which they knew before in a certain literary work, they understand the referred thought without difficulty through association of meaning.

The second fact is that a writer uses both the implicit as well as an overtly expressed reference depending on the choice and the significance of the alluded idea. This is to mean that writers do not necessarily present allusion plainly to readers; but they also utilize allusion to a

certain extent implicitly in their writing. Thus it is the responsibility of the readers to find out the meaning meticulously.

The third feature of allusion is its brevity, the economical use of words. To cite an allusive concept, not necessarily the writer adds detailed explanation rather she/he may makes reference to few words that can say implicitly more. Abrams agrees on this hypothesis by saying, "an allusion is an economical device that draws upon the ready stock of ideas or emotion" (Abrams 1981:10).

The fourth attribute of allusion is its viability of including other optional and possible reference to a literary text, a well-known person, place, event, literary work, myth, Bible, history or work of art and so on. It includes every possible implicit reference to the literary work from other undetermined options of references.

Generally, according to the definitions from the various scholastic writings and texts, the following definition is taken as representative or working definition in the context of this paper: ***An allusion is a reference from a literary work; fiction, film, drama, songs, historical events, myth, the Holy Bible and so on to another piece literacy work serving as meaning development to the situation being written about.*** By utilizing it subtly, writers can underscore and strengthen certain fundamental ideas that they want to convey.

2.2 Types of Allusion

Though it is difficult to categorize allusion into specific parts, the following are the common types of allusions that are used in literature. These are literary, mythological, historical and Biblical allusions.

2.2.1 Literary Allusion

Writers may incorporate great writings from other professionals engaged in the field of literature. This professionally acclaimed works may serve

as a reference in other equivalent or other genres of literature in some way or simply and ordinarily. This deliberate presentation of reference of a literary text into another literary work is called literary allusion. It is specifically mentioning or calling attention of a literary work into other literary work to bring the work to the mind of a reader.

Literary allusion shows literary knowledge or cleverness (Irwin 2002). It adds literary depth to a word or phrase, and suggests an association with literary excellence, shows topicality by reference to recent events, sharpens a generality of experience (Pasco 2002).

World celebrated songs take a literary allusion from a novel, poem or other piece of literature. For Example, Sting's album title, 'Nothing like the Sun', was taken from a Shakespeare sonnet (#130) and one of the songs on it contains the line, "my mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun." (Harris 2005). The New Jersey-based band also alludes to the love-struck couple from Shakespeare's tragedy, and specifically to the tragic fate of the young Montague, in the following line: "Juliet loves the beat and the lust it commands / Drop the dagger and lather the blood on your hands, Romeo" (Ibid).

In the Amharic contemporary songs also there are so many literary alluded ideas. For example; in the song ኢቫንጋዲ (Evangadi), ሞናሊዛዬ (monalizaye), ፍቅር ሰፈርድ ,(Fiker siferde) and so on can be taken as instance of literary alluded songs. Artist Gosaye Tesfaye in one of his songs "ዴዝዴሞና" alludes to one of the character's names Desdemona from William Shakespeare's play Othello, tragedy on the theme of jealousy.

Most Lyrists use literary allusion commonly for the following reason: *for the effectiveness of their work in terms of audibility and enhancement of theme.*

2.2.2 Mythological Allusion

Mythological allusion is an indirect or direct reference relating to a traditional story about heroes or supernatural beings, often attempting to explain the origins of natural phenomena or aspects of human behavior. It is an act of alluding to a mythical narrative story that through many retellings has become an accepted tradition in a society (Lansford, 2007).

Mythological allusion is the repeating account or story that has been told before about the set of diverse traditional tales by the ancient Greeks. It includes to the exploits of gods and heroes and their relations with ordinary peoples, and so on (Ibid).

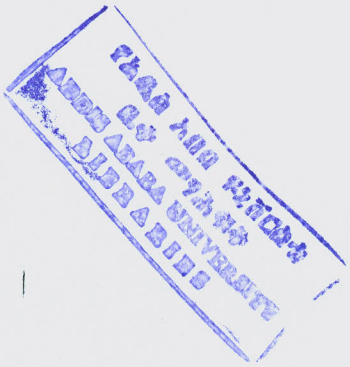
A great part of mythological allusion can also be found in Shakespeare's tragedy, especially to underline important theme in Hamlet, a myth that connects Hamlet with the point of vengeance is a good instance. Mythology is also used to describe and characterize the dramatic personae in the play. For example: by inserting Mythological allusion in a character's speech, the author makes the dramatic personae describe a certain quality of one of his characters (Van 2005:10).

2.2.3 Historical Allusion

A historical allusion is the mention of a historical fact that brings up (or alludes to) something in history to set up a scenario that's nearly the same as the historical event or time. It is an act of making an indirect reference to past happenings in a previous time about famous people, nation's deeds, natural occurrences and other precedent phenomena to a literary work.

There is a trend of making historical allusion in world celebrated songs which convey information about the era. The following song lyric is also a

good instance of historical allusion. The allusions are making to the historical figures and what they have done in historical times.



Born Too Late" by the Clarks

Born Too Late" by the Clarks

Martin Luther King show me the way

Jesus Buddha teach me how to pray

Christopher I think I see the bay

I was born today

(Monier February 27, 2008)

In most Amharic songs, there is a number of historical allusions. The following are the common instances of historical allusion in Amharic songs: አድዋ (Adewa) ዘርሃይ ደረስ (Zerhay Derese)፤አጼ ቴዎድሮስ (Atse Tewdros) እምዬ ሚኒሊክ (Emeye Minilik) አክሱም (Aksum) ላሊበላ (Lalibela) and so on. The referring of historical incidents in these songs helps readers/listeners to grasp the message of the song. It brings up something in history. It could even state or set up a situation that is really similar to the historical event (Berhanu 1999 E.C:39).

2.2.4 Biblical Allusion

Biblical allusion is a direct or indirect reference to a Biblical story presented in literary works. It is mostly common to find occurrences of Biblical allusions in literature and other discourses. To mention some examples; the book of Luke recounts the parable of the Good Samaritan, in which a man is attacked by thieves and left at the side of the road. A passing Samaritan binds his wounds, takes him to an inn, and cares for him. The Good Samaritan now refers to anyone who freely helps others in time of their need (Barker 2002).

Another Example; A kiss of Judah is an act of betrayal, or any action which causes another's downfall (Ibid). These are the few examples recurrently known as Biblical allusions.

In the next consecutive sections of the chapter, more focus will be on the paper's subject of discussion, Biblical allusion.

2.3 The significance of Biblical Allusion

Biblical allusion echoes in the different genres of literature for the maximum effect of efficient communication of ideas. In the electronic journal entitled: A Realistic Approach to Biblical Literature stated that "The Bible ranks as one of the richest source of allusion in literature along with Greek mythology " (Cupps 1969:23).

Biblical allusions echo in poetry, fiction, plays, songs and so on. These are just few instances; but there are also further genres of literature, which exhibit biblical allusion as a means of thematic strength. The following discussion describes how the Bible influences those genres of literature.

The first discussion is the influence of Bible on poetry. In the medieval period, religious concern had been crucial issues. Even great poets had been able to demonstrate referring the Holy Bible in their literary work. Rebecca Price, reminds the famous English poet of 17th century, John Dryden. In this regard, Dryden had been the leading literary figure of the period, by his recurrent usage of the Bible, Price in her Journal entitled: Some Rhetorical Aspects of Dryden's Biblical Allusion illustrates Dryden's customary action of alluding to the Holy Bible. Concerning him Rebecca Price comments that;

> More than most English Poets Dryden was influenced in the quality of his poetic performance by the requirements of the age he lived in and by his official position. His varying degrees of poetic success and the various rhetorical stratagems he resorted to influencing his not always easy

> roles as public entertainer, panegyrist, and apologist for church and state are reflected in his handling of Biblical allusion. (Price, 1969:341)

For example in his attempt to elevate the resorted monarch Dryden blend the star seen at noon on the day of Charles's birth in 1730 with the star of Bethlehem in the Holy Bible (Ibid);

That star that your birth shone out so bright

It stained the duller sun's meridian light

Did once again its potent Fires renew

Guiding our eyes to find and worship you.

This verse is almost similar to the Biblical verse "An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them" (Barker 2002:1570). In connection with this kind of verse, Price comments that "When the poem develops in such a way that stories, the secular as well as the sacred-achieve a mutual but flexible and lively relevance" (Price 1969:351).

Like poetry, authors of great novels have a tendency to include Biblical allusion for the enhanced effect of their message. The best example can be taken as reference to the American novelist and short-story writer, Earnest Hemingway. Both during his lifetime till his death, many of his works known by his usage of Biblical allusion. Concerning Hemingway Alton Cupps bears witness as, "A writer like Earnest Hemingway, who would surely qualify as unbeliever in religion was fond of allusions to Bible" (Cupps 1969).

The American writer John Steinbeck as well cautiously styled his story "The Grapes of Wrath" to encompass many themes and ideas of the Holy Bible. Steinbeck alludes to Biblical characters to the characters in the novel. For Example; the character Connie represents the traitor, the Judas figure who had betrayed Jesus at the night of his arrest. Inclusion of this sort of Biblical allusion had enabled the Grapes of Wrath to be

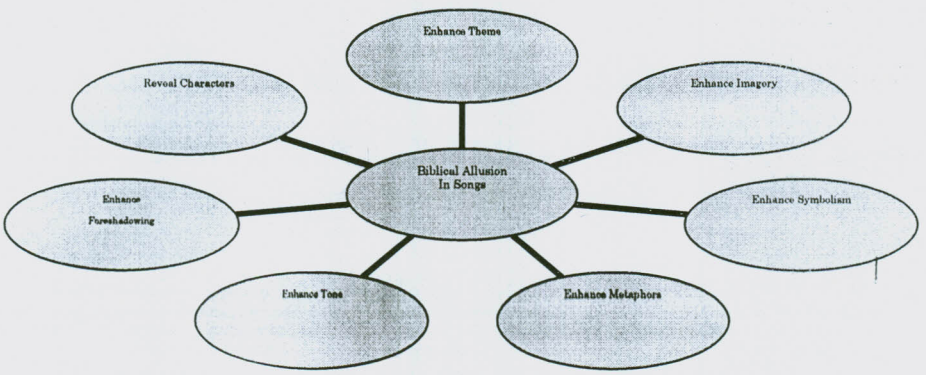
more powerful in terms style as well as thematic implication (Crocket, 1962:192).

The third subject of discussion is the influence of Biblical allusion in drama. Many critics have discussed the influence of Shakespeare in literature because of his usage of Biblical allusions which underlines important themes of tragedy such as revenge, murder and suicide. Biblical allusions in Shakespeare's' plays are employed to illuminate and form the main element of discussion to refer explicitly or implicitly to the future events in his story since the significance of Biblical allusion by itself is great for predictive purpose due to its prophetic character.

The fourth argument is the influence of the Bible on songs. When Biblical allusion is added to a song, it makes the song more interesting through amplifying theme. The following sub-section discusses the significance of Biblical allusion in songs giving particular weight.

2.4 Major significance of Biblical Allusion in Songs

The presence of Biblical allusion in songs enriches all its elements such as character, setting, conflict, theme, and so in other genres of literature (Vinton, 2007). The following diagram describes the significance of biblical allusion in the constituent of songs.



Slightly adapted from the Internet:
www.milforded.org/schools/foran/rscaramella/allusions

There are many examples that can show how the Holy Bible stories are significant in enriching elements of songs. For instance, in the Book of the Old Testament, Job is the principal character of the book of Job. Once upon a time, God and Satan agreed to test Job. Satan proceeded to take away Job's possessions, even his sons, and finally Job was badly affected by extremely painful disfigurement. In works of song if these misfortunes of Job are taken as reference, the theme will be clearer, in terms of meaning and show the exacerbated condition of the message intended to be transmitted through the song. This is because the misery of Job comes to the mind of song listeners easily, as Job's suffering is mostly considered as instance of the most awful human torment in life (Anderson, 1976:55).

Biblical allusion also contributes to characterizations of the fictitious persons in a song. These include showing the character's appearance, displaying the character's actions, revealing the character's thoughts, by letting the character speak, and getting the reactions of others parallel with the personalities of the Bible, their enduring patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior. For example, King David in the Holy Bible is known for his musical skill and for his courage, exemplified by his victorious encounters with the Philistine giant Goliath. Thus a character referred to the attribute of King David becomes significant to the meaning of the song and description of the character.

When a writer also suggests relevance of Biblical allusion, it serves for the description of setting of the song, the time and place which are crucial in the song. For illustration, according to the Old Testament, remarkably Genesis 18, 19, are the two ancient cities near the Dead Sea, Sodom and Gomorrah. Both are said to have been destroyed by a rain of brimstone fire, because of the wickedness of their inhabitants. If a song alludes to the two invariable areas Sodom and Gomorrah of the Biblical stories in reference to the current context deepen the message of the writer to S/he want to state about.

A figurative language like metaphor which comes up with Biblical allusion also creates a more implicit comparison to understand through the five senses: seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching. For example; by equating the Biblical character Samson, the lyrist can make his character in his context to have the character of Samson, since the Biblical Samson is known by his supernatural strength including the strangling of a lion and the slaying of a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass.

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A song adopts a tone towards a subject or character: serious, humorous, sarcastic, ironic, satirical, and so on (Parr 1999). Biblical allusion also gives out to strengthen the tone of the song. Its presence thus enables the lyrist to say his/her intention as an indicator of the message behind the subject matter. For example; the existence of the word "hell" can suggest, "a state of punishment or Judgment of the damned of human being due to transgression" (Stiver 1996:195).

Lyrists as well use Biblical allusions into their lyric to borrow authority, and reputation for their work since the Holy Bible is believed to be, the sanctified manuscript or Scriptures of Judaism and of Christianity (Corley, 2002:305). Moreover it lends a very authoritative and historical significance to the work, even if the work is contemporary.

Biblical allusion creates also someinfluence on listeners' perception, causes listeners to encode, store, and retrieve information in their mental faculty. According to the scholarly article What is Allusion? , "allusion seeks, by tapping the knowledge and memory of the reader, to secure a resonant emotional effect from the associations already existing in the readers mind..." (Irwin, 2001:290).

Generally, Biblical allusion is important in strengthening elements of songs as a whole. The above illustrations are just some of the few instances. There are many other illustrations that show the role of Biblical allusion in songs. Nevertheless, the need this research as it is

described in chapter one is to explain the thematic significance Biblical allusion in songs. The following section discusses the thematic significance of Biblical Allusion in the songs of World Renowned lyrists

2.4.1 Thematic Significance of Biblical Allusion in the songs of World Renowned lyrists

Theme is a broad idea in a story, or a message or lesson conveyed by a work. This message is usually about life, society or human natures. By using theme writers explore timeless and universal ideas (Holman and Harmon, 1986). It is through Biblical allusion that some of the world renowned lyrists attempt to strengthen the theme of their songs, for instance, Bob Marley, Bob Dylan and the Irish U2 music band. They are known for their recurrent use of Biblical allusion in their songs for thematic significance.

In this section of the paper works of these worldly renowned lyrists are discussed underneath showing how their works are enriched by Biblical allusion in thematic strengthening.

2.4.2 Biblical Allusion in the lyrics of Bob Marley

Songs by the prominent lyrist Jamaican Bob Marley evolve around two representative themes by using allusion to the Holy Bible, which is Rastafarianism and political Liberation from the persistent European oppression of the Africans as well as Caribbean (Allan 1999).

With the aid of Biblical implicit reference, the songs of Bob Marley call for personal freedom through revolution and remained highly popular for decades even after his death. His lyrics have been symbolizing the hopes of the downtrodden for a better life. Michael Kulleher in Bob Marley in Light of the Proverb affirms that:

> It is almost impossible to discuss any Rastafarian doctrine with out reference to the Scripture. It might be said that a fullness of understanding of the music of Bob Marley is similarly thwarted with out the reference to his sources, chiefly among them the Bible (Kuelker 1999).

Bob Marley has let the Bible address in a more creative and expressive manner as a consequence still remained in the memory of his fan hitherto. His repetitive employment of Biblical allusion acclaimed his works as "a sort of Bible study in songs" (Ibid).

For example, Marley's "Cornerstone" is a song title and its contents allude to Matthew 21:42 "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes" (Barker 2002:1501). Africa Bible Commentary regarding the word "cornerstone" comments that "This cornerstone symbolizes the king of Israel " and adds to the theme of the song since cornerstone considered as the focal point for the new order of things in the world" (Adeyemo 1984:1156).Thus the inclusion of Biblical term "cornerstone" in the above songs strengthen the theme of the song. The reason why Bob Marley alluded the book of Mathew and Psalms is not in relation to Jesus whom the writer of the Gospel of Matthew had really discussed about. Marley on the contrary referred to the citation from the Bible for his own religious and political significance of Rastafarianism, a religion that has a profound influence on reggae music, which endorsed black superiority (Allan).

Other thematic significances of Biblical allusions are also expressed in Bob Marley's lyric in his different albums released in different period of time. Among them are themes including question of emancipation, resistance, and struggling using Biblical stories or great images as reference (Smith).

For Example to get liberation from Babylon, which Marley and his contemporaries use the name "Exodus" for oppressive social and economic order under which they have been forced to live:

Exodus....Movement of Jah People

Open your eyes look within

Are you satisfied with the life your are living

We know where we are going; we know where we are from

We live Babylon ...we're going to our fatherland

(Allan)

The title of the above song itself alludes to the spiritual birth of the Judeo-Christian religions. It is a story relating to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt and their wanderings through the desert up to Mount Sinai (Barker 2002).

The other thematic significance of the Holy Bible in Marley's song is its motivational power in giving hope to the black people. In this regard, Marley sang a song of expectation. In the song, Cornerstone, for example, there is an implication that the black race has been rejected, but will one day be triumphant. The song finds meaning in the phrase from Psalms 118, "the stone that builder refused ...will always be the head cornerstone". Here Jesus himself as "this rejected stone that becomes the cornerstone" in Mathew Chapter 21:42' (Ibid).

Generally, the songs of Bob Marley preach a theme of love of universal human brother and sisterhood, and of active liberation from oppression by adding biblical concepts and historical events. In the internet article entitled Bob Marley-Songs of Freedom the thematic significance of Biblical allusion in Marley's songs is summarized as,

> In an industry where the vast majority of popular music revolved around repetitive and vapid love songs, Marley's

> lyrics articulated complex social issues: race, power, politics, and God. He filtered these themes through his own unique view of the world, one which saw beyond the arbitrary borders and distinctions of the society in which he lived. (http://tcpc.blogs.com/musings/2005/01/the_bible_and_b.html)

2.4.3 Biblical Allusion in the Songs of Bob Dylan

Bob Dylan is an American musician and songwriter, one of the most important figures in contemporary folk music and rock music (William 1985:38).

Among the many factors that escalated the fame of Bob Dylan in the United States of America and other parts of the world is his continued use of Biblical allusion in order to deepen the thematic message he wants to transmit to his admirers. Hence, most writers liken him to a religious preacher. For example; Don Williams in the book entitled: Bob Dylan the man, the Music, the Message testifies about.him as:

> Among the various themes and subjects that are presented in the songs of Bob Dylan, there are many allusions and references to Biblical motifs and texts. The album preached a message as full fire and brimstone as any strident preacher could hope to master (Williams 1985:131).

The following table entailed some of the areas where Biblical allusions played major roles in the songs of Bob Dylan in the contribution of the meaning strengthening of the lyric.

Name of the Lyrics	Biblical Parallels
Long Time Gone *But I know I ain't no prophet* *An' I no prophet*	Amos 7:14 *I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son...*
The Times they are A-changing *And the first one now* *Will later be last*	Matthew 19:30 *But many that are first shall be last*
When the ship comes In *And like pharaoh's tribe,* *They'll be drowned in the tide*	Hebrews 11:29 *By faith they passed through the Red Sea as on dry land...*

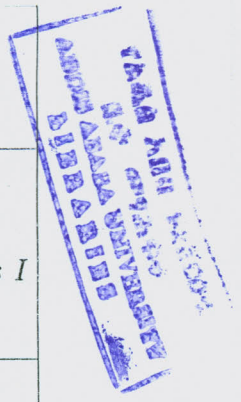

Table 1: *Dylan's Lyrics Parallel to Bible*

Adapted From: *Biblical Allusion in Bob Dylan's Lyrics* (Hamilton 2005)

According to the above table "Long time gone", alludes to the book of Amos which says similarly "I was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son, but I was a shepherd, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees" (Barker 2002:270). Amos, the prophet, "was a shepherd and dresser of sycamore trees and by informing us that he had not abandoned his vocation as shepherd-farmer until he was summoned away by God and commanded to prophesy" (Ibid). Here the lyrist Dylan likens himself with the prophet Amos saying the same word so as to strengthen the theme of the song by means of Biblical allusion.

All the way through his carrier Bob Dylan for various reasons, has used the Bible in his writing knowing that the Holy Bible is a rich source for thematic strengthening, and as an important vehicle for transmitting moral issues, functionary medium for his proclamation of the Christian

Gospel (Hamilton, 2005). He thoroughly assimilated the ideas and images of the Bible in his songs with easy familiar manner (Williams, 1985).

2.4.4 Biblical Allusion in the Songs of U2s

U2 is an Irish rock music band, which attained worldwide popularity during the 1980s and 1990s (Sandow 2006). It grew famous for its commitment to political causes, including prominent support for international human rights through Biblical allusion in its songs. For example, the Band's 1988 release, *Rattle and Hum*, was marked by uncharacteristic explorations of Biblical allusion as a means of thematic amplification (Ibid). As a result, the band won numerous Grammy awards and inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of fame in 2005 (Ibid).

Almost all the albums of U2s released in different time, are "rich with Biblical imagery and outspoken in their concern for human rights and social justice" (Gilmour, 2005:260). With reference to U2s commitment to the Biblical orientation in their songs, Stephan Harmon in his article entitled U2: Unexpected Prophets stated that;

> Arguably the most successful rock band in the world.U2 not only cries out against injustice, but also dares to imagine an attention in light of the Christian Vision. The band searchingly examines the distortion of our world and proclaims with scripture "the place that has to be seen" where the streets have no name" (Harmon 2006).

U2s 2000s album "all that you can't leave behind " intensifies themes like the presence of pain and injustice and offers words of comfort to the broken-hearted and held out the promise of hope by referring Biblical stories. Similarly in the song "all that you can't leave behind there is a phrase "reach me, I know I'm helpless case" that hints the prayer of the needy one day will be heard (Glamour 2003).

U2s songs also do highlight themes like struggle of freedom thirst people through Biblical allusion. In the struggle for justice "non-violent,

grassroots, political actions." and about emancipation if psychological tension between faith and doubt experienced by people who have uttered prayer for deliverance from desperate situations.

Similarly, in the next chapters, the discussion deals with the thematic significance of Biblical allusion in the contemporary Amharic songs showing how lyrists have enabled to explore themes of different sorts through Biblical reference. These worlds' renowned artists are a background to most Ethiopian singers.

Chapter Three

Thematic Significance of Biblical Allusion In Contemporary Amharic Songs

By utilizing Biblical allusion, some Ethiopian lyrists are becoming capable of underscoring and strengthening certain fundamental themes in their songs. In this chapter, an analysis made on selected Amharic Songs by describing how Biblical allusion serves to amplify and generate implications of theme through stimulating ideas, and creating associations. The following discussion encompasses the thematic importance of Biblical allusion in contemporary Amharic songs as follows.

3.1 Biblical Allusion in the Songs of Tewodros Kassahun

Tewodros Kassahun is a reputed artist starting from the year 1997 (E.C.) in which his first album «አቦጊዳ «abogida›› is released to his last album "አበባየሆሽ››. His lyrics gained fame from his fan hitherto as a result of his celebrated works. The use of allusion, from the Holy Bible, is exhibited in most of his albums which acquire a certain literary significance. In this section, attempts have been made to reveal how Biblical allusion is used in a few of his acclaimed songs.

3.1.1 Biblical Allusion in The lyric «አበባየሆሽ›› ‹‹Abebayehosh»

This album song «አበባየሆሽ›› ‹‹Abebayehosh» was released on the eve of the Ethiopian millennium by the known artist Tewodros Kassahun. In this song, the lyrist is addressing a prophetic message expecting the

coming of blessing day for Ethiopians along with the coming of the Millennium.

ምዕዬላዊው ዘመን የአምላክ በረከቱ	The blessing of God in the Millennium
በኢትዮጵያ ትንሳኤ ዘመነ ውስቱ	In the Ethiopian years of Celebration
ስትሰሙ መለከት ወደ ምስራቅ ተመልከቱ	When you hear the trumpet turn to East
አረንጓዴና ቢጫ ቀይ አርማው	The Green, the yellow and the red banner
ከፍ ይሳል ገና ወጥቶ ከማማው	will flag standing on the pole
ሰለሞን አለ ጊዜ ለኩሉ	Solomon said there is time for everything
ይሰግዱልሻል የናቁሽ ሁሉ	Every one will bow down to your feet even your loather
አሳልፈናል ክፉና ደጉን	We had passed through evil and good
ቃልኪዳን አለን እንዳይለያየን	We have promise, let He keep us united

(Kassahun, 1999 E.C.) " Abebayehosh"

The optimistic theme of the above song is strengthened by the Biblical allusion from the saying of King Solomon: **"Solomon said there is time for everything"** which is parallel to the expression in the Book of Ecclesiastes, "**there is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven**" (Ecclesiastes 3:1). According to this verse, everything will take place at its given time, which is going to be beautiful. In this verse, the Biblical Solomon is presenting a striking depiction of God's absolute control over events. For example; there is a right time for poverty, there is also a time for prosperity. This indicates that all occurrences have been fixed and determined by God each with its own character and its period of blossoming and ripening. From this perspective, then, it can be inferred that hope for Ethiopia is also handled by God. At the predetermined time, the blessing of the country

Ethiopia will reach to its culmination especially with the coming of the new Millennium.

In the same song the lyrist also raises issues related to the probable time of Ethiopia's overcoming over its oppressors and defeat due to long time rooted problems. To reinforce the idea, the lyrist call attention of his listeners through the Biblical allusion: "Every one will bow down to your feet even your loather" which is parallel to the book of Isaiah: "*The sons of your oppressors will come, bowing before you; all who despise you will bow down at your feet and will call you the City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel*" (Isaiah 60:14). In this verse, the name Zion is a designation for all Jerusalem (Isaiah 1:27) and for Palestine. The term is also applied to the Jewish people. It is a symbol of hope that the Jewish homeland in Palestine would eventually be restored. Similarly, the word Zion in this context has an implication that the country Ethiopia will appear to shift into a time of prosperity with a greater sense of expectancy, highlighted by a lofty vision for its future and with expressions of abundant blessing.

The lyrist also employed the term *'resurrection'* which reminds of the rise of Jesus Christ from death after three days stay in the grave. This implies that though Ethiopia is a down trodden and unfortunate country by the many challenges for many years, it will have also a time of rising from the gravest condition of its problem at the time set by God whom the lyrist and his listeners trusted in. The Biblical allusion in this song depicts the theme of hope Ethiopia which will be victorious like Zion of Israelites. The point is that days will be replaced by happy and fruitful ones in good time as the saying of Solomon "there is time for everything".

3.1.2 Biblical Allusion in «አምላኬ ሰው በልኬ» «Amlake Sew Belike»

In this song, the speaker is expressing his conviction that a wife is a precious gift from God. The song suggests only the creator grants the appropriate wife or husband to the seeker. In other words, it is only through the unreserved grace of God that a man/woman gets a blessed partner as it is already fated by Him.

ሳይ ሳይ ዓይኔን አንስቼ ወደአስህበት	When I look upward raising my eye to your presence
ሞንቄን ብትሰማ ተው ምናበት	What if you hear my anxiety?
የፈጠርካትን የአዳም መከታ	She whom you created as the support of Adam
የእናቴን ምትክ ተው ስጠኝ ጌታ	Please grant me which can be return my mom,
በዚህች ዓለም ምነው ስኔ ብቻ ጠፋ አፍቃሪ	Why is that I couldn't find a lover?
ሰው እያስ ባይተዋር አታድርገኝ ተው ፈጣሪ	Oh, God don't make me on the earth where there are so many people.
ከአፈሩ ሳይ የሰርዓት ነፍሴ ነች ብቸኛ	If there is any one whom you think can be my better half
ያሰብክልኝ ሰው እንዳስ ስኔ በል ስጠኛ	

(Kassahun, 1997 E.C.)"Amelake Sew Beleke"

To strengthen the suggested theme, the lyrist alluded to the idea of creation from the book of Genesis: **"My soul whom you're created from the soil is alone"** which is parallel to the book of Genesis **"the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being"** (Genesis 2:7). Similarly in the same verse God said, **"It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him"** (Genesis 2:18). Accordingly then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man (Genesis 2:22).

The Biblical allusion in this song reflects the theme of the Biblical creation of man and women. It highlights the theme to listeners by creating connections of meaning that God formed the woman from the man's rib, to be close to his heart, and to establish the intimate link between them in the very creation. Through the song, listeners are also reminded that they should consider a partner/spouse as part of their very being, and see the partner as fulfillment of maturity to manhood, without whom he/she ca be complete. This again connotes that ideal union ordained by the creator cannot exist in a polygamous relationship between a man and several women (Polygamy) or between women and several men (Polyandry).

3.1.3 Biblical Allusion in the Lyric «ሄዋን እንደ ዋዛ» «Hewan Endewaza»

The following song is all about getting of a pleasing woman who is completely comforter to her companion. It is composed against the social and Biblical views of women are the sources of curse to humankind because of her disobedience to God.

ሄዋን እንደ ዋዛ ፍሬዋን በልተሽ	Eve, after you had eaten the fruit without any suspicion
በእኔና በምድር ሞት እንዳመጣሽ	As you brought death between me and the earth
ስባከነው ልቤ ሬርቶ ልብሽ	After being sympathetic to my frustrated heart
መጽናኛ ሆኖልል ክሶኛል ፍቅርሽ	I got comfort after I have compensated through your love

(Kassahun, 1993 E.C.) "Hewan Endewaza"

To reinforce the idea, the lyrist directly referred to the Biblical story of Adam and Eve stressing especially how Eve brought loss to the human

kind. The story is found in the book of Genesis in the third and fourth chapter; *"When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it "*(Genesis 3:6). After that with renewed encounter with God and feeling the guilt of their crime, the eternal home of human kind Paradise had been transformed into misery (Genesis 2: 12-13). The pathetic nature of human race defense was exposed to calamity by the decree of God (Genesis 2: 14-19). This judgment was passed to human being because of Eve's transgression of God's commandment. However, this tragic event of human kind eventually completely changed after Virgin Mary's' conception of the Incarnate Son Jesus for the saving of the mankind. Therefore, Mary's giving Jesus through birth is still considered as a compensation representing all women contrary to Eve's bringing judgment of death upon the man (Adam).

Therefore the singer's saying "I got comfort after I have compensated through your love" is to mean "though my lover brought me in to problem, she offered her love in compensation." Accordingly, by associating Virgin Mary's offering of love through her son Jesus, his lover also brought him a genuine love instead of bad fortune.

3.1.4 Biblical Allusion in the Lyric ‹‹ዳህላክ›› «Dahilak»

The following song was composed in remembrance of the Ethio-Eritrean conflict which had caused tremendous mess in the two countries especially causing instability in the two nations.

ዳህላክ ደሴቱ ላይ አይቼ አንድ መርከብ	After I have seen a ship on the Dhalak Island
በማህበል ተይዛ ሲያስጨቅናት ወደብ	Worrying because of the terrible see storm
አንስት ህጻን ይዛ ቆማ ከመርከቡ	Having a baby daughter standing on the ship deck
ስአምላክ ብትነግረው ፀጥ አለ ወጀቡ	When she told to God, the storm abated
በይ አዲህ ነው ህልሜ ሲፈታ	This is the meaning of my dream
ለህጻን ነፍስ ይራራል ጌታ	God shows mercy towards the soul of a baby
አትሙት ብሎት ያለ ሃጢያቱ	Seeing to it a child should never die for a sin which not his,
መዳን ሆነ ለመርከቢቱ	The ship has got salvation

Kassahun, 1997 E.C.) "Dahilak"

The song is about the mercy of God towards innocent people emphasizing on Eritrea's owned Island Dahalak. On this particular Island, the singer's (the Speaker's) and her baby suffer from the feeling of helplessness with unknown reason. In a dream, the speaker saw a ship tossing here and there by a powerful windy storm. Due to the hazardous storm, the woman and her baby experience tension. While in the middle of the tension the woman was hugging the child she prayed to God: then the lord (God) replied to her answer instantly. Then the speaker's lover got immediately the meaning of the dream as follows: *"God shows mercy towards the soul of a baby / Verifying that a child never dies for a sin which not his/The ship has got salvation."*

The suggested theme in the above song "Dahalak" allusion is from the book of Mathew "He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm" (Luke8:24). In this story, when was Jesus awakened by the terrified disciples, He dealt

directly with the storm. His rebuking of the storm was followed by calm as sudden as a storm. Storm here in the lyric symbolizes overwhelming struggle, shock, devastating loss and catastrophe in the woman's (who hugged and stood on the ship) personal affairs. The woman represents the country-Eritrea.

The baby whom she hugged symbolizes the whole nation of the country- its citizens (innocents), who are overwhelmed by emotional disturbance such as anger, rage and turmoil. Therefore, the above song suggests that it is only by God's supernatural ability that the problem of innocents would be solved. It also has a prophetic implication that whatever disturbance or problems is occurring in the woman's (Eritreans) life, it will be solved quickly at its appointed time by God despite the fierce wind (misery) the country is going through at present.

Therefore the Biblical allusion taken from the book of Luke captures the theme or the intended message of the song with multi-layered connotation of meaning: i.e. God's dominance over a difficult situation created by disagreeing factions that brought about again disastrous on the innocent nations.

3.1.5 Biblical Allusion in the Lyric «ሃይለስላሴ» «Haile Seilassie »

In the following song, Tedi Afro alluded to the concept of *'the lion of Judea'* from the book of Genesis and the book of Revelation in the Holy Bible **"You are a lion's cub, O Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness—who dares to rouse him?"** (Genesis 49:9) and **"Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals"** (Rev 5:5).

ጁዳ አንበሳ አራት ኪሎ	Judea Lion, Arat Kilo
ቢከትምም ስድስት ኪሎ	Though is established at Sidist Kilo
ጥሳ ሆነ ትልቅ ዋርካ	It became a great tree of shadow
ለአንድነቲ ለአፍሪካ	For the unity of Africa
አራ ታቦቱ በፒያሳ	Arada Tabernacle at Piazza
ቀዳማዊ ንጉስ ጁዳ አንበሳ	The First King of Judea Lion
ግርማዊነትዎ የህዝብ እንደራሴ	Majesty, representative of his people
የአፍሪካ አባት ዓይለስላሴ	Father of Africa Haile Sellassie

*(Kassahun, **1993** E.C.) "Haile Silassie*

In the Holy Bible, the name lion often is a Messianic title in the book of Genesis (49:8-10), where Judea is named a 'lion cup' and promised the right to rule which looks forward to the ideal king in the line of David, Jesus Christ.

It is also the source of the faith Rastafarian; Haile Sellassie king of Ethiopia believed to be Messiah of the black race. The Jamaican song writer and pioneer of Reggae music, Bob Marley has also handled this Biblical allusion in his songs about the black messiah saying that *"He is the lion of Judea"*

Correspondingly the concept of 'the lion of Judea' in the above lyric glorifies the divine supremacy of Haile Sellassie through the Biblical awareness of *"the lion of Judea-Jesus"*. And as a method, the Biblical allusion in the above song magnifies the theme that How Hailesillassie is great.

3.1.6 Biblical Allusion in The lyric ‹‹ጃ ያስተሰርያል›› «Ja yasterseyal»

This song album was released in the year 1997 E.C by Tewodros Kassahun when the political tension rose at its climax between the ruling party of Ethiopia and its opposition party, at the time when the national ballot vote was processing.

In response to the time, the song "Ja Yasteseriyal" which means "Ja forgives Sin" was released having a political as well as transformational connotation to the song listeners who had been longing for an immediate change in the country.

	JA makes remission (6)
ጃ ያስተሰርያል (6)	Exodus for Ethiopia, to the Promised expedition
ዘፀሓት ለኢትዮጵያ ወደ ተስፋ ጉዞ	
ባህሩን የሚያሻግር አንድን ሙሴ ይዞ	With the one Moses who helps to cross the sea
ቅርብ ነው አይቀርም የኢትዮጵያ ትንሳኤ	The resurrection of Ethiopia is near at hand
በአንድነት ከገባን የፍቅር ሱባኤ	If we all confess our sins with love and dedication
ጃ ያስተሰርያል (6)	JA makes remission (6)

*(Kassahun, **1997 E.C.**) "Ja Yasteseriyal"*

In the above song, heightened message of the time lies in two familiar words from the Holy Bible alluded in the song which highlights the issue desired to be communicated. The words are *"Exodus"* and *"Resurrection"*. Here is the meaning of the two Biblical terms.

The title *"Exodus"* derives from the Greek word *Exodus*, means departure, out-going. The word found in the book of the Old Testament. It is also stated in the New Testament in the book of Hebrew: **"By faith Joseph,**

when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones" (Heb 11:22).

The story of Exodus is a historical event that transformed the Jewish people and their religious ethical system from slavery to freedom, from Egyptian bondage to Canaan independence. Remembering the story of Exodus still evokes feelings of repulsion and determination to breaking out from the state of oppression, especially in religious institutions.

Along with the story of Exodus, Moses is viewed as a national hero who helped Israelites to escape from Egypt and who lead them to the land of Canaan, in what was later called Palestine, to settle permanently.

The Historical event of Exodus as well Moses as leader of the Exodus, is alluded to the above song by means of meaning association to strength the theme of the song. That is, liberation and mercy through a determined leader of nation. Therefore, the Biblical allusion in this song make the song complete in transferring the intended message which was crucial at the time when of the Song *"Ja Yesteryeal"* was released.

3.2 Biblical Allusion in the Lyrics of Shewandagne Hailu

Shewandagne Hailu is known by his first album *«አኩ·ኩ·ሉ››* *‹Akukulu››* which was released in 1996 E.C. The song refers to the Biblical character Peter, the most prominent of the twelve disciples of Jesus Christ, emphasizing on his particular misdemeanors of delivering Jesus Christ to His enemies.

በጨረቃ ብርሃን ጀምበር ስቃ ቦታ	When the sun leaves its place to moon
እንሂድ ብለሽ ወጥተሽ ጨዋታ	You asked me to play a game
አልከዳህም ብለሽ ቃል ገበተሽ ለልቤ	Although you promised that you will never leave me me
እንደ ጴጥሮስ ከዳሺኝ ሦስቴ	Three times as much you betrayed me Like
አዘነብሽ በቃ ለሜቴ	

የአንቺስ የብቻው ነው ስሜት የሚጎዳ	Peter
በንስጓ ልቡን ሲያጸዳ	So I felt dejected
ስመልካም ነው ጴጥሮስ ቢክዳም	Your behavior broke my heart
አልክዳህም ብለሽ በኪዳን አስረሽው	The betrayal of Peter was for good
በአንድ ለሊት ሦስቱ ከዳሽው	But through repentance his sin was cleansed
የዋህ ልቤን በቃ አሳዘንሽው	After you said to my heart I will never betray you, by giving your oath
	Within in a night you betrayed it three times
	You grieved my innocent heart eventually

(Hailu 1996) "Akukulu"

The Biblical Peter is unstable, indecisive, character who is more guided by quick impulse than logical reasoning, swayed from one extreme to the other. To make stronger his lover's action of betrayal, therefore, the singer directly referenced the negative traits of Peter equating with the songs character (the beloved girl) as **"Though you swear to my heart not to go away from me/ Three times as much you betrayed me Like Peter".** This saying has been described equally in the book of Luke as **'"before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times"** (Luke 22:61).

By referring to the traits of the Biblical Peter, the speaker is describing to the betrayal of his fiancé through allusion which convey the underlying theme. That is the unfaithfulness of a friend is more painful than anything else. Therefore, listeners who had previous knowledge about the Biblical story of Peter and Peter's betrayal of Jesus can visualize the disappointment of the speaker.

3.3 Biblical allusion in The Lyrics of Tamrat Desta

Like in the above song, Artist Tamrat Desta in his song, «እንደ ይሁዳ» "Endeyihuda" (Like Judea Iscariot) presents the most awesome grievance resulting from betrayal by a lover by means of Biblical allusion.

(Desta , 1996 E.C) "Endeyihuda"

Judas Iscariot is believed to be an example of traitor, who handed over Jesus to His enemies. After his hopes for a high place in an earthly kingdom, he became a thief (Luke 6:66). It was at the Last Supper that Jesus revealed that one of the disciples was going to betray him (Luke 6:71). Then after Judas Iscariot sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, he was showing his disloyalty to him with a kiss.

እንኳን ቀረ በዚሁ ደግሞ ሰሌሳ ዓጢያት	I am glad to see its inequity quieting at its premature stage
ከምሾጣት ሰበቀል የልቤን ቀረጢት	For it prevented my heart from being dubbed by revenge
ያመነን አየሳሙ ስጥቅም ቢሸጡት	Selling the faithful one for fortune sake
ገንዘቡ አኬልዳማ ትርፉ የደም መሬት	The money will be just like Aceldama, and the profit the blood land
መርጨሽ ከሰው ስልጣን ብሰጥሽ ክልቢ ጓዳ	Though I choose you among people and ordained to reign in my heart
አንቺ ለወጥሺኝ በማይሆን ነገር አንደ ይሁዳ	You exchanged me with things in vein like Judea
አንደ ይሁዳ (8)	Like Judea (8)

The act of Judea Iscariot surrendering a beloved one to somebody treacherously is always considered as an act of the Biblical Judas. In the same manner, the lyrist of the above song used the Biblical allusion from the story of Judas Iscariot to highlight the theme of betrayal.

3.4 Biblical allusion in the Songs of Tibebu Workieye

Artist Tibebu Workieye is one of the contemporary singers. His songs are enriched by Biblical allusion. In the following section, two of his songs are selected for analysis.

3.4.1 Biblical Allusion in «ሕልሜ እሁን ይሆናል» «Hilme Hiwen Yihonal»

In the following song the speaker expresses hope to himself through the Biblical words **"If there is patience till it become reality, there is time for everything"** The song seems to have been inspired by the book of Ecclesiastes chapter three verse one; **"there is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven"** (Ecclesiastes 3:1).

ጠቢብ ሰለሞን ሲናገር በቅዱስ ቃሱ ሲመክር	When Solomon the wise said and advise with the sacred word
አውን አስኪሆን ካስቻለው ለሁሉም ጊዜ አለው	If there is patience till one sees the fulfillment of a dream, there is time for everything
ህልሜ እውን ይሆናል ህልሜ	My dream will become real, my dream
አምላክ ይስጠኝ እንጂ እድሜ	Provided God Keeps us alive.

(Workieye, 1995 E.C.)"Hilme Ewen Yihonal"

The significance of the Biblical allusion in the above song is revealed in message. It makes the song listeners' to think of their own experiences especially those listeners who are deprived of blessing. The song enables them to think of the good days that will come according to the time appointed by God. It explains that all things are determined by God since He set a time for everything to be accomplished in its own time. In other words, **"there is time for everything"** is to mean that the continual processes of life do not need to be viewed as meaningless rather should

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not be viewed as colorful, and shifting pattern with its beginning and end. Instead of frozen perfection, there are innumerable hopes, each with its own period of blossoming and ripening.

Therefore, due to the presence of the Biblical allusion in the above song, listeners can understand it easily the thematic implication of the song contextualizing to their own personal life. And it enables them to expect a blessed time for their own personal benefit through associations of meaning. In general, the use of Biblical allusion in the above song suggests that hasty need of people should be refrained, for God is in control of our destiny.

3.4.2 Biblical Allusion in «አላማርርም ጌታዬ» ‹‹Alamririm Getaye››

The lyrist in this song is refrains from lamenting temporal misfortunes on hoping for the good days to come. It is designed as a tool for avoiding worries rather looking things optimistically.

ሳግኝቶ ማጣት ሰው ቢሰብርም	Though it is difficult to lose after prosperity
አምላኬ አላማርርም	O my God, I will never grumble
አጣሁኝ ብዬ ብዙ አልደፍርም	I don't dare to say I am penniless
ፈጣሪዬ አላማርርም	O my creator, never will I complain
ከምድር እንደመጣሁ ያኔ ወዲህ ራቁቴን	Since I came from the earth once with my nude
ወደ ሦስት ክንዲ ቤቱ ስሄድ ራቁቴን	Nude I will go to my grave
ልበል እንደ አዮብ እኔ በስራው ሳልወቅሰው	Let me say like Job without condemning His work
እሱ እንዳመጣው ለእኔ እሱ ይመልሰው	Once he brought it, may He Himself returns it back as well
አላማርርም ጌታዬ	
አላማርርም አምላኬ	

(Workieye, 1999 E.C.) "Alamarerim"

The song conveys a sense of optimism by inducing people to tolerate problems. It is more clearly presented by using the Biblical story of Job, the righteous man who lost everything in his life, and is described in the Holy Bible as **"a man. . . blameless and upright. . . one who feared God, and turned away from evil"** (Job 1:1).

According to the Holy Bible, Job was a pious, rich, and the head of a large contented family. A misfortune happened unpredictably to him one day After Satan proposed that Job would curse God if he were to lose all his wealth; so God and Satan agreed to test Job. After that Satan proceeded to take away Job's possessions, even his sons and daughters, and finally he afflicted Job with extremely painful boils. Job refuses, however, to curse God (Job 1).

The lyrist's choice of the Biblical allusion to the above unfortunate story of Job conveys the theme that worrying about temporal misfortune is futile once it is ordered by God. The song line **"since I came from to the earth once with my nude, it is also will I go to my grave"** is a good instance supporting this evidence. It is referenced parallel to the Biblical verse **"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart..."The LORD has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised"** (Job 1:21). The righteous Job here opts to surrender himself to the Lord accepting the fact that he did not bring anything with him when he came into this world-It was all God's gift-that he will not take anything with him from this world-he would depart naked (Job 1:21).

Similarly, the lyrist of the above song agrees with his creator that what ever problems he experiences him; he should put faith in God than worrying about something happened in his life.

This Biblical allusion enables listeners to comprehend God's good will despite the numerous calamities that have befallen them.

Generally, in this song the indirect reference to the disfigured physical appearance of Job helps people to understand the thematic implication that the lyrist wants to address i.e. worrying about problems should be avoided for it would not bring any change to our life.

3.4.3 Biblical Allusion in «አንቺኝ ሰጠኝ» ‹‹Anchin Setegn››

The theme of «አንቺኝ ሰጠኝ» ‹‹Anchin Setegn›› is about the success of a man after getting his beloved girl. He considers her as a blessing from God. Thus to underline her significance, he compares her with the Biblical heavenly food "Manna".

ለስሙ ነበር ኑሮዬ	It was not a real life that I lived
በዚይድ በቆጠር እድሜዬ	In spite of the many years that elapsed
ገና አሁን ነው ማፍቀር ችዬ	It is only I was able to love
የጀመርኩት ኑሮን ሀ ብዬ	That started to live
አንቺን ሰጠኝ ልጽናና	He gave me you to be comforted
ለነፍሴ የፍቅር መና	You are the Manna of my soul

(Workieye, 1999 E.C."Anchin Setegn"

By means of the Biblical words directly referenced from the Bible the lyric layered the saying of Job as **"He gave me you to be comforted / For my soul's Manna of Love"** as a tool for theme signification. The word Manna is in the Holy Bible cited several times. For instance; according to God's promise to Moses, He spoke to him **"I will rain down Manna from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day..."** (Ex 16:4). Manna is a special food provided for the Hebrews during their exodus from Egypt in the wilderness. According to the Biblical stories of Exodus, Manna was white (Number 11:9), of delicious flavor came by miraculous means! Hebrew writers called it "angels' bread". Jesus, referring to himself, used it as a

metaphor (John 6:31-58). John called it spiritual food, spiritual sustenance for the risen saints (Revelation 2:17). Therefore inclusion of the story of manna in the lyric is important for the following thematic significance.

- Girls are a blessing for a man as a reward from God.
- Girls are sweet and delicious like the spiritual food Manna.

3.4.4 Biblical Allusion «የብዙ ዓመት ፍቅሬ» ‹‹Yibzu Hamet Fikre››

The song «የብዙ ዓመት ፍቅሬ» ‹‹Yibzu Hamet Fikre›› is about a man deprived of love, and experiences psychological as well as physical suffering while he was expecting her coming. Unfortunately she did not return to him though he waited for her patiently. Thus he rather prefered screaming since he was unable to control his inward distress.

የብዙ ዓመት ፍቅሬ ጨለማ ለበሰ	My many years of love is clothed by darkness
እምባዬ እንደ ጅረት በጉንጬ ፈሰሰ	Like spring my tears flowed down my cheek
ወትሮም ገር አንጀቱ በናፍቆት ሲቀጣ	When its innocent heart was punished by longing
የአዳም እምባ አይቆምም ገንፍሎ ከወጣ	The tears of Adam never stops once it burst out

(Workieye, 1995 E.C.) "Yebizu Amet Fikre"

To highlight the sorrowful experience, a Biblical allusion has been used. The Biblical "Adam" is a representation of all men who share same life experience as the speaker in the song. The name Adam is the first man, created by God (Genesis 2:20). It is used in the song as a common term for all human beings. Hence, the presence of the Biblical name 'Adam' emphasis to the commonness of this problem and brings out depression

of the speaker. In the song, the speaker agonizes "When its innocent heart is punished by longing/The tear of Adam never stops once it burst out." The lyric shows that when a lover betrays, it causes sorrow that is hard to bear.

3.5 Biblical allusion in The Songs of Alex Diaspora

Alex Diaspora emerged with the coming of the Ethiopian Millennium. His single album's song «ዲያስፖራ» (Diaspora) got good reception from his listeners subsequent to its announcement through the national media. After he introduced the song «ዲያስፖራ» (Diaspora) he came up with his full album including other songs which are influenced by Biblical allusion. In this section, two of his songs; «ዲያስፖራ» and « የያዕቆብ ጽናት» are considered to be analyzed to depict the significance of the Holy Bible in terms of theme enrichment.

3.4.1 Biblical Allusion in «ዲያስፖራ» (Diaspora)

In this song the artist has tried to raises a message of evoking and impresses those Diasporas on the significance of returning back to their country.

በሠማይ በምድር ባቡር	By air by train
ከአገር ያወጣኸኝ ችግር	I had to go out of my country
ናፈቀኝ ተራራው ገደሉ	I became nostalgic to the uphill and the downhill
መልሰኝ ከአገሬ ከአፈሩ	Please taken me back to my land's soil
ከግራም ከቀኝም ተሰባሰቡና	Gather from all corner of the world
እንደ ያዕቆብ ልጆች አገር ቤት ግቡና	Then go into your land like the sons of Jacob
ፀሓይ ትውጣልን ይገለጽ ደመና	Let the sun rise to us, let the fog become clear to us
እውን እናድርገው የተስፋውን መና	Let's make realistic the promised manna

(Olympia, 1999 E.C.) "Giba Diaspora"

In this song, the lyrist declares the hopeful of blessing for days of Ethiopian to come, especially in the new Millennium. The message of the song is heightened because of the Biblical allusion, **"go into your land like the sons of Jacob"** the situation in the lyric which is parallel to the story of Jacob and his family exile and return to their homeland to **"make realistic the promised manna".**

According to the book of Genesis, the descendants of Jacob increase in number through their generations in the land of Egypt. In consequence, the Egyptians began to see them as a threat and began to think how to enslave them. For that reason, the deliverance from Egyptian slavery had become the central issue to the sons of Jacob who yearned to go back to their home land Canaan, to their original inhabitants.

Likewise, most Ethiopians living abroad are overwhelmed by misery because of the hard system laid by their masters like the family of Jacob in Egypt. As Jacob had a promise from God to return to his home land, the Ethiopian Diasporas to return back to their mother land with the intention of making permanent settlement in their country. Therefore, the presence of Biblical allusion in the above song makes its theme clearer since it associates with the experience of Ethiopian like the story of Israelites Exodus from the land of Egypt.

3.5.2 Biblical Allusion in «የያዕቆብ ጽናት» (Yeyacob Tsnat)

The following song makes reference to the story of Jacob; in the Old Testament. He was one of the Hebrew patriarchs, son of Isaac and grandson of Abraham. After depriving his brother Esau of their father's blessing and of his birthright by trickery, he was fleeing from one place to another place. Esau was angry with him that he planned to kill him,

የአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
ቤተ መጻሕፍት
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and so his mother, Rebecca, sent Jacob away to her brother, Laban, in a foreign country. Jacob thus fled to the house of his uncle, Laban, where he worked for many years, and married Laban's daughters, Leah and Rachel. According to the biblical account (Genesis 29-35), Jacob served his kinsman Laban seven years for his favorite wife Rachel but received her sister, Leah, in her stead. This unexpected incident obliged Jacob to serve seven years more for Rachel. Finally, his life time dream love, Rachel became Jacob's wife after many years endurance in Laban's house.

ያዕቆብ በመጸናቱ ፍቅር አገኘ	Jacob inherited love because of endurance
ልቤ አመነ እንጂ መች ተሞኘ	My heart believed but was not decived

(Olympia, 1999 E.C.) "Etsenalew"

Similarly, for the effect of thematic enhancement, the lyrist alluded to the Biblical story of Jacob from the book of Genesis portraying the story of Jacob through the words **"Jacob inherited love because of endurance"**. Here, the Biblical allusion gives listeners of the song with the right example and explanations of the story of Jacob through associations of meanings thus showing the significance patience for blessing.

3.6.1 Biblical Allusion in the Songs of Abeba Desalegn

Artist Abeba Desalegn is known for her songs «ግሪሳው ከቦኛል» "Girisaw Kebognale" and «እልም አለኝ አውቃለሁ›› « Hilm Alegn Awkalew». In both

songs, the lyrist used Biblical allusion as a vehicle of thematic enhancement. Here, after the songs are analyzed respectively as follows.

3.6.1 Biblical Allusion in «ግሪሳው ከቦኛል» «Girisaw Kebognale»

In this song for the purpose of meaning enhancement, the lyrist made an indirect reference to a biblical story of David and Goliath from the book of Samuel.

ግሪሳው ከቦኛል ሰብሌም ሊበላ ነው	The birds have surrounded me, my yields are in jeopardize
ህይወቴን ማቆያው ወንጭፍህ ብቻ ነው	It is only your sling that keeps me alive
ጎልያድን ጥለህ ድል ያገኘህበት	Which is the weapon that shot Goliath and made you attain victory
ፉሪሳህን ስጠኝ ጀግና ልሁንበት	Give me your sling, and let me declare my heroism
አገሬው ጉድ ይበል ስግሬሞት ያውራ	Let everybody be astonished and speak amazingly
ከጀግኖች መካከል ያርገኝ የሰው አውራ	let they make me pop idol of human beings amongst the heroes.
አምስት ጠጠር ለቅመህ በአንዱ ድል ነስተሃል	After selecting five stones, you won victory with one
ዛሬ እኔ ልተካ አንተ አለም ያውቅሃል	You are famous today; let me overtake your part

(Desalegn, 1998 E.C) "Furisahin Sitegn".

The song line **"The birds have surrounded me, my yields are in jeopardized/It is only your sling that stays me alive"**. The lyrist used the two Biblical characters metaphorically, as a way of illuminating and developing the theme of the song. The Biblical giant Goliath is representative of the Philistines who challenged the Israelites. The Israelites therefore send a champion against him so that the issue of the war between the two countries might be settled by a single combat. The Champion name from the Israelites sides was David. David was too small, he had some stones and he threw one at Goliath and hit him in the head and immediately. Goliath died in the resulting contest by a

የአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ
ቤተ መጻሕፍት
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stone shot from the sling (1 Samuel 17:50). David was a small and weak, Goliath was huge and strong.

In this song, the use of Biblical allusion is important because of the following reason. David symbolizes the very small individuals who are weak unable and defend their adversary with their own might but by the Grace of God, where as Goliath is a giant hero of the Philistines who can manage Philistines problems with his own might but to be defeated. Refer to these opposite Biblical figures helps the song listeners to realize of their potential in overcoming their trouble without fearing their giant adversaries like Goliath. For instance, in the context of Ethiopia Goliath can symbolically represent problems that are deeply rooted in the countries political, social and economic system.

Generally, the use of Biblical allusion in this song enables to simplify listeners of the song to learn something and apply it to their own situation by developing a simple strategy for defeating their fierce opponent like the little David of the Holy Bible.

3.6.2 «እልም አለኝ አውቃለሁ›› « Hilm Alegn Awkalew»

This song has a thematic significance in that it reveals suffering, and also by the hope of ultimate good. It has also a message-life is controlled and directed by the Creator. Nothing is beyond the power of the Creator as revealed through the words **"Things are for our own good, blessed days are at hand."**

እልም አለኝ አውቃለሁ ነገን የማይበት	I have a vision through which I can visualize clear tomorrow
ቀንዲል የሚሆነኝ ሻማ ማበራበት	That will helps me to ignite Lamb Stick and Candle
ያስበኛል እሱ ፍላጎቴን ያውቃል	He will no let me down, He knows my desire.
ነገር ስበን ነው ስኔም ቀን ይወጣል	

Things are for good, blessed days are at hand

(Desalegn, 1998 E.C.) "Hilm Alegn".

The theme of the song evolves around the Biblical words embedded in the book of Romans: **"and we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose"** (Rom. 8:28). The context of Romans 8:28 teach as that though some people are children of God, they may still experience suffering in their life. Therefore, knowing this undeniable fact, they should not loss their hope because their present sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to them ahead.

Therefore, the use of the Biblical allusion in the song enriches the theme of the song .i.e. temporal anguish; lamenting and bad misfortunes are all designed to turn to eventual victory since the creator is in control of everything.

In this song, listeners for that reason get comfort of the promise which the lyrist guarantees in his lyric parallel to the statement of the Holy Bible. It asserts the theme optimistically hoping for the goodness of the day supposed to come.

3.7 Biblical Allusion in the Song of Aster Awoke

Artist Aster Awoke is a known Ethiopian singer and lyrist who dedicated all her life for the growth of modern music in Ethiopia for the last 35 years. She has been running in her romantic songs focusing mainly on the significance of the love between lovers. In her recent album, however, she is introducing issues related to the virtue of society using Biblical allusion. For example in the following song; «አንድ አድርገን›› "Ande

Adirgen" she raises an important issue the unity of people following God's will.

አቤቱ አንድ አድርገን ፈጣሪ አትስደን	O God unite us as one, and eliminate division among us
ጌታዬ አንድ አድርገን በሞራህ አትስየን	My Lord make us to eliminate
የአዳም ፍጥረቱ አንድ አይደለም ወይ	division among us
ስምን አስር ሆነ የሰው ልጅ ጠባይ	There not one creation in Adam?
ፍጹም ይቅር ብለህ በደላችንን	Why should our character be so diversified?
አንድ አምላክ ነህና አኛንም አንድ አድርገን	After your complete forgiveness of our transgression
	Since you are one God, make us one

(Awoke, 1999 E.C.) "Ande Adergen."

Aster Awoke in the above song utters of a prayer for the unity of her country's people. Her prayer alludes to the song from the prayer of Jesus in the Gospel of John "My Lord makes us to eliminate division among us..." Similarly, there is a Biblical prayer of Jesus for the unity of the future generations of Christians who would come to faith through the testimony of the disciples (John 17:20-29). Likewise, the artist's desire is to see the ultimate unity among the people of Ethiopia. This point is strengthened and justified by the prayer of Jesus **"I in them and you in me, may they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me"** (John 17:23).

This Biblical allusion highlights the theme which is the significance of unity among the people of Ethiopia. It urges the song listeners to live harmoniously reminding them of the prayer of Jesus.

3.8 Biblical Allusion in the Songs of Bisrat Garedew

Artist Bisrat Garedew is known for his song of marriage «ቃና ዘገሊላ» and «አሜን» "Amen". The song "Cana Zegelila", celebrates the happy beginning and ending of the wedlock. In this lyric, there is a Biblical story which alluded to. There is also a song «አሜን» "Amen"has a tone of prayer which reveals the need of accepting or agreeing with the situation once brought into someone's life. The songs are analyzed below.

3.8.1 The song «ቃና ዘገሊላ» "Cana Zegelila"

In the song «ቃና ዘገሊላ» "Cana Zegelila" there is a line **"Cana in the Galilee/ whom did the miracle/ / be amongst them /bless their wedding"** is a Biblical allusion taken from the book of Luke about the marriage banquet at which Christ turned water into wine.

ቃና ቃና ዘገሊላ	Cana Cana Cana .....
ቃና ቃና ቃና...	Whom did a miracle
ተዓምር የሰራኽው	Be amongst them
የታደምከው አምላክ	And Bless their Wedding
ተገኝ በመሐላቸው ጋብቻቸውን ባርክ	

*(Garedew **1998 E.C.**) "Cana Zegelila"*

Jesus performed this miracle in Cana, and his disciples put their faith in him (John 2:11). The occasion was a wedding feast at which wine had run out, which would have been an insult to the standards of hospitality of that day. In response to the crisis, Jesus supplied the lack by miraculously changing water into wine. The master of ceremonies recognized the superior quality of the new supply and commented on it to the bridegroom. Here, Jesus performed his first miracle, graciously relieving the embarrassment caused by the shortage of wine at a marriage feast.

By referring indirectly to this Biblical account of Cana in the above song, the speaker is expressing his wish to the good celebrity of his friend's marriage ceremony as in the story in Luke chapter three.

Associating this Biblical account, the song enables the song listeners to create an image of the event of Cana, which they have read in the Holy Bible regarding the miracle of Cana.

3.6.2 Biblical Allusion in «አሜን» "Amen"

The common Biblical word "Amen" is taken as an implicit reference to strengthen the theme of the song. The word "Amen" is a religious word which is common to church and other sacred areas. But its supporting source is the Holy Bible. For example, in the book Psalms, there is an approving statement; **"Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen** (Psalms 42:72). " In Christianity, uttering the word "Amen" is an indication and affirmation of a prayer request especially at the end of a spiritual wish. It is also an indication to acknowledge agreement or reinforce a statement that another person (cleric) has said.

ሆዴም አይናር መቆጨት	No regret I feel in my heart
ጉዳቴን ሳልቅስበት	Let me cry cover my affliction
ነገም ደግሞ ሌላ ቀን ነው	Tomorrow is another day
ዝገጁ ነኝ ልቀበለው	I am ready to accept what ever will come
ባላመልጥም ቀን ከጣለው	Although I can not escape destiny
ሰው ባይናረኝ አማን የሃሰው	Though I don't have witness
አልደፋሁም አንገቴን	I don't feel shame
ተቀበልኩት ብዬ አሜን	Rather I accepted it saying Amen.
	Amen Amen Amen ...
	Amen Amen Amen...

(Garedew 1998 E.C.) "Amen"

The word Amen in the above song is employed in response to what had happened in the life of the speaker, who agreed with the undeniable reality.

The word "Amen" in this song has a religious implication, which enables listeners of the song to realize that there are some difficulties they should accept saying the religious word 'Amen' particularly when they face insurmountable difficulties.

3.9 Biblical Allusion in the Songs of Tigist Wayisso

The following song "ምን ይነካኝ ብለህ» « Minyinekagn Bileh» is taken from Tigist Wayisso's album which was released in 1999 E.C. In this song, the girl (the speaker) was offended by offensive terms raised against her. For that reason, she met her trust in God hoping that He will protect against bad rumor.

ምን ይነካኝ ብልህ እንደው ስታስበው	What do you think will happen to me?
አንተን የመሰለ እያለ ጎኔ ሰው	Since I have a man like you after me
ግዴለም አታስብ አንተ እየለህልኝ	Don't worry since I have you
ምንም አልሆን አኔስ አንተን ያኑርልኝ	Nothing will happen to me so long as
የሰው ሚዛን የሚያውቅ የሰውን አፍ ሲሪታ	let God with me
ልብስን መልክን ሳይሆን ልብን የሚያይ ጌታ	The God understands the nature of human beings
	Hush people for will
	He sees the heart not appearance

*(Wayisso, **1999 E.C**) "Minim Alehone"*

In order to strengthen the theme the lyrist indirectly took reference from the book of Jeremiah in this manner; **"He sees the heart not appearance"** which has partial similarity with the Biblical verse **"I the LORD search the heart and examine the mind, to reward a man according to his conduct, according to what his deeds deserve"** (Jeremiah 17:10).

By referring to the Biblical ideas indirectly from the book of Jeremiah to the song, the singer is conveying that people's (her adversaries) heart is full of pride, ambition, evil desire, and corruption of all kinds. The singer is referring to how it is impossible to comprehend the hearts of human being absolutely. But the hidden character of man, though concealed from others, cannot escape the scrutiny of God since **"Instead of appearance He sees the heart."**

This Biblical allusion induces song listeners boast in the hope in God asserting the impossibility of understanding the human heart. Since the allusion from the Holy Bible highlights the theme of the song because of the following factors:

- Jeremiah believed to be the celebrated prophet (because of his reputation in the Christian society).
- The alluded verse is a saying of God passed through the prophet Jeremiah, which is highly regarded.

3.10 Biblical Allusion in the Song of Hibist Tiruneh

The following song is Hibist Tiruneh's Song «ያንኑ የገኔ ክፋይ» «Yaninu Yegone Kifay » a part of album released in the year 2000 E.C. This song has a thematic implication that men have great importance in the life of women since they are the source of their being.

ያንኑ የገኔን ክፋይ ርቄ በየት ልየው	How can I see my best half far off?
ሰው ባጣ የምልክው ዋዎይ! ልቤን ቆጨው	When I didn't find a messenger alas! I felt regret

(Tiruneh, 2000 E.C.) *"Beyet Liyew"*

This Biblical verse is found in the Holy Bible in the book of Genesis, Chapter two. According to this particular section of the book, once up on a time, God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, He took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh (Genesis 2:21). Starting that time onwards man is no longer alone. A human community had begun to exist in Eden with a more harmonious coexistence. The man and the woman became a one nature and brought into being in true partnership bound together in an intense love.

Similarly the speaker in this song is seeking a lover uttering **"How can I see that my best half far off?"** It is a rhetoric presentation of theme which reminds the audience how great a lover is in one's life.

3.11 Biblical allusion in the Songs of Mikiya Behailu

Artist Mikiya Behailu is among the known lyrists and singers who acquired recognition from her listeners. Her two songs directly alluded to in the Holy Bible story. Therefore, they have the power to transfer the intended message successfully. The songs are the song «ይሳካል አንድ ቀን›› «Yisakal Ande Qen» and «ዙሬ መጣሁ›› «Zore Metaw.» The following discussion is focused on the two songs to reveal how Biblical allusion is significant to the development of theme.

3.11.1 Biblical Allusion in «ይሳካል አንድ ቀን›› «Yisakal Ande Qen»

The following song «ይሳካል አንድ ቀን›› «Yisakal Ande Qen» has a preaching appeal about the disadvantage of worrying about temporal situation since there other possible times in which blessing are predestined.

ችሰው ከጠበቁት ቀን መምጫውን ያውቃል	People can wait paitently
	A better day will come
ነገ ስለ ራሱ ሲደርስ ይጨነቃል	Let tomorrow worries itself
የሰው ልጅ ከጸና በመንፈስ በአካሉ	If human beings can endure
ይሳካል አንድ ቀን የታሰበው ሁሉ	Their ambition will be fulfilled

*(Behailu, **1999 E.C.**)Yisakal Ande Qen"*

This thematic idea is highlighted through the Biblical allusion from the saying of Jesus in the Holy Bible in the book of Mathew. It is found in chapter six and is stated as **"therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own"** (Mathew 6:34). Jesus in this verse indicated that worry is just as a destructive agent to spiritual life. Therefore, He warned His disciples not to worry about the basic needs of life (Mathew 6:25-25). Relatively He courses them to recognize the providence of the Heavenly Father God for their needs. To strengthen His idea, Jesus urges them to learn from the life of birds; they do not plant any crops, they do not store any food in barns. Each new day they must hunt and gather food, yet they do not seem to worry. They are rather awake every morning singing joyfully.

Therefore, in the above song Jesus' instruction not to worry about tomorrow is taken as a vehicle of thematic enhancement. As a result, listeners combine the message of the song and the Biblical lesson not to worry about tomorrow by urging them to have greater confidence in God for their future. In other words, the use of this Biblical allusion serves as psychological edification for the audience of the song.

3.11.2 Biblical Allusion in«ዞሬ መጣሁ›› «Zore Metaw »

The song «ዞሬ መጣሁ›› «Zore Metaw » shares similarity with the parable of the prodigal son in the book of Luke, chapter fifteen. The lyric has comparable tone and thematic implication with the story of the Prodigal son (Luke 15), but the difference lies on its application in the story.

በሰጠኸው ፍቅር ልቤ ተቀማጥሶ	With your gracious love was being my heart pampering
ሹመት ንግስናውን አሳውቅበት ብሶ	And disregarding its ordination and its royalty
ጠግቦ ጌትነቱን አልችል ብሶ	And blustered by its lordship, with imprudent controlling
ሄደ ክብሩን ጥሶ ከቤትህ ኮብልሶ	Gone leaving behind its esteem
	From your home
ዞሬ መጣሁ	I returned back
አንተን መሳይ ፈልጌ አጣሁ	I didn't find anybody like you
ከኮበለለበት ከሄደበት ስፍራ	From the region where it moved out
ቢፈራረቁበት ውርደት ከመከራ	When dishonor and affliction recycling
ያን ጊዜ ፍቅርህን ልኩን አውቀል	At that moment it understood your love
ይቅርታህን ናፍቆ ልቤ ደጅ ቆሟል	Seeking your mercy, my heart is standing at the door

*(Behailu, **1999 E.C.**) "Zore Metaw"*

The story of the prodigal son describes relation between God and sinners. However, the lyric in this song Biblically alluded and shifted to a love between people of opposite sex.

The story is found in the book of Luke which is about the story of a man who has two sons. The younger demands his share of inheritance while his father is still living, and goes off to a distant country where he wastes his substance with unrighteous living, and eventually took work as a swine herder (clearly a low point, in Judaism). There, he came to his senses and determined to return home and throw himself on his father's mercy. But when he returns home, his father greets him with open arms,

and hardly gave him a chance to express his repentance; the father killed a "fatted calf" to celebrate his return (Luke 15:11-32).

By alluding to the parable of the prodigal son, the above song generates an infinite number of interpretations. For example, it invites the song audience to participate in it. In the context of this song, it gives a lesson to listeners on how important it is to pardon a lover and how it is good to be sympathetic to a lover, particularly when he/she returns to his fiancé.

3.12 Biblical allusion in the Song of Nathaniel Haile

Nathaniel Haile is one of the most successful contemporary singers. He won his popularity with his album «ሌት ይነጋል» «leyt Yinegal» immediate to it's commencement in 1999 E.C. One of the songs in this album is «የአብርሃም የሳራ» «Yeabrham Yesara ». It is about a warning notice in caring friendship between two partners. In this song, the lyrist directly employed Biblical allusion from the story of Abraham and Sara to magnify the significance of happy marriage.

According to the Holy Bible, both Abraham and Sara are considered as the prime example of matrimony because of their dedication to comply with each other as husband and wife with high reverence.

የአብርሃም የሳራ ብለን ያደምቅነው	We celebrated our marriage acclaiming that that it would be that of Abraham and Sarah
ዛሬ እንዲህ ነገር በዝቶ ቤቱን ያረከሰው	Today, our home is blemished by conflict
የሞቀው ቤታችን እንዳልተቀናበት	Though our home used to be envied
ፕሳቻ ሲወርሰው ኃላ እንዳናፍርበት	I am afraid that if it is overwhelmed by jealousy, it will become a source of embarrassment

(Haile, 1998 E.C.) "Yaberaham Yesarha"

Similarly, the song «የአብርሃም የሳራ» «Yeabrham Yesara » conveys advices to partners urging couples to maintain harmony in marriage. It advice that strong friendship and mutual liking are often the basis for repair of troubled relationships like Abraham and Saran, since both are considered biblically as the key example of happy marriage. The lyrist is therefore advising his listeners to learn about marriage from these Godly people of the Holy Bible. In other words, it recommends the listener to apply the lesson of the Biblical marriage of Abraham and Sara to their own life.

3.12 Interview Analysis

To get a first-hand account on the lyrists' personal views on referring to the Bible, to gain valuable insight about the thematic significance of Biblical allusion in contemporary Amharic songs, two lyrists namely Habtamu Bogale and Abrish Zeget were interviewed. The two lyrists were interviewed because of their repeated usage of Biblical allusion in most of the Amharic lyrics they composed. It is an attempt of capturing lyrist's stand on the viewpoint of using the Biblical allusion as a vehicle of thematic enhancement. Since the interview was to some extent an informal one, it induced them to respond.

The first question the lyrists were asked was about their frequency of using of Biblical allusion in their songs. Artist Habtamu answered that in almost all the lyrics he wrote, he used Biblical allusion assuming that his theme could get acceptance among his listeners and give might to his ideas. Because there are ideas which are not easily expressed stories of the Bible are alluded to.

Concerning his frequency of using Biblical allusion in most of the songs he has written, artist Abrish Zeget responded that he uses Biblical allusion because of his religious orientation beginning from his child

hood. His life background allows him to incorporate stories of the Holy Bible in the songs he has composed as means of strengthening idea he want to transfer. At a time when he sees the significance of Biblical allusion, he implicitly refers to the idea of the Bible in his songs instinctively.

The second question was about for whom lyrists compose their songs containing Biblical allusion. Artist Habtamu Bogale responded that he consider Christian listeners have knowledge of the Holy Bible. The lyrist here is talking about listeners who have awareness in Biblical knowledge. However, this may not be true about other people who listen to his songs; they might be listeners who do not have knowledge of the Bible. Concerning this idea, Artist Abrish Zeget argued that though some people do not have knowledge about stories of the Bible, they get additional knowledge from the songs which they receive through Biblical allusion. In other words, the ideas of the Bible implicitly incorporated in the song enable song listeners to get the message across.

The third question was about the significance of using Biblical by inspired ideas in songs. According to Artist Habtamu Bogale, placing Biblical allusion subtly in songs allows listeners to catch idea of songs easily, especially through an association with some of the Biblical stories which they know along with the message of songs; it enable them to grasp what the song preferred to communicate since song listeners consider the Holy Bible as true and justifiable book. In the same way, Artist Abrish Zeget agrees that when a song text incorporates ideas from the Holy Bible, listeners will find the song familiar with their knowledge of story from the Holy Bible and easily get the meaning of the song through meaning association. He added that since listeners respect the Bible as a sacred element, they are willing to accept stories related to it. The latter argument is evidence for whatever the meaning of the song is, if it is refers to the Holy Bible, it can also be a source of religious

inspiration. Therefore, Biblical allusion positively influences the mind of song listeners.

The Fourth question that was asked was about the intentionality of alluding to the Holy Bible. Artist Habtamu Bogale responded that most of the songs which he wrote are provided by the Biblical information unconsciously. But there are also times in which he wrote few songs intentionally. For example the song "Endeyihuda" can be taken as instance. After he got the desire to write the song regarding the notion of betraying someone for the sake of advantage, he had begun reading the story of Judea Iscariot from the Holy Scripture, especially from the book of John and Luke. Similarly when he wrote the song "Alamarerim Getaye" he took abundant time to study the Biblical story of Job. This shows lyrists are alluding to the Bible intentionally as a method of thematic signification by giving a considerable amount of time.

Regarding the intentionality of alluding to the Bible Artist Abrish Zeget agrees that ideas of the Holy Bible came immediately to his mind while he was of writing those songs. Therefore, he used those immediately inspired ideas of the Holy Bible to strengthen his ideas in his songs. For example, when he was writing "Furisahin Sitegn" (Give me your Sling), it is the story of the Bible that he used to read in the church (Sunday school class) came to his mind immediately. The alluded story of the song was the story of David and Goliath. Their contrasting conflict became a source for his song. Here it can be said that earlier life experience has influence the later works of the lyrist.

The fifth question that was asked was whose influence is marked in alluding to the Holy Bible in their songs. Artist Habtamu Bogale replied that some of the folk music in our country which used Biblical allusion became his leaning. Those folk songs which have Biblical allusion are the cause of his inspiration. As a result, their influence became his motivation to use Biblical allusion, in his songs. Especially the 'Begena'

songs can be taken as an example. Therefore for artist Habtamu those previously pioneered biblically alluded songs became his initiative for his current endeavor.

Abrish Zeget responded concerning whose influence is marked in his style of referring to the Holy Bible in his songs. He has been a devoted Orthodox Church follower and spiritual singer, housed to sing and write spiritual songs right from his teenage. In his spare time, he used to read the Holy Bible. His previous experience and his leaning towards reading the Holy Bible therefore helped him to refer to the Holy Bible to most of the songs he has composed.

Generally, the interview was indeed successful in getting a first-hand opinion of the two lyrists. Regarding Biblical allusion in songs, it gives an overview of the current trend of using Biblical allusion in contemporary Amharic songs.

Chapter Four

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this paper attempts of assessment made on the thematic significance of Biblical allusion in contemporary Amharic songs, its influence, and its contribution to songs, in terms idea strengthening. The songs have been examined just like any other literary works analytically, and thoroughly. Particular reference has been taken from the Ethiopian contemporary Amharic songs which exhibit Biblical allusion. By the use of Biblical allusion, a lyrist can say much more than is expressed in the allusive words; she/he can bring to mind Biblical stories in part or entirely. This often enables the lyrist to tell the theme of the song elaborately. If the reader finds the allusions and is already familiar with the work being alluded to, the job is considerably easier, she/he can immediately use the knowledge to interpret or re-interpret the work in question.

The Bible-both the Old and the New Testaments stories have influenced and continue to influence in many Amharic songs. A song which alludes to the Bible can be an agent to educate listeners through their knowledge of the Holy Bible indirectly. Amharic song Lyrist would enable to illustrate their subject matter in detail. They are able to demonstrate successfully by encompassing many themes and ideas from the Holy Bible in their songs which plays diversified roles in the lives of their listeners. It serves them as an encyclopedic reference for every song composed at any time.

By using Biblical allusion, most Amharic songs are underscoring and strengthening certain fundamental themes in their song. They are successful in showing inclusion of Biblical stories as aesthetic garments to the success of meaning. They are exposing the psychological, emotional, and spiritual need that edify those song listeners. And at the

same time, the songs attempt to instruct and expose the political, economical, social truths. They are also praising the countries emperors and warriors who worked to unite Africa and Ethiopia. There are also resound soulfully about the most essential truths of life – Love, hate, hope and so on.

The presence of Biblical allusion also helps to demonstrate some social issues like having hope through faith on God, women as gift from God, wishing the blessing of friends, and caring friendship at the core of between two partners. These are some the most common significances of Biblical allusion observed in Amharic songs as a tool for strengthening theme.

In general using Biblical in the Amharic songs important to make the song theme clearer, because of the following reasons:

- It serves as persuasive device as a result it can serve as a vehicle of changing listeners mind for a certain aspiration.
- It makes song listeners to understand the topic of discussions in a more elaborated manner.
- It can expose listeners to the wisdom and knowledge the writer possesses.
- It has connotations for the song listeners to understand more fully the point the lyrist is trying to make.

When the song listeners find the Biblical allusion and are already familiar with the work being aliuded to, the job is considerably easier. They can immediately use the knowledge to interpret or re-interpret the work in question. In some of the songs, however, Biblical allusion is presented as covertly for the purpose of aesthetic value, song listeners

may not understand theme of the song. A knowledgeable song listener, who is already aware of the Biblical allusion and familiar with the work being alluded to, can apply that knowledge to discover additional meanings instantly and facets embedded in the song. If not, the song listeners will be unfamiliar with the work alluded to, and the allusion becomes a puzzle since they do not immediately recognize the Biblical allusion. Therefore to avoid this puzzlement, there should be mechanisms to capture of the meaning of songs which exhibit Biblical allusion as follows.

- Describing those alluded ideas at the cover page of the song album.
- Or it is good to describe the referred idea of the Holy Bible in a separate sheet of paper in the Album along with the Cassette enclosure.

Once the work alluded to is known, the song listeners can then track down its original meaning in its original context.

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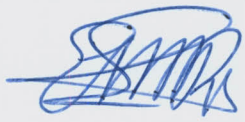
Declaration

This is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to literature, and acknowledgment of collaborative research and discussions.



Endale Besher Feleke

Addis Ababa University

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