

Addis Ababa University School of Graduate Studies

**Andōmta as an Interpretative Strategy with Reference to
the Book of Genesis**

By

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Dedication

To the memory of my late father Ato Alehegne Mengistie who was unable to witness the fruits of my labour, however modest.

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Key to transliteration

I have used the following symbols for the transliteration of phonemes, whose pronunciations are not immediately intelligible to the non – Amharic speakers.

Vowels

Sound	Symbol	Pronunciation	
		Amharic	English
አ	a	አመጣ	amät'ä
ሁ	u	ሙሉ	mulu
ኢ	i	ኢያሪኮ	Iyariko
ኤ	e	ኤፍራታ	Efrata
እ	ə	አንድምታ	andəmta
ኧ	ä	ጠፋ	täffa
ኦ	o	ኦሜጋ	omega
Consonant			
ሸ	š	ሸመት	šumät
ሻ	ž	አሳሻር	azažž
ቸ	č	ቸብቸቦ	čäbčäbbo
ጸ	p	ጸጥሮስ	pe'tros
ጠ	t'	ጠላት	t'älat
ጸ	ś	ጸሎት	śälot

Abbreviations

A	Andðm
A.A.	Addis Ababa
AC	Andðmta commentary
Acts	Acts of Apostles
BAC	Cowley, 'The beginnings of the andðm commentary Tradition,' <i>JES</i> , x, 2
Ch.	Chapter
Chr.	Chronicles
Col.	Colossians
Cor.	Corinthians
Cyr.	Writings of Cyril of Alexandria
Dan.	Daniel
Dt.	Deuteronomy
Did.	[Ethiopic] Didascalia
E.C.	Ethiopian Calendar
Ecc.	Ecclesiastes
Ecclus	Ecclesiasticus
EMML	Ethiopian Microscript Microfilm Library, A.A.
En.	Enoch
Eph.	Ephesians
Ep. Jer.	Epistle of Jermiah
Ex.	Exodus

Ez.	Ezekiel
FN	f፡፡tha nāgäst, 'Law of kings'
Gal.	Galatians
Gen.	Genesis
H.	Hatäta, an explanation in a commentary
HA	Haymanotä Abäw, 'Faith of the fathers'
Hab.	Habakkuk
Hag.	Haggai
Heb.	Epistle to the Hebrews
Hos.	Hosea
Int.	Introduction
Is.	Isaiah
Jas.	James
Jdg.	Judges
Jer.	Jeremia
JES	Journal of Ethiopian Studies
Jn.	John
Jon.	Jonah
Josh.	Joshua
Jub.	Jubilees
Jud.	Judith
Kgs.	Kings
Lam.	Lamentations

Lev.	Leviticus
Lk.	Luke
MA	<i>Aklilä Bərhan Wäldä Qirqos, mäšhetä amin, A.A. 1946 E.C.</i>
Macc.	[The Ethiopian books of] Maccabees
Mic.	Micah
Mk.	Mark
ML	<i>Aklilä Bərhan Wäldä Qirqos, märha lə bbuna, A.A., 1943 E.C.</i>
MW	mäqdəmə wangel
Nat. Lib.	National Library. A.A.
NT	New Testament
NTIAC	Cowley, 'New Testament Introduction in the Anḏmta Ccommentary Tradition
OT	Old Testament
OTIAC	Cowley, 'Old Testament Introduction in the Anḏmta Commentary Tradition, <i>JES, Vol.XII</i> , no. 1, pp. 133-175.
PN	Cowley, 'preliminary notes on the baläandəm commentaries,' <i>JES, vol.ix, no. 1, pp. 9 – 20.</i>
Ps.	Psalms
Qid	AC on Qəddase, the liturgy.
Rev.	Revelation

Rom.	Romans
Rt.	Ruth
Sam.	Samuel
Sin.	Sinodos
Song.	Song of Solomon
TH	təməhrtä Həbu'at
Thess.	Thessalonians
Tim.	Timothy
Tit.	Titus
TW	tərguame wangel
V	Verse
Wisd.	Wisdom
WM	wəddase maryam
YaWD	Dərsan of Yohannes afä wärq
Ywk	Yosef Wäldä Koryon
Zech.	Zechariah
Zeph.	Zephaniah

Abstract

Having read an Amharic commentary material on a given text, one can easily understand how the Ethiopic exegesis tradition is affluent with different kinds of literary features and techniques as an interpretative strategy. However, not enough research has been done in this huge area of study.

Thus, this research is done to put forward as a starting point for reasoning or explanation that the Amharic *andəmta* commentary material has its own valuable techniques as it identifies possible interpretative strategies that may help literary critics in their study of Amharic literature.

The research begins by providing a general introduction to the definition, history and sources of the commentary material. The main body of the thesis is to identify some of the peculiar features of the commentary and to show how these features fit into the overall interpretative strategy.

To do this, some strategic terms that are used in the *andəmta* commentary material are identified and show how the terms are drawn upon to justify the interpretation arrived at the *andəmta* commentary on the basis of the quoted texts from the Book of Genesis.

Chapter one

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Study of the traditional Amharic *andāmta* commentary on a given Ge'ez text is the highest stage of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwahādo Church education. As Heyer puts it, "here the foundation for the practice of the Orthodox faith is set forth, the education of monks prescribed, the theology of the fathers of the church firmly standardised, the calendar fixed and dogma practised."¹

The *andāmta* commentary can be defined as a translation and clarification of the Ge'ez texts of Biblical, certain patristic and liturgical books. The commentary serves to illustrate the underlying meaning of the translated Ge'ez text. It is a theological commentary in the sense that it sees the Bible as a book of divine revelation, but it shows a tendency towards theological polemics.

The mode of exegesis known as *andām* "consists of Amharic commentaries on Ge'ez texts,"² which are then interpreted using different strategies. It is the commentary in which, after the text has been interpreted once, a chain of successive comments (as many as 10 or 15 alternative comments) is given, each one being introduced by '*andām*' ('and or one'). For the Ge'ez *andām* commentary, *aw* (or) or *bo* (there is) is used instead of *andām*, which means "in addition to this meaning, there is another one."

While *andām* is used in the Amharic commentary, the alternative interpretations are introduced by the same word, with no words for 'secondly' or 'thirdly'. But it is the same as saying 'secondly' or 'thirdly'. Because this *andām* commentary has been defined once and for all, and cannot be altered, the student must remain within its confines, however much he may be devoted to research and enquiry. If he makes even a few small alterations, or makes any correction, many things will be spoken against him.³ People will say, for

example, "Master so-and-so has forgotten the interpretation; the Amharic has slipped his memory." ⁴

The *andämta* commentary material contains three strands: the Ge'ez text (*zär* or *näbab*), the Amharic translation of it (*zäybe*), and the commentary proper (*tärgwame*). The Ge'ez text (*zär* or *näbab*) is regarded as the "scholars' text" (*yäliqawänt zär*). This text is taken as correct, and those texts, which are found to be differing from it, are wrong.

The Amharic translation (*zäybe*) attempts to bring out, in fully colloquial and often Ge'ez - oriented Amharic, the essential meaning of the *Geez* text. Often several alternatives are presented, the alternatives either corresponding to different ways of understanding the Ge'ez text, or to different Amharic expressions of the same thought. The scholars versed in the commentary material call this type of translation the literal translation or interpretation.

Literal translation, as its name refers, "directly translates the Ge'ez text alone, and does not have any explanations."⁵ It is in this stage that they translate the ancient books from foreign languages into Ge'ez, especially those that were necessary for daily use.⁶ "People have further translated them into Amharic and are still at work on them now. However, since they had grown up with the profundities of the *andäm* commentary,"⁷ this type of Amharic translation was certainly new to the scholars. For this reason, the scholars of former times used to refuse to accept even the Bible, because it was a literal interpretation of texts without any explanation. Because of this, the commentators took the *andäm* commentary as convenient for taking the meaning the way they wanted to, correcting the text and making the text clear. Because they feared that an incorrect text, if translated just as it was without correction, would not make the meaning clear and might even lead to proselytise ones religion.⁸

The commentary proper (*tärgwame*) contains explanations (*hatäta*), illustrative stories (*tarik*), and quotations (*täqs*), and is often formed in Socratic way of question and

answer form (using *bilu* for the question). In this stage of commentary the commentator preserves the meaning only, without needing the text or keeping to its grammatical form. For example, it translates '*bäləwwa läzatti qwunśə*' as 'say thus to Herod', or '*antä kwäkwəh*' as 'you are a foundation'. All those who are mature in thought like only this type of interpretation of the text. However, those who have studied other languages and know other types of commentary choose the direct translation. The reason is that, if it is to be a literal translation, they must translate the actual words of the text.

It is not yet clearly known when the *andəmta* commentary type of interpretation of books began in Ethiopia. Similarly, it is not wholly clear who started it, or in which country it originated. But Ethiopian tradition affirms that it was when Old Testament books reached Ethiopia. Jewish teachers brought oral commentary on these books to Ethiopia; later the New Testament and Patristic writings were brought to Ethiopia, and Bible commentaries also were translated into Ge'ez. The Ethiopian teachers used the translated materials at their disposal to produce a commentary corpus which reached fairly definitive form during the Gondarine period in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries A.D.⁹ This is explained in the preface which appears at the beginning of some of the printed editions of the *andəmta* commentary.¹⁰

In Ethiopia, all the scholars of former times were very learned and upright, and they wrote, translating into Ge'ez, the Old and New Testament commentaries formerly interpreted by the Apostles, then by the 318 scholars, then by Athanasius, John Chrysostom, Cyril, Gregory, and their fellows, which were written in Greek, Hebrew, Coptic, Arabic, and Syriac. Then, in order that people should understand the commentaries, they translated them from the Ge'ez language into Amharic, putting the material in good order.

The *andōmta* commentary tradition includes lists of the prominent teachers who have passed on the commentary material from generation to generation. For Old Testament teachers, the traditional list starts from the time of Məḥḥlik I; from then up to the time of Frumentius (fourth century A.D.), Azaryas, Sadoq, Lewi, Aron, Al'azar, Həzbä Ra'ədy, Yəwahi, Akin, Səmə'əon, Enbaräm are listed.¹¹

The list continues up to the time of Täklä Haymanot (thirteenth century) with Yətamər, Abyud, Gedewon, Yared, Həzbä Barək, Täklä Qä'at, Asqä Lewi, Harbägwas, Yägnäh Mäsqäl, Yəqna Dawit, Zäl'əul, Minas, Abba Yədla, Həywät Benna Basəyon, Bäkurä Šəyon, Həzb Qäddəs, Bərhana Mäsqäl, Həywät Bänne, Set, Wäradä Məhrät, Zäkkaryas, Zär'əa Yohannəs, Täklä Haymanot.

After this and untill Echäge Qalä Awədd (late seventeenth cent.), Elsa, Fileppos, Həzqəyas, Tewodros, Yohannəs, Yohannəs Kämä, Endryas, Märha Kərdstos, Petros, Enbaqom, Ya'əqob, Matyas, Yohannəs, Bätträ Wängel, Abrəham, Zäwängel, Zämika'el, Bätträ Giyorgis, Zäkrəstos, Yämanä Ab, Həryaqos, Qalä Awadi are listed.¹² This is the same as the lists of abbots of Däbrä Libanos (əcəgewočč) except that other lists add another Zäkrəstos before Həryaqos, bringing the total to 57 so far.¹³

After this, the list of Old Testament teachers diverges from the line of abbots of Däbrä Libanos and continues: *Geta* Esdros, *Geta* Gälawdewos, *Mäl'akä Gännät* Wäsän, *Mäl'akä Gännät* Wäldä Maryam, *Mäl'akä Gännät* Täklä Haymanot, *Ato* Adärahən, *Arat* Ayna Gošu, *Aläqa* Šähayä Ləda, *Mämhər* Gäbrä Elyas, *Mämhər* Säwagännähu, *Bəuy* Təkle, *Mämhər* Filatawos, *Mäl'akä Gännät* Šəge, *Nəburä əd* Kəfle.

With respect to the teachers of the commentaries on the New Testament books, it is said that Sadi Pawlos and Mä'aləmm Petros interpreted the Ge'ez texts into Amharic, and that Sadi Pawlos then taught Zəkri; and Zəkri transmitted the teaching through Särwe

Kḏrḏstos, *Aläqa Gwangwḗl*, *Mämhḏr* Esdros, and Sḏnä Krḏstos, then Wäldä Ab. Wäldä Ab taught Wäldä Mika'el and Gäbrä Iyäsus.¹⁴

The succession of the teachers of the commentaries on the *fḗtha nägüst* and *arägawi mänfäsawi* are listed in the introductions to the *andḗmta* commentaries on these works, beginning from the fifteenth and sixteenth century respectively, when the works are claimed to have been translated into Ge'ez. There do not appear to be traditional lists of the succession of the teachers of the *andḗmta* commentaries to the other patristic and monastic works, though rather meagre bibliographical information about the more recent ones is available.

We are further told that in 832 E.C., the king called Dḏgnažän appointed *Abba* Yḗdla at the head of 150 scholars and instructed him to preach and teach in the whole of Ethiopia having Šḗlalḗsh (Etissa) as his home base; we are told that the commentary called *Andḗmta* was begun in this same place.¹⁵

Among the teachers who gave shape to the commentary, *Mämhḏr* Esdros was the one who contributed a lot. He revised the former interpretations by re-reading many books with the help of his disciples, as he was blind. He is said to have read 300 books and corrected many errors in the previous interpretations. And because of this, his interpretations are known until today as *mämhḏr* Esdros's interpretations.

Mämhḏr Esdros was identified as the 'four-eyed'¹⁶ because of the depth of his knowledge and the extent of his research. When his students dispersed throughout the country to teach, *mämhḏr* Esdros retired to an island in Lake Tana. However, he did not give up reading books. He read more books and set down their meanings better. Later he called his disciples from wherever they were staying with the following message. «**የቀረን ነገር አለና ኑ፤ እንደገና እንመርምር፤ እንማር**» which means "We have missed something; come. Let us pursue our research, let us learn." Many of his disciples respected their

teacher's words and came; but a few replied saying «ንሕነሰ ኢተወለድነ እምዝሙት (ዮሐ.8÷41) እኛስ አንተ አባታችን ሳትሰሰን (አዲስ ትርጉም ሳታመጣ) የተወለድን ነን፤ እንደገና ወደ ት/ቤት አንገባም» which means «we were not born of adultery (John 8v.41); we were born before you our father went lusting (before you brought a new commentary). We will not re-enter school.» Because of this, a few remained with their stand, while many accepted the call and got organized in the new plan of study. Therefore, two kinds of schools of interpretation were created. They are called the 'upper house' and the 'lower house'.¹⁷

The commentary of the disciples who refused to come when their teacher called them is the interpretation of the 'upper house'; and their school is said to be the Gojjam School of commentary. “The commentary of the 'upper house' gives a very long and thorough explanation for a given text.”¹⁸

The commentary of the 'lower house' is that of the disciples who improved the commentary and set down the meaning by reviewing the texts with their teacher. This is what is known as the Gondär School of commentary.¹⁹

Different Ge’ez and Amharic materials are used in the formation of the *andämta* commentary tradition. As we have seen above *Mamhär* Esdros read 300 books and pursuing researches on an island in Lake Tana, and *Aläqa Wäldä* Ab read also 600 books.²⁰ These numbers suggest that they studied virtually all available and relevant Ge’ez literature by the time.

As far as internal evidence is concerned, the *andämta* commentary only infrequently names its sources, so it may be supposed that much unattributed material has been utilised. Some of the attributed materials are discussed below:

Commentary material in Ge’ez has been used in the formation of the *andämta commentary* tradition. It has been used more often than it is cited by name. However, in

some contexts, it appears that the main outlines of interpretation of the *andəmta* commentary may have been worked out before the Ge'ez commentaries became available, and that, for this or some other reason, they lacked full acceptance. In the course of this paper, for example, I have investigated a certain rejection of a concept from the Ge'ez commentary material in the Amharic commentary.

In the commentary on Gen. 1v.3, 'The spirit of God' is rendered in Ge'ez as 'it is the wind, which is life for the waters, which purifies the water.' But in *Tərguame Orit* it is interpreted as 'it is an example of the Holy Spirit, which is given in baptism.' There are a few further explicit references to TW,²¹ TO,²² and a commentary on the Pauline epp.,²³ and a number of implied references to these or similar commentaries.²⁴

In the *andəmta* commentary tradition, commentators use religious history, biography of different individuals, and monastic stories to make their commentary as exhaustive as possible. Thus, the *andəmta* commentary draws upon *tä'amərat*, *gädlät*, *sənkəsar* and the books of monastic stories (*zena abäw*, *mäšhafä gännät*, etc.) account for about half the attributed references in this category.

Secular historical works are also important sources from which the commentator takes related stories, which can illustrate or explain his commentary. The principal works of secular history to which the *andəmta* commentary refers are *giyorgis wäldä amid*, *yohannəs mädäbbər*, *zena əskəndər*, and *zena eskəndəs*.

Other theological works in Ge'ez translation and various Ge'ez prayers and chants are also used in the *andəmta* commentary tradition. *hawī*, *aksimaros*, *gəbrä həməmat*, *mäšhafä adar* and the works of *ya'əqob zäsərug*, *mälkə 'a iyäsus*, *dəggwwa* are some examples.

Fisalgos, a work on natural history is also very often used in the commentary tradition. The book is the main source that talks about lion (e.g. Rev.5v.5), the unicorn (e.g. Ps.21v.21), the viper (e.g. Mt. 3v.7) and the phoenix (Is.40v.31).

The *andəmta* commentary contains comments both in Ge'ez (e.g. Jer. 14v.2) and in Amharic (e.g. Ps.19v7) concerning Ge'ez grammar; these appear to be taken from traditional *səwasəw* material. Some show a measure of awareness of the particulars of Hebrew grammar, e.g. 'In the Old Testament, the imperfect may be used for the imperative, or the imperative for the imperfect' (Jer. 34v.14).

To make their illustration concrete and acceptable by their audiences, the Amharic *andəmta* commentators present different local colours as a strategy. If we may take this as feature of the *andəmta* commentary material, it can be read as the evidence for the Ethiopianness of the commentary material. For example, in the *andəmta* commentary tradition, considering the extent of the *andəmta* commentary material, references, predominantly to the Gondarine emperors, are frequent. From my little reading, the following emperors are mentioned predominantly. Bazen,²⁵ Abrəha Asbəha,²⁶ Yədkunno Amlak,²⁷ Yəshaq,²⁸ Bə'ədä Maryam,²⁹ Na'od,³⁰ Ləbnä Dəngəl,³¹ Sərsä Dəngəl,³² Zädəngəl,³³ Susənyos,³⁴ Fasil,³⁵ Yohannəs I,³⁶ Iyasu I,³⁷ Täklä Haymanot I,³⁸ Tewoflos,³⁹ Yostos,⁴⁰ Bəkaffa,⁴¹ Iyasu II,⁴² Täklä Haymanot II,⁴³ Sälomon,⁴⁴ Tewodros II.⁴⁵ In addition, while Bazen and Abrəha and Asbəha are mentioned as distant historical figures, the references to the later emperors contain interesting snatches of social history; for example, of sarsa Dəngel (Mälläk Säggäd), the *andəmta* commentary relates that the daughters of his palace used to swim at Gorgora,⁴⁶ that in his time the harp was brought to Ethiopia,⁴⁷ Ps.150 v.4 and that when he was fighting the Fälashas his tent had to be moved three times because of the streams of blood.⁴⁸

And sometimes the *andämta* commentary contains references to stories about the Ethiopians. The commentators might take these stories as illustrations of specific points. For example, *Ras Wäldä Ləḵul*, mentioned in Ecclus. 11V.12, is taken as an example of a complete incompetent appointed person to high office; *Qob Astəl Haylu* and *Təqur Käbte*⁴⁹ are examples of people of great authority who had not received formal appointment. *Abba Asbe*⁵⁰ was considered unfit to be a witness in a law court, and he used to eat his meals in the public market place. A man called *Kurfo*⁵¹ is said to have died after eating some 25 kilos of beans.

Unfortunately, many of these stories, while illustrative of social history, are undateable; there are, however, clear references to the period of the Gondär kingdom: for example, the notes that *aqabe sä'at Abranyos*⁵² taught that after three prostrations to the Trinity, one prostration to the Virgin Mary should be added; that until the time of Sə'ul Mika'el⁵³ gourds of honey were sold without tipping out their contents for inspection. But then this was stopped because of fraudulent practices, and that *Qes Ase Məḥərka Dəngəl*⁵⁴ wrote, 'Jesus the Nazarene' on his clothes. The ACFN, in particular, contains miscellaneous materials on the social and religious history of Gondar.⁵⁵

Commentators also present geographical references to make their commentary as tangible as possible. I have tried to examine some references in the *andämta* commentary to Ethiopian places and tribes like Gondär city,⁵⁶ places and churches in Gondar,⁵⁷ areas, rivers and lakes in the present Gondär administrative region, such as Dämbiya, Sämen, Tadda, Angäräb, and Tana,⁵⁸ Bägemdər,⁵⁹ places or rivers in Gojjam region, such as Arängo, Yəbaba, Abay river, etc.⁶⁰

Places references are also used in the *andämta* commentary to effect solidity in their commentary, e.g. in answering the question 'Why did Costantine choose Nicea for the council?' the comment⁶¹ replies, 'Because it is a wide plain, just as people say, 'A

wide plain like Wäagda''. *Andəm*. Because it is a central place, like Arängo and Yḁbaba, which are central for people from Gojjam, Bägemḁdr, Tḁgre, Lasta and Wällo. *Andəm*. Because it is a convenient place like the Gondär of former times.'

The *andəmta* commentary infrequently cites the interpretations of named teachers. It appears from the contexts in which their opinions are recorded that some of their interpretations were considered sufficiently important to be added to the tradition after it was substantially complete, and that the period to which the small group of named teachers belong, namely the late eighteenth century, is the close of the latest stage of real development of the *andəmta* commentary.

The most prominently named and identifiable teachers are *Mämhḁr Esdros*,⁶² *Mäl'akä Gännät Täklä Haymanot*,⁶³ *Ato Adärahḁn*,⁶⁴ *Mämhḁr Wäldä Rufael*⁶⁵. Commentators mention the name of teachers in their illustration to indicate the named teacher's different commentary version on a given text. For example, of Ato Adärahḁn, it is noted that the most carefully counted verses in Isaiah⁶⁶ are different from the traditional one; the *andəmta* commentator records his achievement as noteworthy, but has not in practice adopted the result he obtained.

1.2. Statement of the problem

As I have indicated above, this traditional exegesis developed by the ancient Church of Ethiopia was established as early as the 14th century AD.⁶⁷ However, not enough research has been done in this vast area of knowledge. Why?

As Pederson mentions three probable reasons can be given. The main one is that it was passed down orally until recent time in which recordings has begun. Those who are familiar with the traditional school of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahḁdo Church, "the absence of written material is well-known. Eager students may in private write down some

notes to support their memory, but books and notes were not and are not used in classes"⁶⁸ except to memorise the Ge'ez text or the *zār* to be commented-upon.

The second reason "may be the failure on the scholars part to recognise the significance of the few bits of exegesis they might have come across."⁶⁹ This was the case with Cowley, in whose attempts we get some explorations of some of the material in question. In his own words, as cited by Pederson, he tells us:

I had probably absorbed some prejudices about the state of Biblical and patristic studies in the Ethiopian Church, and for the most part I had not read, or even heard of, the non-Ethiopian sources which contributed to the *andāmta* commentary tradition. Principally, however, I was unaware of the *andāmta* commentary as a possible object of study, and conditions for study were unfavourable.⁷⁰

And the third reason is that "the scarcity of people who are efficient enough in both Ge'ez and Amharic and, at the same time sufficiently familiar with Biblical studies, particularly with patristic Bible exegesis."⁷¹

This study, thus, attempts to make up for the said lack of attention and fill up the gaps in order to facilitate further work in the field. Based on the points so far discussed, this study will try to answer the following research questions:

1. What do we mean by *andāmta* commentary?
2. Does it have its own peculiar features? If so, what are they?
3. How do they function?
4. How can it be seen as an interpretative strategy?
5. What sources do the scholars use?, etc.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General objective

The general objective of this study is to describe and explain how the traditional Biblical Amharic commentary material of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwahido Church is interpreted. And to present in translation a sufficient sample of the Amharic commentary material from the Book of Genesis, which is selected as the reference and at the same time show how the interpretative strategy works.

The analysis has been supported by translations of the Amharic commentary taken from one of the books of the Holy Bible. The text that has been chosen for this part is the commentary of the Book of Genesis. I have chosen this book because the *andāmta* commentary on it is extensive and includes materials collected from a variety of sources, for example from the Ge'ez commentary materials of the Books of the Old Testament and the New Testament, the Books of Scholars and the Monks. However, I have used other 'sacred' texts for more explanation, like the Book of Psalms and the Book of the Apocalypse of St. John.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The research also has specific objectives that are drawn from the general objective. These specific objectives are the following:

- a. To provide a general introduction to the definition, history, sources, etc. of the corpus;
- b. To identify some of the peculiar features of the commentary and to show how these features fit into the overall interpretative strategy;
- c. To identify the strategic terms and show how these terms are drawn upon to justify the interpretation arrived at in the *andāmta* commentary.

1.4. Methodology of the study

As the study is more of a theoretical undertaking, it is mainly based on library research. The project started with the assessment of reference materials written on the subject. This effort of assessing related materials from libraries was backed by interviews and discussions conducted with different intellectuals who have specialized in the area.

1.5. Significance of the study

Ethiopian literature, until about a century and half ago, was chiefly Christian Ge'ez literature (Ephrem,1998: 1). The writing of non-religious works has been practically neglected for quite a long time. Thus, we may conclude that Ethiopian Ge'ez literature is the Christian literature of the Ethiopian Orthodox Täwahðdo Church.

However, this huge area of study does not seem to have attracted the attention of many researchers. Many scholars have criticised this. Däbbäbä, for example, criticizes modern Amharic literature for its neglect of the valuable literary techniques of Ethiopian Ge'ez literature. As he puts it, "I am afraid that Amharic literature, due to the negligence of the authors and lack of criticism on Ge'ez literature, does not seem to benefit fully from the strong aspects of Ge'ez with respect to forms and writing techniques."⁷²

However, Däbbäbä does not give us a clue as to what these forms and techniques are. This research is thus expected to introduce one of these forms the *andämta* by way of discussing what Däbbäbä and others have not pointed out quite clearly. Besides it paves the way for further research on the area as it identifies possible interpretative strategies that may help literary critics in their study of Amharic literature.

1.6. Scope of the Study

As the world of *andämta* commentaries is a world in which a person's whole life may be lived, such a tradition cannot be sufficiently described and explained in such a

short study. Therefore, in order to limit the scope of this study, the following matters have been excluded, as they can constitute two research undertakings in their own rights.

- a. Comparison of Ethiopian exegesis with other exegetical traditions;
- b. Detailed consideration of the theology of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwahādo Church.

On the basis of the above background information, this thesis is going to be constituted.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

For the international academic world, the study of Ethiopian Bible commentaries is a field in its infancy. In fact, the entire bibliography of publications in this area can be listed on one page. First, there was the groundbreaking work of the late Roger W. Cowley, who can be credited with inspiring research in the area. In addition to some preliminary articles, he published two books. His articles and books are discussed in their order of publication year.

“ Preliminary Notes on the Baläandem Commentaries” (1971) is an introductory work he wrote on the commentary material. Cowley tried to discuss some preliminary notes on *andämta*, which paved the way for his later works. Expressing his regret that the corpus has attracted little attention from foreign scholars, or outside the immediate circle of the *mäshaf bet*, from Ethiopians, he tells his readers that the corpus exhibits a number of noteworthy features. Moreover, having discussed the general features of the books, which are commented upon by the corpus, he briefly discusses that the Amharic used in the materials contains old linguistic features. He further indicates that we find some foreign words, alphabets, etc. in the materials. Cowley more significantly discusses the general features of the books which are taught in the *mäshaf bet*, namely, the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Fathers and the Books of the Monks, as well as the Liturgy and Canon Law.

Discussing the general format of the books, he says,

In overall form they consist of introduction and text with comment. Most of the printed ones have an imperial preface in Amharic relating the difficulty of obtaining books in Old Testament times, the activity of Ezra, the translation of the Septuagint, the translation of the Scriptures into Ge'ez and their interpretation into

Amharic, the destruction created by Graññ, the preservation of the Christian faith in Ethiopia and the Emperor's desire to have Christian books printed.⁷³

Because the famous teachers of the *andāmta* commentary came from various areas of Ethiopia, and Old Testament studies, for example, have a strong link with Gojjam as well as with Gondar, it is to be expected that *andāmta* commentary material contain dialectal variations of the older Amharic.

Besides, from the time that Ge'ez ceased to be a spoken language, Ge'ez texts must have been translated into Amharic and the body of semi-traditional comment handed down. Gondär church teachers consider the commentaries to have assumed their present form in the days of the Gondär kingdom, and whether this is true or not, and even though teachers and copyists may have attempted to 'modernise' the language, the material can be expected to contain old linguistic features.

This research, therefore, seems to be an important undertaking for those who are interested in researching the linguistic features of the language of the Amharic *andāmta* commentary corpus. However, I am not interested in discussing the linguistic features of the commentary material. Rather, I, having the features seen in the commentary material, shall focus on how *andāmta* is seen as an interpretative strategy by providing some theoretical background as well as exemplary texts.

Cowley has produced another research on the subject under the title "Beginnings of the *Andām* Commentary Tradition" (1972). His aim is to show that marginal annotations to MSS are closely associated with the development of the written *andām* commentary tradition, that they are probably the actual literary nucleus around which this oral tradition crystallised and was reduced to writing. To do this, he has examined three annotated MSS and he further compares these annotations with the *andām* commentaries-thoroughly in the case of the 4 books of Kings, randomly in the case of other books-below which he gives

the material on I Samuel, which he thought to be a fair sample of the whole. Procedurally, he gives the annotated Ge'ez word first, then the reference, and then the annotation.

This work of Cowley on marginal annotations of existing commentaries may come in handy for approaching the subject in terms of using the marginal annotations to MSS to discuss the features and their functions in the interpretation. This work should be taken as an important guide to explore the commentary material by using the marginal annotations to the rest of the commented upon MSS. However, as its approach is different, my study might not directly be the beneficiary of this work.

“Old Testament Introduction in the *Andəmta* Commentary Tradition” (1974) is Cowley’s third valuable research on *andəmta*. Here, he discusses how each Book of the Bible is furnished with an introduction dealing with matters of authorship, content and canonicity. More importantly, the study gives an English translation of a selection of Old Testament introductory material⁷⁴ “in order to illustrate the traditional attitudes to, and interpretations of, the Old Testament books in Ethiopia”⁷⁵. Cowley tells us that none of this material had previously been translated into a non-Ethiopian language. As an appendix to his brief study, he has added a translation of a chapter from a book by *Liqä Sə l’ānat* Habtä Maryam Wärqnäḥ⁷⁶ on the commentary tradition about the ancient teaching of Ethiopia together with some bibliographical and historical annotations.

Cowley also wrote a similar study on New Testament introduction, entitled “New Testament Introduction in the *Andəmta* Commentary Tradition” (1977). In this research too, he discusses how matters of authorship, content and canonicity are treated in the Books of the New Testament. Finally, he gives English translation of introductory materials of some selected Books of the New Testament.

In the previously mentioned two studies that deal with the introductory materials of the commentary, Cowley mentions lists of books in the two Testaments that are accepted by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tāwahǎdo Church's biblical canon.

Since Cowley's ultimate focus is on the introductory materials of the commentary corpus, he does not seem to have given attention to the features of the commentary and to show how these features fit into the overall interpretative strategy. That aspect is going to be discussed in this study in addition to some historical background on the corpus.

“*Māmḥǎ* Esdros and His Interpretation” (1980) is another study in which Cowley investigates the life of *Māmḥǎ* Esdros, one of the known exegetes during the Gondarine period, about whom some information is available from Ethiopian historical sources, from oral tradition, and from the *andǎmta* commentary material, and whose name is remembered in the commentary schools of today. After briefly telling us about the biography of the scholar, he gives supplementary material on the traditional line of the transmission of the *andǎmta* commentary, lines of *qǎne* and *zema* from one individual to another by listing the names of the scholars alphabetically. The work is helpful to those who want to undertake biographical research on the exegetes versed in the area. This study seems to be an important undertaking for the study of the history of the commentary material in detail.

Cowley's other work, which was published in a book form on the subject is *The Traditional Interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church* (1983). In this work, he treats three closely related subjects. The first (pp.1-61), which is titled “The *andǎmta* Commentary Corpus, its character, provenance, and development,” touches upon every important aspect of the Ethiopian exegetic tradition. The corpus or the content of the *andǎm* commentary is reviewed in detail on pp. 61-64. These pages not only exhibit the impressive wealth of the *andǎmta* commentary material and Cowley's personal

library but also provide us with his thorough study of each of the books reviewed. Understandably, the materials which are of interest to the teachers of the *andəmta* commentary include Old Testament and New Testament scriptures, monastic writings, patristic and liturgical books. Very few of these are published in Ethiopia, and the vast majority are preserved in manuscripts. The reason for this, as Cowley points out, is that the *andəmta* commentary has been transmitted orally from generation to generation.

The second subject (pp. 65-156) is an annotated translation of a Ge'ez commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John as preserved in the British Library MS Orient 13830 (pp. 116– 192). Since this manuscript is apparently not described in any published catalogue, a brief description of it would have been a helpful addition in Cowley's work.

The third subject (pp.157-381) is an annotated translation of the Amharic commentary on the Apocalypse in *mäšhaftä haddisat sostu, nəbab kännätərgwamew*, edited by *Liqä Liqawənt Mähari Tərfē*, and published in Addis Ababa in 1951 E.C., (pp. 347–484). Cowley used the twentieth century MS to show some linguistic features which were omitted when the *andəmta* commentary of the Revelation was published, and to enrich the translation with pieces of information which were apparently not transmitted to or from *Liqä Liqawnt Mähari Tərfē*.

These three sections are distinctly different from each other so that one may be justified in considering them as three separate works. Cowley has taken the time to look for some similarities between *Tərguame Qälämsis* and the *andəmta* commentary of the book of Revelation, but their difference is obvious. In fact, “*Tərguame Qälämsis* completely differs from the *andəmta* commentary of the Revelation on certain points, and specifically opposes certain views well represented in the *andəmta* commentary and widely adhered to in Ethiopia”⁷⁷.

The book concludes with a useful bibliography of printed works and unpublished dissertations, and two indices: a general index and a set of indices to Ge'ez literature, including canonical and patristic books and the *awalḍal*.

Cowley's last contribution on the subject is his *Ethiopian Biblical Interpretation: A Study in Exegetical Tradition and Hermeneutics* (1988). In this book, Cowley explains in detail the kind of interrelation with regard to content, but does not develop sufficiently the formal, literary aspect of the Ethiopian exegesis in relation to its different patristic sources. The main questions which the study seeks to answer are: "With which exegetical tradition(s) does the traditional Biblical (and patristic) Amharic commentary material of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church stand in essential continuity, and what are the processes that have made this tradition what it is?" (Cowley, 1988:17)

To answer these questions he made some sample studies of the commentary with the aim of illustrating the use of non-Ethiopian traditions and the selection of material. This introductory chapter is followed by an investigation of the relationship between Ethiopian and Jewish commentaries with Greek, Syriac, and Arabic commentary materials. The main body of the work consists of the texts and translation of the *andḍmta* commentary on Genesis 1-2v.4 and Hebrews 1, preceded by surveys of the materials which have contributed to Ethiopian Orthodox Christian understandings of the Creation and of Christology followed by comparative studies of selected exegetical motifs. In the concluding chapter, Cowley attempts to briefly draw together some of the factors that have generated the commentary. He chose "the Creation" and "Christology" as the central themes to compare the Ethiopian commentary material with other traditions "because they are basic to the Ethiopian Orthodox presentation of the Gospel and are pervasive in the commentaries, and, in addition, because they are so fully treated in other literatures that they are very suitable for comparative study" (Preface vii).

In his conclusion, Cowley remarks that Ethiopian Biblical commentary is inherited from much non-Ethiopian exegetical tradition from the second to the thirteenth centuries A.D. He says: “The Ethiopian *andፅmta* commentary tradition is an exegetical tradition which has an essential continuity with Antioch exegesis, and which Ethiopian scholars have moulded into its present form” (p.382). But we see Cowley stating that the *andፅmta* commentary stood its ground in the face of all the influences. As he puts it, “Although its sources have been variously influenced by hermeneutic theories and doctrinal concerns, these theories and concerns have not influenced the Ethiopian development of the tradition” (*Ibid.*). Though it has the merit for comparative research undertakings in between the Amharic *andፅmta* commentary with other commentary traditions, it has nothing to do with my research.

Another study that should be considered is a brief study by Verena Böll titled, “Some Remarks About the *andፅmta* on the *Qፅddase Maryam*, specifically the Anaphora of Our Lady Mary from Hፅryaqos of Bፅhፅnsa” In this study, Böll briefly discusses some of the features of the *andፅmta* commentary of the Anaphora of St. Mary to show how she is going to deal with the topic for her PhD dissertation. As the dissertation is written in German, I couldn’t review it here because of my illiteracy on the language.

Another book on the subject is Pederson’s *Traditional Ethiopian Exegesis of the Book of Psalms* (1995). In her introductory remarks, Pederson briefly discusses the *andፅmta* commentary, beginning with its definition and describing its characteristics and the technical terms used in the corpus.

In addition, in the second part which forms the main part of the book, Pederson gives an annotated translation of the Book of Psalms. As a background for her translation, she has tried to discuss the composition of the book and its use in the Ethiopian Church and in other churches. For example, she shows that, in the Hebrew canon, the Book of Psalms is

divided into 5 parts, namely, Book Pss. 1-41, Book Pss. 42-72, Book Pss. 73-89, Book Pss. 73-89, Book Pss 90-106, Book Pss. 107-150, while the Geez division in the *andāmta* version is like Book Pss. 1-10, Book Pss. 11-20, Book Pss. 21-30, etc.

Pederson also discusses the matter of authorship of the Book of Psalms. Even though the Book of Psalms is traditionally ascribed to King David (in Ethiopic it is referred to as *Mäzmurä Dawit*), she tells to her readers that this attribution of authorship is difficult because “ the Hebrew titles of the Psalms attributed 73 of them to David, 12 to Asaph, 11 to the sons of Korah, 2 to Solomon, 1 to Heman, 4 to Ethan–Idithun and 1 to Moses, while 50 Psalms have been handed down anonymously.”

Pederson also remarks that the Book of Psalms has from the very birth of Christianity been the backbone of Christian prayer. Here, she discusses how Ethiopian Christians divide the Book to recite privately. To make her study as exhaustive as possible she has made a survey of published works of traditional exegesis of the Book of Psalms. She has mentioned some works that are published in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Syriac and Arabic. She has also tried to briefly compare the sources, interests and exegetical methods of the Amharic commentary material with other traditions. The translation she made of the *andāmta* commentary on parts of the Psalms, which forms the main part of her work, is more important to those who are interested in studying the features of the commentary material of the Book of Psalms and the methods used in it.

“The Teaching of *Tərgum* in the Ethiopian Church” by Frederic Heyer (1960) should not be forgotten, although covering a very small portion of the material available and must form the starting point of any scientific research on this topic. Heyer, has tried to discuss when, how and where the teaching of *tərgum* (which is referred to in this paper as *andāmta*) takes place. The article is relevant for those who work on the teaching aspect of the corpus, with which I am not dealing.

To the aforementioned publications, we ought to add Miguel Angel Garcia's recent publication on the subject. His book, entitled *Ethiopian Biblical Commentaries on the Prophet Micah* (1999), is presented in three sections. The first details his eight source manuscripts for the Ethiopian commentaries on the prophet and his reasons for dividing them into three groups. Since the commentary manuscripts also incorporate Biblical text to a greater or lesser degree, Garcia has in addition consulted four manuscripts and two printed editions of the book of Micah, all of which are described in the work. The second section of the book discusses literary forms and technical terminology. The third, the bulk of the book, presents an edition of one manuscript from each of these three groups along with an English translation, i.e. the text-critical edition of Ethiopian exegetical commentaries on the prophet Micah. Though its relevance to my study is little, it definitely has a significant value to those who work on a comparative study of the rest of the commentaries in other traditions.

The main indigenous accounts of the *andämta* commentary are those by Habtä Maryam Wäraqnäḥ /*Liqä Sätanat*/ (*t'äntawi yäityopya sər'atä tämḥärt*. 1971 E.C.); Enbaqom Qalä Wäld /*Aläqal*/ (*Collection of Sources for the Study of Ethiopian Culture: Documents on Traditional Ethiopian Education, And Traditional Ethiopian Church Education*, 1965 E.C.), Aklilä Bärhan Wäldä Qirqos (*märha läbbuna*. 1943 E.C.), Kidanä Maryam Getahun /*Abba*/ (*t'äntawi yäqolo tämari*, 1954 E.C.); and Mänkär Mäkonñḍ /*Mämḥär*/ (*mäshetä liqawḍnt*, 1972 E.C.). These Church scholars, having had a first hand experience in the traditional schools of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, have tried to discuss the history and some of the features of the corpus. Moreover, they have focused on how the corpus is taught in the Church schools. In this thesis, however, no attention is given to the teaching aspect of the corpus.

Fጅqrä-Dጅngጅl Bāyänä, too, has tried to discuss the contribution of the *andጅmta* commentary tradition to the development of Amharic. In his ‘‘yä’*andጅmta tጅrguame lä’amarጅñña ጅdgät*’’ (1974), Fጅqrä Dጅngጅl has suggested that Amharic will benefit if it takes some techniques of using words from the language of the *andጅmta* commentary material.

It is impossible to deny that the above reviewed studies are insignificant to pursue further researches on the area. They are noteworthy as reference sources and pointing studies towards other titles which are not yet explored. However, as my study emphasizes on the features and methods of the Amharic *andጅmta* commentary material as an interpretative strategy, I do not directly benefit from them. Actually, the suggestions and comments we find in the works will be taken into consideration.

Chapter three

3. Features of the Commentary Material

Andōmta has its own features and methods to explain a 'religious' text. Its essential integrity is demonstrated by its unity of style and by the many cross-references it contains. This chapter discusses concepts and features; each under a sub-heading with sample analysis from the text selected and demonstrates how these concepts and features fit into the overall interpretative strategy.

Thus, the chapter will have the following sub-sections:

3.1. Introduction as a recurring formula;

3.2. Standardized pattern;

3.3. *Andōm*;

3.4. *Hatāta*;

3.5. Other features.

3.1. Introduction as a recurring Formula

In the *andōmta* commentary tradition, each biblical book is furnished with an introduction dealing with at least some of the following matters.⁷⁸

- a. The writer's name and its meaning;
- b. The significance of, and reason for his name;
- c. The matters about which he wrote, or the history he relates;
- d. Important doctrines which were revealed to him;
- e. The canonical authority and abiding usefulness of his writing.

The Book of Genesis, as it is one of the books named as *bō luyat* (a term also applied to the whole Old Testament), has its own introductory section by which the commentator reveals some information about the book commented upon. The information includes them as matters of authorship, content, usefulness and canonicity.

3.1.1. *Authorship*

In the introductory material of the book commented upon, the name of the author is clearly cited as:

ጌታም ሙሴን ጠርቶ እንዲህ አለው። ሕግ የምሠራላችሁ እኔ ነኝና ና። ሙሴም እስራኤልን ጠርቶ ኢትትዋኩቱ፤ ግርግር አትበሉ፤ ነገርም ያለበት ሰው ቢኖር አሮንና ሐር ጉዳዩን ይስጧችሁ ብሎ አሮንንና ሐርን ዋናና ምክትል አድርጎ ሾመላቸው። ይህንንም በአራት ክፍል አድርጎ ጽፎታል። ስለምን ቢሉ በአራቱ ማዕዘን ምሉዕ የሆነ ጌታ እንዲመሰገንበት። ከአራቱ ባሕርያት የተፈጠረው ሰውም እንዲጠቀምበት እንዲያመሰግንበት፤ እንዲጠበቅበትም።

...God called Moses, and said to him, *'It is I who will make a law for you. Come'*. Moses called Israel and said, *'Do not quarrel, do not create disturbances, do not fight each other. If any man has enmity or an argument, let Aron and Hur hear the matter for you,'* and he appointed for them Aron and Hur as chief and deputy. He wrote this in four sections. If you ask why, it was by reason of his knowing that the Lord who is at the four corners of the earth would be praised with it, and that man who was created from the four elements would find profit in it, would often praise with it and would be guarded by it.

In the quoted text, we can easily see that Moses wrote the Book of Genesis having had all the information from God.

In most of the commentaries of the books commented upon of the Church the names of the authors are mentioned with their different meanings.⁷⁹ But the name of Moses is not clearly defined in the introductory material of the Book of Genesis. Nevertheless, instead of defining the name of the author, the commentator, as we very often see⁸⁰, gives the alternative meanings of the noun (i.e. *Orit*) added to the title of the Book *Zäfdärät*. This helps the commentator to tell his readers or hearers what the text is all

about. For example, though the author independently treated the matter of content at the end of the introductory material, the following explanation can vividly tell us the overall content of the book:

ኦሪት ማለት ዜና ማለት ነው። የጥጦስን የሐሳዊ መሲህን የምጽአት ነገር ትናገራለችና። አንድም ስምዕ ማለት ነው። ስማዕ እስራኤል አሐዱ ውእቱ እግዚአብሔር አምላክከ ብላ አምልኮቱን ትመሰክራለችና።

አንድም ስምዕ ማለት ነው። ስማዕ እሥራኤል አሐዱ ውእቱ እግዚአብሔር አምላክከ ትላለችና።

አንድም ሕግ ማለት ነው። ሕግ ሠርታ ሕገ ይኩንክሙ ትላለችና። አንድም ሥርዓት ማለት ነው። ሥርዓት ሠርታ ሥርዓተ ይኩንክሙ ትላለችና።

አንድም ቃል ማለት ነው። ወወረደ ኤር ቅዱስ እንዲሉ።

አንድም ብርሃን ዘተፈነወ ማለት ነው። ኤር' ማለት ብርሃን ማለት እንደሆነ።

አንድም መጽሔት ማለት ነው። መጽሔት መስተዋት የዓይን ጉድፍ የጥርስን እድፍ ዐይቶ እንዲያሳይ። ኦሪትም ጽድቅንና ኃጢአትን ቆጥራ ለይታ ትናገራለችና።

Orit (Torah) means 'Zena' (news), for it narrates the story of the false Messiah, the Second Coming and the kingdom of Heaven.

Moreover, 'It means 'testimony', for it says 'Testify, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one'⁸¹

In addition, 'It means 'law', for having made a law, it says, 'Let this be an ordinance to you.'

Alternatively, 'it means 'word', just as they interpret, 'A holy 'er came down.'⁸²

Again, It means 'light that was sent', just as Ermyas (Jermiah) means 'light.'

And it says, 'it means a 'mirror', as mirror shows dirt on the teeth and grime on the head; the *Orit* reveals sin and righteousness, apostasy and faith'.

3.1.2. Content

By content, I mean the matters about which the commentator writes or the subjects treated in the texts to be commented-upon. The matter of content is clearly treated in the introductory section of the Book of Genesis.

በአራት ዘጠኝ ነገሮች አለብት። እነማን ናቸው ቢሉ ሕግ፣ ስምዕ፣ ትእዛዝ፣ አኮቴተ እግዚአብሔር፣ ነገረ እግዚአብሔር፣ ተግሣጽ፣ ምዕዳን፣ ጥበብ ሥጋዊ፣ ጥበብ መንፈሳዊ ናቸው።

There are nine subjects treated in the *Orit*. If you ask what they are, they are law, testimony, order, praises of God, the words of God, advice, prayer and material wisdom and spiritual wisdom.

This helps the commentator to 'brainstorm' his readers or hearers so that they will read in between the lines of the commentary.⁸³

3.1.3. Usefulness

In the *andōmta* commentary tradition, the usefulness of a given text is told in its introductory part. The commentator tells his audiences the significance of the commentary following his introductory material. As the overall purpose of the commentary is to let the audiences understand the commented-upon text, this way of telling the usefulness of the commentary material in advance is expected by the scholars of the corpus. In the introductory material of the Book of Genesis, the commentator clearly tells his audiences what they benefit from reading his commentary.

ይህም ተጽፎ ሲነበብ ሲተረጎም ከነቢያት እስከ ሐዋርያት ደርሷል። ሐዋርያትም ለቀሌምንጦስ ሰማንያ አንድ መጽሐፍ ቆጥረው ሲሰጡት ከብሉያት ስምንት በሐውርተ አራት ብለው ቆጥረው ሰጥተውታል። ስምንቱ በሐውርተ አራት ማን ማን ናቸው ቢሉ አራት ዘልደት፣ አራት ዘጸአት፣ አራት ዘሌዋውያን፣ አራት ዘጎልቁ፣ አራት ዘዳግም፣ አራት ዘኢያሱ፣ አራት ዘመሳፍንት፣ አራት ዘሩት

ናቸው። ይህም ለከንቱ አልተጻፈም። እኛ ልንመከርበት ልንገሠጽበት ነው እንጂ። ወኩሉ ዘተጽሕፈ ለተግሣጺ ዚኦን ተጽሕፈ ከመ በትዕግሥትን ወበተወክሎተ መጻሕፍት ንርኩብ ተስፋነ እንዲል።

This was written and was handed down from the Prophets to the apostles being read and interpreted, it. The apostles gave it to Clement⁸⁴, calling it the eight *divisions of the Orit*. If you ask what they are, they are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges and Ruth. These were not written for nothing but in order to be counsel, advice and instruction for us, as it says, ‘*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope.*’⁸⁵

3.1.4. Canoncity

By canonicity, I mean the important doctrines that were revealed to the writer. In the *andōmta* commentary tradition, the scholars tell us what the canons the writer of the commentary got from God are in order to write his book. For example, in the introductory section of the Book of Genesis, we are told that God told Moses all that he wrote in his book.

[ሙሴ] ኢያሱን አስከትሎ ወደ ደብረ ሲና ወጣ። ኢያሱን ከእግረ ደብር ትቶ እሱ ከርእሰ ደብር ወጥቷል። ሰባት የብርሃን መጋረጃ ተጋርዶ ነበር። ስድስቱን ገብቶ ከሰባተኛው ሲደርስ ቆመ። ስድስቱን ቀን በስድስቱ ዕለታት የተፈጠሩ ሃያ ሁለቱን ሥነ ፍጥረት በልቡናው ሲሥልበት ሰንብቷል። ሠላሳ አራቱን ቀን አምስት መቶ ሰባውን ትእዛዛት ወነበረ ወነበረ ያለውን ቃል ሲነግረው ሰንብቷል።

[Moses], taking Joshua, went to the foot of the mountain Sinai. Leaving Joshua at the bottom of the mountain, he went to the top of the mountain, and was shielded by seven curtains of light. Having passed through the six curtains he stopped at the seventh. For six days, God taught him the twenty-two wonders of creation created

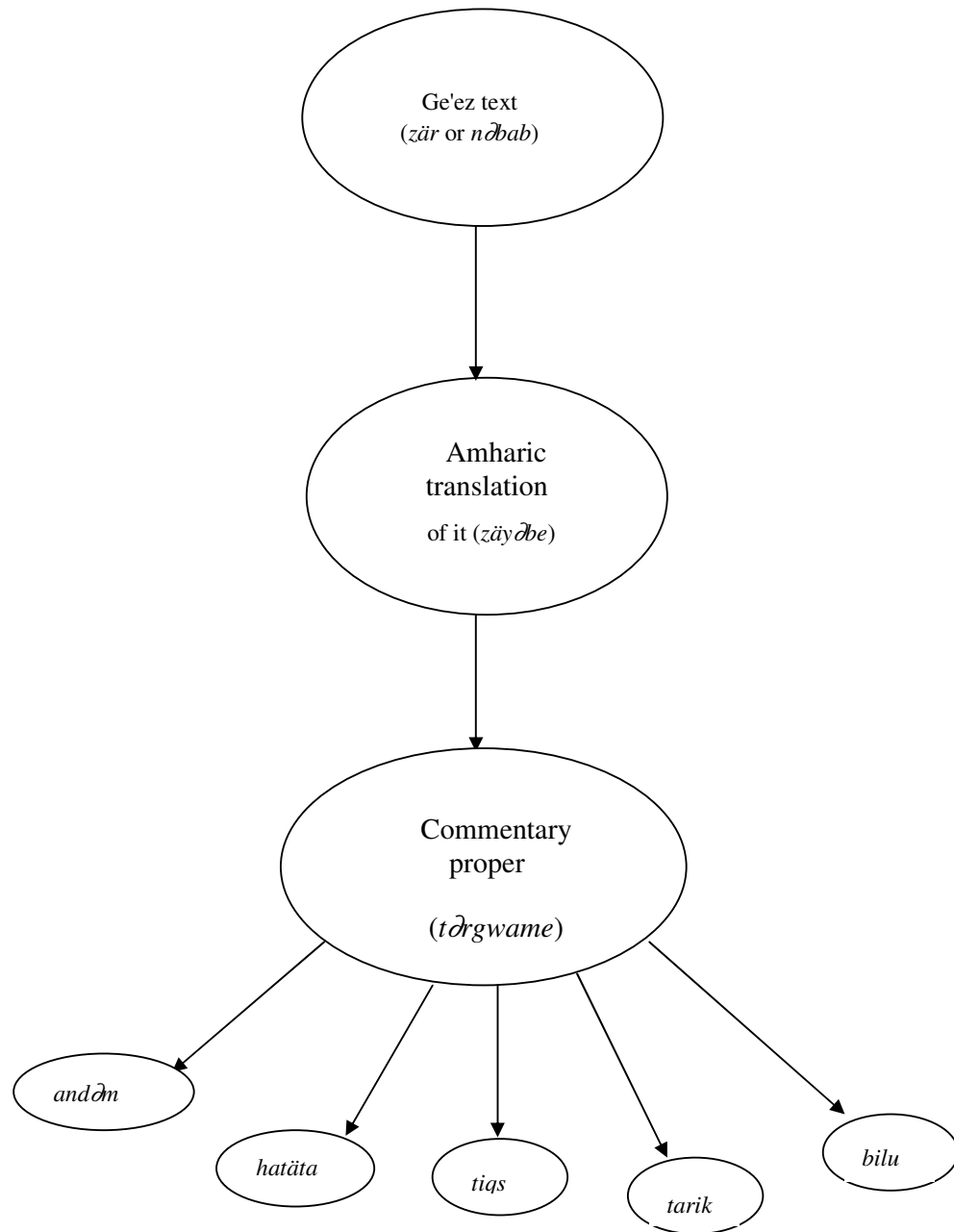
in the six days.⁸⁶ For thirty-four days, God spoke to him about the five hundred and seventy instructions beginning, ‘*He spoke to him*’, repeatedly saying to him, ‘*He spoke to him*’.⁸⁷

From what has been discussed above, it is possible to conclude that the commentary of the Book of Genesis is well introduced before it is started. The information included in the introduction of the commented-upon text gives background knowledge to the audiences of the commentary.

3.2. Standardized Pattern

"The presentation of text and comment in the *andāmta* commentary tradition follows a standard pattern."⁸⁸ This pattern is more or less common to all Amharic *andāmta* commentaries. The general purpose of this pattern is to enable the commentator to use a set of formulae so that he can reach his final goal of clarifying the meaning of the commented-upon text.

A sentence of the Ge'ez text is followed by its Amharic 'translation' (*zäybe*). This is followed by the commentary proper (*tārgwame*). The commentator illustrates his *tārgwame* by using different stories, quotations, explanations, etc. This pattern can be shown in the following diagram.



By following this pattern, the commentator gives the commentary proper of a given text. This can be shown in the following examples:

ሰመዮ እግዚአብሔር ለብርሃን መዐልተ

(ዘፍ. 1÷5)

*And God named the light 'day-time'*⁸⁹

(Gen. 1v.5)

This verse is the Ge'ez text to be commented-upon. The Ge'ez text is in general regarded as the scholars' text (*yäliqawðnt zär*), and according to the traditional Ethiopian view, this text is correct and texts found to be differing from it are wrong.

Having put down the Ge'ez text, the scholar then translates it into Amharic.

እግዚአብሔር ብርሃንን መዐልት አለው።

(ዝኒ ከማሁ)

God named the light 'day-time'

(*Ibid*)

And then the commentary proper follows:

ሥራህ ማለት ነው። ሰው ሲጽርበት ሲግርበት የሚውል ስለሆነ ወኮነ ሌሊተ ወጽብሐ ጨለማ ሁኖ አድሮ ነጋ። ወኮነ መዓልተ። ብርሃንም ሆነ። ያ ጊዜ ኑሮ አይደለም። በዛሬው ስለታወቀ አንድም ነቢይ ሙሴ ባወቀ ተናግሮታል። ወኮነ 1ድ ዕለት ሆነ። ዕለት ብሂል ዘያስተዛውጎሙ ለመዓልት ወለሌሊት እንዲል።

(ዝኒ ከማሁ)

it means 'work', because human kind spends the day toiling and labouring. *And there was night, and it became dawn*, it became dawn, the night having passed in darkness. *And there was day - time* - and there was light; ('day') was not previously established - (rather, it is so called) because it is known by what happens today. *And* ስሙስ Moses the prophet spoke it according to that with which he was familiar. *And there was 1 day*. Night - time and day - time was 1 day, as it says, 'A "day" means that which comprises day - time and night - time.

(*ibid*)

As we could see from the above example, the Amharic translation of the Ge'ez text attempts to bring out, in fully idiomatic Amharic, the essential meaning of the Ge'ez. Mostly the commentator presents more than one alternative which are either corresponding to different ways of understanding the Ge'ez text, or to different Amharic expressions of the same thought.

The procedure of translation we saw in the foregoing quotation is the one which commentators use very often. We can call it as word-for-word translation.

When we come across the commentary material of any text, we can also see another way of translating the Ge'ez text into Amharic. The commentators translate the Ge'ez text in ways different from the way it appeared in the original language. We can call this way of translation adaptational translation. The following can be an example:

**ወገብሮ እግዚአብሔር ለዕንሰ እመ ሕያው በአምሳለ እግዚአብሔር
 ጌታ አዳምን በራሱ አምሳል ፈጠረው። አብ ቢሉ በወልድ በመንፈስ ቅዱስ
 አምሳል አዳምን ፈጠረው። አንድም ወልድ ቢሉ በአብ በመንፈስ ቅዱስ አምሳል
 ፈጠረው። አንድም መንፈስ ቅዱስ ቢሉ በአብ በወልድ አምሳል ፈጠረው።**

(ዘፍ. 1 ÷ 27)

And God made man in the appearance of God:

The Lord created Adam in His own likeness. If it is said [that it was] the Father [who created him, then] He created Adam in the appearance of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

And *ፊ*. If it is said [that it was] the Son [who created him, then] He created him in the appearance of the Father and of the Holy Spirit.

And *ፊ*. If it is said [that it was] the Holy Spirit [who created him, then] he created him in the appearance of the Father and of the Son.

(Gen. 1v. 27)

In this kind of translation, the commentators also take the concept of the Ge'ez text and reproduce it in their own words.

ወይቤ እግዚአብሔር ለታወጁ ምድር ዘመዶች እንስሳ።

ሐሙስ ማታ ለዓርብ አጥቢያ የእንስሳ ወገን የሚሆን ፍጥረት ሁሉ ይፈጠሩ አለ።

ወዘይትሐወስ

በልባቸው የሚሳቡ በእግራቸው የሚሸከረከሩ ፍጥረታትን ሁሉ ታስገኝ አለ።

(ዘፍ. 1÷24)

And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth species of animals'

Thursday night, towards the dawn of Friday, He said, 'Let every created thing which is of the tame animal type be created'.

And that which moves.

He said, 'Let the earth produce all created things which crawl move on their belly and run on their feet'.

(Gen. 1v. 24)

The *Andፀmta commentary* scholars do this when they feel that the Ge'ez text is vague to the audiences.

When translating a Ge'ez text into Amharic, if the commentator feels that he is not able to translate the text clearly, or if he feels that his audiences may feel doubt about his translation, he repeats the translation in different ways. We can see this in the following example:

ወይቤ እግዚአብሔር ለይኩኑ ብርሃናት ውስተ ጠፈረ ሰማይ

ጠፈርና ሰማይ አንድ ወገን ማክሰኞ ማታ ለረቡዕ አጥቢያ ጌታ በሰማይ ፀሐይ

ጨረቃ ከዋክብት ይፈጠሩ አለ። አንድም ሰማይ በሚባል ጠፈር ፀሐይ ጨረቃ

ከዋክብት ይፈጠሩ አለ። ፀሐይ ጨረቃና ከዋክብት ይፈጠሩ።

(ዘፍ. 1÷14)

And God said, 'let there be lights'⁹⁰ in the täfär of sämay,'

(grouping *täfär* and *sämay* together) on Tuesday evening, toward the dawn of Wednesday, the Lord said, 'Let sun, moon, and stars be created in *sämay*.'

Andöm. He said, ' In the *täfär* which is called *sämay*, let the sun, moon, and stars be created.'

(Gen. 1v.14)

Commentators sometimes omit the Amharic translation (*Zäybe*) when commenting upon a given text. They sometimes go to his commentary proper:

**ወአእረፈ እግዚአብሔር በሳብዕት ዕለት እምኩሉ ግብሩ
አረፈ ማለቱም በጌታ ድካም ኑሮበት አይደለም። መሥራትን ተወ ሲል ነው።
ወባረካ እግዚአብሔር ለዕለት ሳብዕት ወቀደሳ
ይሠራ ዘንድ ከጀመረው ሥራ ሁሉ አርፎበታልና። ሐተታ። መናፍቃን ፍጥረት
ነበረው ዕለት አለቀበት እንጂ እንዳይሉ አንድ ቀን አተረፈ። ዕለትስ ነበረው
ፍጥረት አለቀበት እንጂ እንዳይሉ እምኩሉ ግብሩ አለ።**

(ዘፍ.2÷3)

And on the seventh day God rested from all his work

Its saying 'He rested' does not mean that the Lord experienced tiredness, it means 'he ceased creating'.

And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it,

He rested from all the works, which he had begun. *Hatäta*. He left an extra day, lest heretics should say, 'He had more things to create created things, but the days were exhausted too soon for him', he said '*from all his work*', lest they say, 'He had more days, but things to create were exhausted too soon for him'.

(Gen. 2v. 3)

3.3. The *Andəm*

"In the *andəmta* commentary tradition the commentator introduces his commentary (*tərguame*) by the term *andəm* when he has alternative interpretations for a given Geez text.⁹¹ The term *andəm*, therefore, is a key technical term that is indispensable to the strategy. The term is equivalent to saying 'in addition to this meaning there is another one'. The more alternative interpretations the commentator gives, the better his readers or hearers understand the mystery behind the text.⁹² "After the text has been translated once, a chain of as many as 15 successive comments⁹³ is given being introduced by *andəm* ('and more over')"⁹⁴.

We can see this by taking a text from the book of Genesis.

የሦስትነት ሥላሴን በምን እንመስላቸዋለን ቢሉ ሥላሴ ለባውያን ነባብያን ሕያዋን ናቸው። እኛም በነፍስ ለባውያን ነባብያን ሕያዋን ነንና አንድም ለሰው ልብ ቃል እስትንፋስ እንዳለው ሥላሴም በልብ በቃል በእስትንፋስ ይመስላሉና አንድም ለሰው ፍጹም መልክ እንዳለው ለሥላሴም መልክ አላቸውና ነአምን ከመ ቦ ለእግዚአብሔር መልክአት ጽዱቃት ዓይን ወእዝን አዕዳው ወአዕጋር ወቦ እለ ተርፋ እምኔሆን አባላት እንዲል። አንድም በአርአያነ ወበአምሳሊነ ከመ ይኩንን ይላል። ሥላሴ በባሕርይ የሚገዙትን እኛ በጸጋ እንገዛለንና። አንድም በአርአያነ ከመ ይኩንን ይላል። ከመ ይኩንን ዓሣተ ባሕር ወአራዊተ ምድር ወአዕዋፊ ሰማይ።

(ዘፍ.1÷26)

If it is asked, 'To what shall we liken [the members of] the Trinity?', [the members] of the Trinity are understanding, speaking, and living. *Andəm*. Because just as a person has a heart, a voice, and breath. *Andəm*. Because just as a person has a complete form, so also [the members of] the Trinity have a form, as it says, 'we believe that God has real bodily parts eye and ear, hands and feet, and He

has organs which are in addition to these'. Andፌ. As it says '...in our appearance and in our likeness, in order that he governs or rules – because we govern by grace the ones that [the members of] the Trinity govern by nature. Andፌ. As it says '...as He governs in our appearance.'⁹⁵ ... as He governs the fish of the sea, and the wild animals of the earth, and the birds of heaven.

(Gen. 1v. 26)

In the aforequoted text, the commentator explains what resemblance man has with the Holy Trinity and to be called by them 'Let us make man in our appearance and in our likeness', which we find in the Ge'ez text. As we can see, to lead his readers into the heart of the text, the commentator presents about four alternative interpretations for the Ge'ez text.

3.4. Illustration

The chief objective of the commentators in using *andፌmta* as an interpretative strategy is to get to the heart of the text they analyse. Time and again the commentators state that their aim is to discover the mystery hidden in the depths of the texts. Thus, they illustrate the commented upon text in different ways.

3.4.1. Illustration by means of story/history (*Tarik*)

Predominantly, the commentators use the *tarik* (the illustrative story) taken from Biblical and non-Biblical⁹⁶ sources. These sources actually do not appear in the *andፌmta* commentary in the form of literal quotations from the canonical text, but rather in the form of periphrastic rendering.

When the commentator wants to present a story to illustrate the text he is commenting upon, he introduces his commentary on a given text by the term *tarik*.⁹⁷

The following story, for example, is introduced by the term *tarik* to illustrate why God said “ለይኩን ብርሃን” meaning “Let there be light.” The story tells about the fall of Satan.⁹⁸

ወርእዮ እግዚአብሔር ለብርሃን ከመ ሠናይ

እግዚአብሔር ብርሃንን የበቃ ፍጥረት እንደሆነ ዐውቆ ፈጠረ። ከመ ሠናይ ባለው ከመ ጦብ ይላል። ከመ ሠናይ ማለት ነው። ጦቢት ማለት ሠናይ ማለት እንደሆነ ወፈለጠ እግዚአብሔር ማዕከለ ብርሃን ወጽልመት። እግዚአብሔር በጨለማና በብርሃን መካከል ድንበር ለየ። ታሪክ። ለይኩን ብርሃን ያለበት ምክንያት ምንድን ነው ቢሉ ጌታ መላእክትን ሕያዋን ለባውያን ነባብያን አድርጎ ፈጥሯቸው ነበርና ምንት ንሕነ እምአይቴ መጻእነ ወመኑ ፈጠረነ ወሚመ በበርእስነኑ ተፈጠርነ ተባባሉ። ዲያብሎስን ከሁሉ በላይ አድርጎ ፈጥሮት ነበርና ከወደላይ እኔ ፈጠርኩ የሚል ድምፅ አጣ። ከወደታች እንዲህ ሲሉ ሰማ። እኔ ፈጠርኩ ልበል ብሎ አሰበ። አስቦም አልቀረ አነ ፈጣሪሆሙ ለፍጡራን አለ። ያን ጊዜ የሱ ወገኖች ከሦስት ተከፍለዋል። የተጠራጠሩ አሉ። አዎን ፈጠርኩን ያሉ አሉ። ምን አንተ ትፈጥረን እኛ ፈጠርንህ እንጂ ያሉም አሉ። የተጠራጠሩት በአየር ቀርተዋል። አዎን ፈጠርኩን ያሉት ወደዚህ ዓለም ወርደዋል። ምን አንተ ትፈጥረን እኛ ፈጠርንህ እንጅ ያሉት አብረው ወርደዋል። ያን ጊዜ በመላእክት ሽብር ጸናባቸው። ወአጽንዖሙ መልአክ ሰላም በቃሉ እንዲል ቅዱስ ገብርኤል ንቁም በበህላዌነ አስከ ንረክቦ ለአምላክነ ብሎ አጽንቷቸዋል። ዛሬ ድል የተነሣን በጦር በጌ አርበኛ ባለህ ጽና ብሎ እንዲያጸናው ለብሥራት ያበቃው ይህ ነው። ወበእንተዝ ደለዎ ይጸር ዜናሃ ለማርያም እንዲል። ከዚህ በኋላ ጨርሰው ሳይክዱ ሳይክዱ ለይኩን ብሎ ብርሃኑን ፈጠረላቸው። ይህ ዕውቀት ሁኗቸው ቅዱስ ቅዱስ ቅዱስ ብለው አመስግነዋል።

(ዘፍ.1፡4)

And God saw the light was beautiful,

God created the light, knowing that it was a worthy creation. (A.T.V.) reads 'that it was tob' for 'that it was beautiful'; it means that it was beautiful', just as 'Tobit' means 'beautiful'.

And God separated the light and the darkness.

God made a boundary between darkness and light.

*Tarik.*⁹⁹ If it is asked why he said, “*Let there be light*”, [it is because] the Angels said to each other – for the Lord had created them living, understanding, and speaking – “*What are we? From where did we come? And who created us? And were we created each by ourselves?*” Because God had created the devil in the highest place of all, he [the devil] lacked a voice from above saying, “I created”, and he heard them [the angels] below talking like this. He thought he would say, “I created”, and did not fail to act on his thought. He said, “I am the creator of the created beings”. At that time his tribes were divided into three. Some doubted; some said, “Yes you created us”; some said; “what do you mean you created us—rather we created you.” The doubters remained in the air; the ones who said, “yes, you created us”, descended to this world; the ones who said, “what do you mean by you created us—rather we created you” descended together with him [the devil]. Then the Angels were very troubled, and as it says, “*An angel of peace quietened them with his word,*” St. Gabriel reassured them, saying, “*Let us stand firm in our respective states until we find our God*”, just as today a good warrior reassures a defeated army, saying, “stand firm where you are.” It was this that he made him worthy for the good news bearer, as it says, “*And because of this it befitted him to bear news to Mary.*” After this, before they [the Angels] completely apostatised, He [God] created light for them, saying “*Let there be*”. This became knowledge for them, and they praised Him saying, “*Holy, holy, holy.*”

(Gen. 1v. 4)

3.4.2. Illustration with *tāqs* (quotation)

In the *andāmta* commentary tradition, the commentators incorporate different quotations from Biblical and non-Biblical sources. This way of using quotations from different sources enables the commentators to enrich their commentary. The commentator quotes not only from other sources but also from the text he is commenting upon.¹⁰⁰

The commentator introduces his illustration by the abbreviation “*tiq*,” (for *tiqs*), meaning quotation. The following can be a good example:

**ወሐይዎ ናኮር። ናኮርም በድንግልና መቶ ዘጠኝ ዘመን ኑሮ ታራን ወለደ። ታራ
ማለት ያፍ ፅኑስ ማለት ነው። ጥቅ። እስመ በመዋዕሊሁ ያስተዌንስዎሙ ቋዓት
ወአዕዋፍ እንዲል።**

(ዘፍ.11÷24)

And Nakor lived.

Nakor lived one hundred nine-years in chastity and begat Thara. Thara means a conceived bird. *Tiq*. As it says *in his lifetime, he let birds conceive.*

(Gen. 11 v. 24)

3.5. Explanation (*Hatāta*)

In the *andāmta* commentary tradition, the commentator gives further explanation for a given text by inserting different kinds of strategic words which are used to supplement, support or corroborate what has been interpreted in the *andām* mode. *Hatāta* is one of these terms. The commentator uses this term or word before he starts the commentary proper of the commented-upon text. The term serves as a note on an unfamiliar custom, like the length of a king's reign, or when the meaning of a word is unfamiliar, etc. For example, in the following text we see the commentator explaining the text by using the term *hatāta*:

ወባረኮሙ እግዚአብሔር ወይቤ ብዝኅ ወተባዝኅ ወምልዕዋ ለምድር ውስተ
ምድር። አዕዋፍንም በዚህ ዓለም ይበዙ ዘንድ አዘዛቸው። ሐተታ። በዚህ ቀን
ሦስት ፍጥረት ፈጥሯል። በልባቸው የሚሳቡ በእግራቸው የሚሸከረከሩ በክንፋቸው
የሚበሩትን እንደ ቆቅ እንደ ጅግራ ያሉትን። እነዚህን የመሰለ ሁሉ አንድ ወገን፤
በክንፋቸው የሚበሩትን እንደ ያፍ እንደ ንስር ያሉትን እነዚህን የመሰሉ ሁሉ
አንድ ወገን መገኘታቸው ምንም በባሕር ቢሆን ተፈጥሯቸው ከአራቱ ባሕርያት
ነው። ከነዚህም ከባሕር ተገኝተው በዚያው ጸንተው የቀሩ አሉ። አንድ ጊዜ ወደ
የብስ አንድ ጊዜ ወደ ባሕር የሚሉ አሉ። በረው በረው የሄዱ አሉ። ይኸውም
ምሳሌ ነው። ባሕር የጥምቀት በባሕሩ ጸንተው የቀሩት በክርስቲናቸው ጸንተው
የሚኖሩ ሰዎች ምሳሌ ነው። በረው በረው የሄዱት ወደክሕደት የሔዱ ሰዎች
ምሳሌ ነው። 1ድ ጊዜ ወደባሕር 1ድ ጊዜ ወደየብስ የሚመላለሱ ክርስቲያን
ከመሆን እስላም ወደመሆን እስላም ከመሆን ክርስቲያን ወደመሆን የሚመላለሱ
ሰዎች አምሳል ነው።

(ዘፍ. 1÷22)

And God blessed them, and said, 'Be many and multiply in the earth',

And he ordered the birds, that they be many in this world.

Hatäta. On this day, he created things—ones which crawl on their belly, ones which run on their legs, and ones which fly with their wings. The ones like partridges and guinea fowl, and everything that resembles these is one group. The ones that fly with their wings, like small birds and hawks, and everything that resembles these is one group. Even though they are produced from the sea, their created nature is from the four elements. From among these, there are some which, having been produced from the sea, have remained there. there are some which go at one time to dry land, and at another to the sea. There are many which fly away. This is a simile. The sea is a likeness of baptism. the ones which remain living in the sea are a likeness of baptism. The ones which fly away are a likeness of the people who

have gone off to apostasy. The ones which go to and from, at one time to the sea, and at another of the people who go to and from being a Christian to being a Muslim to being a Christian.

(Gen. 1 v. 22)

As we can see from the quoted text, we can understand that the commentator's intention to present the *hatäta* in advance (after the *zäybe*) is to illustrate the text with the exemplification, which he brought at the end.

To give more explanations on a certain Ge'ez text using this strategic term, the commentator sometimes tries to clarify the text by giving an explanation (*hatäta*) in advance. This enables him to explain to his readers the mystery behind the text. The following example illustrates what I mean:

ወርእየ እግዚአብሔር ከመ ሠናይ። የበቁ ደጋግ ፍጥረታት እንደሆኑ ዐውቆ ፈጠረ። ሐተታ። ጨረቃ በአራተኛው ኬክሮስ ተፈጥራ ስታበራ ቆይታ ገብታለች። ፀሐይ በምዕራብ መስኮት ተፈጥሮ ወዲያው ታይቶ ገብቷል። ፀሐይኒ አእመረ ምዕራቢው እንዲል። አንድም ፀሐይ በ፬ኛ ኬክሮስ ተፈጥሮ ሲያበራ አምሸቶ ገብቷል። ጨረቃ በምሉ ብርሃን ተፈጥራ ስታበራ አድራ ገብታለች። ወገበርከ ወርኅ በዕድሜሁ እንዲል። አንድም ጨረቃ በምልዐት ተፈጥራ ስታበራ አድራ ገብታለች። ፀሐይ በነግሕ ተፈጥሮ ሲያበራ አድሮ ጨረቃ በገባችበት ሆኅት ገብቷል። ወገበርከ ወርኅ በዕድሜሁ ፀሐይኒ አእመረ ምዕራቢው እንዲል። ተፈጥሮአቸውንም ከዚህ ይናገሩታል። የፀሐይ ተፈጥሮ ከነፋስ ከእሳት ነው። የጨረቃ ተፈጥሮ ከውኅ ከነፋስ ነው። ይኸም ይታወቅ ዘንድ ፀሐይ ትሞቃለች። ትደምቃለች። ጨረቃ ትደምቃለች አትሞቅም። አንድም የሁሉም ተፈጥሮአቸው ከነፋስ ከእሳት ነው። ፀሐይን ሙቂ ድመቂ ቢሳት ትሞቃለች ትደምቃለች። ጨረቃን ድመቂ አትሙቂ ቢሳት ትደምቃለች አትሞቅም። የነዚህ ክፍለ ብርሃናቸው እንደምን ነው ቢሉ ለይኩን ብርሃን ካለው እርሱ ባወቀ ሰባት ክፍለ ብርሃን አምጥቶ ሦስትን ለፀሐይ ሁለትን ለጨረቃ አንድን ለከዋክብት አንድን

ለደመና ሰጥቶታል። ወመሥልስታ ለፀሐይ ያውጥሎም ለአድባር እንዲል።
አንድም በሄኖክ ወትነሥእ ምስብዒተ እም ዘወርኅ ይላል ብሎ ሁሉንም ለፀሐይ
ሰጥቶታል።

(ዘፍ.1÷12)

And God saw that it was good.

He created, knowing that they were worthy, important, created things. *Hatäta*. The moon, having been created in the fourth Kekros,¹⁰¹ remained shining and set; the sun, having been created in the window of the west, appeared and immediately set, as it says, also *the sun knew its entrance*. *Andä*m. The sun having been created in the fourth Kekros, remained shining until evening, and set: the moon, having been created with full light, spent the night shining and set, as it says, '*And you made the moon in its maturity*'. *Andä*m. The moon, having been created in fullness, spent the night shining and set; the sun, having been created at dawn, spent the night shining, and set in the portal in which the moon had set, as it says, '*And you made the moon in its maturity, and the sun also knew its entrance*'.¹⁰² [Teachers] speak here of their creation. The creation of the sun is from wind and fire; the creation of the moon is from water and wind. To make this known, the sun is hot and bright; the moon is bright and is not hot. *Andä*m. The creation of both [sun and moon] is from wind and fire. As He [God] said to the sun, 'Be hot be bright', it is hot and bright; as He said to the moon, 'bright,' do not be hot', it is bright and not hot. If it is asked what their apportionment of light is, after He said, 'Let there be light', He brought seven portions of light, by what [only] He knows, and gave three to the sun, two to the moon one to the stars, and one to the clouds, as it says, '*And the third part of the sun will burn up the hills*'.¹⁰³ *Andä*m If it is asked that in Enoch it

says, 'And it receives seven-fold more than that of the moon'¹⁰⁴, [then] he gave it all to the sun.

(Gen. 1v.12)

3.6. Cross-reference

The commentator sometimes refers to different kinds of sources. The text referred to might be the same book that is being commented upon, or any other book.

3.6.1. Yaläwðñ wädäfit yamät'äl

In the *andðmta* commentary tradition this term is used to indicate a text or texts which is/are taken from the text about which the commentary is done. This helps audience of the commentary not to be confused by raising questions which are going to be answered later on. After presenting what is promised, the commentator concludes his narration by ... *yaläwðñ amäta*. For example, in the following text, the commentator presents the narration he promised and concludes with *yaläwðñ amät'ä*.

ወኮነ በአሐቲ፣ ዕለት ቦአ ዮሴፍ ውስተ ቤት።

ኮነ ያለውን ወደፊት ያመጣል። ከዕለታት በአንድ ዕለት ዮሴፍ ተክል ለመጎብኘት ወደተክል ቦታ ገብቶ ሳለ አንድም ብሉዩን ከሐዲሱ ሐዲሱን ከብሉዩ ለማናፈስ ወደቤተ መዛግብቱ። ያን ጊዜ አንድ ሰው ስንኳን አልነበረም። ሰው አለመኖሩን ዐይታ ሳታፍር ሳትፈራ አንት ባሪያ ዛሬስ አለቀቅሁም ብላ ተራምዳ ልብሱን ያዘኛው። ኮነ ያለውን አመጣ።

(ዘፍ. 39 ÷11)

Once upon a time it happened that Yosef entered a house.

It will bring what he said to have happened later on. Once upon a time while Yosef entered the garden to visit the plants, *andðm* to aerate the old with the new he entered the archive. By then there was no one. While she saw that there was

nobody around, she, with no fear and shying caught his clothes by saying 'you negro. Then he brought what it said it *happened*.

(Gen. 39 v. 11)

3.6.2. Sil / Sil näw

The commentator uses *sil näw*, meaning, "...the text ought to read...," when he wants to refer to what somebody said about a certain concept. Usually when he uses this phrase, the commentator asks his readers "if you ask why this is so, the answer is..." The following example illustrates what I mean:

ስለምን አዳምን በነግሕ የቀሩትን በሠርክ ፈጠረ ቢሉ የሠርክ ተከታይ ጨለማ ነው። እነዚያን አላዋቆች ናቸው ሲል። የነግሕ ተከታይ ብርሃን ነው። እርሱንም አላዋቂ ነው ሲል ነው። ይኸስ ይሁን እነዚያን በፊት ፈጥሮ እርሱን በኋላ መፍጠሩ ስለምነው ቢሉ በሰው ልማድ ዛሬ ባለጸጋ በፊት ምግቡን አዘጋጅቶ ኋላ ሰውን እንዲጠራ ጌታም በፊት ምግቡን ፈጥሮ በኋላ እርሱን ፈጠረ ያውስ ቢሆን አቅንቶ እንዲሄድ እነሱን አጎንብሰው እንዲሄዱ አድርጎ ስለምን ፈጠራቸው ቢሉ። የገዥና የተገዥ ምልክት ነው። አንድም እነዚያ ተስፋ ትንሣኤ የላቸውም። ለሱ ግን ተስፋ ትንሣኤ አለው ሲል።

(ዘፍ.1÷27)

If it is asked why he created Adam at dawn, but the others at dusk, dusk is followed by darkness, and by this, he said of those [other created things], 'they are ignorant'; dawn is followed by daylight, and by this he said of him [Adam], 'He is not knowledgeable'. If it is asked why, while this is so, he created those first and him [and] afterwards, it is according to human custom; just as today a rich man, having first prepared the food, subsequently invites people [to eat], so the Lord having first created the food, subsequently created him [Adam]. If it is asked why, even if that is so, he created him [Adam] so that he walked upright, but those so

that they walked stooping, it is the mark of the governor and the governed. *Andom*. [By it] those have no hope of resurrection, but he [Adam] has the hope of resurrection.

(Gen. 1 v. 27)

This term also introduces a correction of the structure of a given Ge'ez text. When the commentator feels that a certain Ge'ez text is wrong, he gives the correction of that very text saying 'Sil näw' after he translates the Ge'ez text into Amharic. We can see this in the following example:

**ወተፈጸመ ሰማይ ወምድር ወኩሉ ዓለሞሙ
ፍጥረተ ሰማይ ወምድር ወፍጥረተ ኩሉ ዓለሞሙ ሲል ነው። የሰማይና የምድር
የሠራዊታቸውም ተፈጥሮ ሁሉ ተፈጸመ።**

(ዘፍ. 2÷1)

And heaven was completed and earth, and their entire world, in place of 'the creation of heaven and of earth, and the creation of all their world' it reads all the creation of heaven and of earth and of their companies was completed.

(Gen. 2 v. 1)

The commentator makes not only a correction of the structure of a given Ge'ez text but also grammatical error. For example in the following text, the commentator corrects the grammatical error.

**የጨለማን ተፈጥሮ ወጽልመት መልዕልተ ቀላይ ብሎ የነፋስ ተፈጥሮ ወመንፈስ
እግዚአብሔር ይጸልል መልዕልተ ማይ ብሎ የመላእክትን ተፈጥሮ ወአዘዞሙ
ለኪሩቤል ወሱራፊል ብሎ የመላእክትን ተፈጥሮ ወአዘዞሙ ለኪሩቤል
ወለሱራፊል ብሎ ያመጣዋል። ምድርሲ ሀለወት ዕራቃ ፣ ምድርኒ ሲል ነው።**

(ዘፍ. 1÷2)

He will now introduce the creation of darkness, saying '*and darkness was over the deep,*' the creation of wind, saying '*the wind of God hovered over the water,*' and the creation of Angels, saying '*and He commanded the Cherubim and the Seraphim.*' And the earth was bare. Reading and the earth.

(Gen. 1v.2)

In the quoted text, we see the commentator corrects the error made by the previous writer by the letter 'ሲ' into 'ኒ' i.e. the word «ምድርሲ» into «ምድርኒ».

3.6.3. ...ፅndil(u) or ... ፅndalä

Commentators quote a certain text from a certain book and try to convince their audiences that what is being said is accepted by many scholars. This intention of theirs is introduced by ...ፅndil(u) or ... ፅndalä.

This can be seen in the following example:

ወይቤ እግዚአብሔር ንግበር ሰብአ በአርአያነ ወበአምሳሊነ። ጌታ ዓርብ በነግሕ በኛ አምሳል በኛ አርአያ ሰውን እንፍጠር አለ። ሐተታ። ንግበር ማለት የአንድነት በአርአያነ ማለት የሦስትነት። አንድም ንግበር ያለው ያንድነት የሦስትነት ይሆናል። ንግበር ብሎ ማብዛቱ የሦስትነት እንደ አንድ ቃል ሁኖ ንግበር ማለት ያንድነት እየኖራቸው ቃል ልብ እስትንፋስ ቢኖራቸው እኔ ላድርግ አንተ አታድርግ እሱ ያድርግ ባሉ ነበርና። ኢይቤ እግበር አነ ወአንተ ግበር ወይግበር ዝኩ አላ ይቤ እግዚአብሔር ንግበር እንዲል።

(ዘፍ. 1÷26)

And God said, 'Let us make man in our appearance and in our image.

On Friday, at dawn, the Lord said, 'Let us create man in our image and in our appearance.

Hatata. His saying 'let us make' may show [both] unity and trinity – His saying '*let us make*' in the plural shows the trinity, [and] his saying '*let us make*' while being

as one voice shows the unity, because if each of them individually had a voice, a heart, and breath, they would have said, "Let me make [it]", or "you make [it]", but God said "Let us make."

(Gen. 1 v. 26)

3.6.5. ጸንደክ ልሳ

The commentator does not only refer to what somebody said. He also sometimes tries to convince his audiences why the previous author said the very word, phrase or sentence. This is done by the phrase *ጸንደክ ልሳ*.

ወፈጸመ እግዚአብሔር ግብር ዘገብረ።

እግዚአብሔር የጀመረውን ፍጥረት ሁሉ ፈጥሮ ፈጸመ። ሰማይን ከነግሱ ምድርን ከነልብሱ ፈጥሮ ፈጸመ። ሐተታ። እስከአሁን ባዕድ ፍጥረት ሲፈጥር ሰንብቶ ነበር። እንግዲህ ወዲህ ግን ግብር እምግብር ቢራባ እንጂ ሌላ ባዕድ ፍጥረት አይፈጠርምና እንዲህ አለ።

(ዘፍ. 2÷2)

And God finished his work,

God completed [it], having created all the created things which he had begun, meaning "He completed [it], having created heaven with its belongings and earth with its garments". *Hatäta* He [Moses] spoke thus because until now He [God] had spent the time creating alien created things, but from now on it will multiply further by natural increase, and no other alien created things will be created, he said.

(Gen.2 v. 2)

Therefore, the objective of all these ways of justification and referring to the previous authors is to tell the audiences that different authors are united concerning the comment given, and to explain the text as exhaustive as possible.

3.7. Alternative Interpretations

Dealing with ambiguity is one of the fundamentals of interpretation and textual criticism. Thus, in the *andəmta* commentary tradition, the commentators sometimes offer alternative interpretations for a certain word or phrase to explain the ambiguity. For example, the Ge'ez word *wärh* may mean 'moon' or 'month', and these are distinguished in Amharic for which the Amharic words are ወርኅ or ወር.¹⁰⁵

These alternative interpretations are also offered when the commentators get words that are homophones in current Ge'ez pronunciation, e.g. *säb'a* 'seventy' and *säb'ə a* 'people of'.¹⁰⁶

Commentators give alternative interpretations depending on the geminating of a consonant; e.g. in Qid. 187a variant reading '*aryannä*' noted in the *andəmta* commentary is annotated *sitäbiq* (geminated) to distinguish it from '*aryanä*'.¹⁰⁷

3.8. Association of Meanings

In the *andəmta* commentary tradition, commentators usually associate the meaning of a certain word with a given phenomenon or individual to make the mystery more concrete to the audiences. For example in Is. 1 v. 11, 'rams' is referred to in the sacrifices offered by Moses and Aaron, 'bulls' to those of David and Solomon, and 'sheep' to Josiah's. In En. 24, the 'seven mountains' are respectively associated with 'the garden', with Adam and Eve, the 'Holy Hill', with the children of Seth, Noah's ark, with his children, Mount Sinai, with Moses and Aaron, the Mount of Olives, with David and Solomon, Mount Tabor, with Barak and Deborah, and Calvary, with our Lord and his Apostles.

3.9. Symbolization¹⁰⁸

In the *andämta* commentary tradition, commentators use different kinds of figurative language. For example, in the following text, the commentator exemplifies the meanings of the rising, shining, and setting of the sun with human life process:

ወይኩኑ ለትእምርታት

ለመዓልትና ለሌሊት መለያ ምልክት ይሆኑ ዘንድ። ፀሐይ ስትወጣ ጨረቃ ስትገባ ተነሥቼ ከዚህ ደረስሁ ይላልና አንድም ምሳሌ ይሆኑ ዘንድ። ሐተታ። ፀሐይ መውጣቱ የመወለዳችን በጠፈር ማብራቱ በዚህ ዓለም የመኖራችን መግባቱ የመሞታችን ተመልሶ መውጣቱ የመነሣታችን ምሳሌ ነው።

(ዘፍ.1÷9)

And so that they be for symbols, so that they be a distinguishing mark for day-time and for night time, as one would say, "I set out at sun rise, or at the setting of the moon, and reached here."

Andäm. [it is] so that they be symbols. *Hatäta.* For the rising of the sun is a symbol of our birth, and its shining in the *täfür* a symbol of our living in this world; its setting is a symbol of our death, and its rising again, of our resurrection.

(Gen.1÷9)

In this text, the rising of the sun and the setting of the moon are symbolised.

3.10. Extension by inference¹⁰⁹

There are times we see the commentators expanding their interpretations giving an extensive interpretation to a certain text by inference. This action of expansion helps the commentator to give more explanation on a given text. For example, the comment on LK. 1v.66 depicts the people speculating about the future career of John the Baptist:

ወይቤሉ ምንትኑ ይከውን እምዝንቱ ሕፃን፡

ከዚህ ሕፃን የተነሣ ምን ይሆን፤ አንድም ይህ ብላቴና እንደምን ያለ ይሆን።
እንደ ኖኅ አባ አንጋድ። እንደሙሴ ጠላት ይገድል ባሕር ይከፍል ደመና
ይጋርድ መና ያወርድ። እንደ ኢያሱ በረድ ያዘንም ፀሐይ ያቆም። እንደ ጌዴዎን
ፀምር ይዘረጋ ጠል ያወርድ። እንደ ኤልያስ ሰማይ ይለገም እሳት ያዘንም ይሆን
አለ።

(ሉቃ 1፥66)

And they said, what will this child do in the future

Will he be a father of tribes like Noah? Will he kill enemies, divide the sea, be
enveloped in cloud, and bring down manna, like Moses? Will he cause hail and
stop the sun, like Joshua? Will he spread a fleece and bring dew, like Gedeon?
Will he fasten the Heavens and cause fire to rain like Elijah?

(Lk. 1v. 66)

In the aforequoted text, the future carrier of John the Baptist is inferred
imaginatively by the commentator in the form of questions.

3.11. Resolution

As we have seen above a commentary refers to different texts to give an
exhaustive explanation for a certain text. In this process, the commentator might find an
idea contrary to the text he is commenting upon. Therefore, he gives a resolution to the
apparent disagreement between diverse authorities by using different interpretive terms.

3.11.1. bilu

In the narration of the *andāmta* commentary, we frequently get a skilful
interweaving of questions and answers. This strategy helps the commentator to be
exhaustive in presenting all the related details about the text commented upon and to give
a resolution of an apparent disagreement. For example, there is a discussion of the

apparent disagreement between Ecclus 2 v. 18 and Sam. 24v.14, on whether it is better to fall into the hands of God or of man. In the *andōmta* commentary on the two texts , we get the answer that David spoke of this world, where God's mercy is better than man's, but Sirak spoke of the world to come, where it is a terrible thing to fall from God's mercy.

This terminology is also used to search for reasons. The commentator asks a question introducing by the term *...bilu...* and proceeds to give a number of reasons that lead him to accomplish his objective.

When the commentators comment upon a given text, they raise different kinds of questions, which they feel will be raised by those who have opposing views, usually the heresies and give their answers. Thus, when they forward a question and give its answer, they usually introduce it by the term --- *bilu* --- 'And if any one should wonder why --- then---'.

We can see this in the following:

ሕዝቅኤል 16 ይላል፤ ከዚህ ዮሐንስ አራት አለ። እንደምን ነው በዮሐንስ ወንጌላዊ ራእይ ተከፍሎ ቀርቶበታል ቢሉ ተከፍሎ ቀርቶበት አይደለም።

(ራእይ 4፥8)

Ezekiel says "sixteen"; here John says "four". How is this? If someone argues that the vision has been partially withheld from John the evangelist, [the answer is] No part has not been withheld from him.

(Rev.4v.8)

The commentator then explains the question he raised.

እንዳልተከፈለበትስ በዘመነ ብሉይ ለነበሩ ሰዎች ከተገለጸው ምሥጢር በዘመነ ሐዲስ ላሉ ሰዎች የተገለጸው ምሥጢር እንዲበልጥ ለማጠየቅ የካህናተ ብሊት ምሳሌ የሚሆኑ ኻይ አራቱን ካህናተ ሰማይ ከመንበሩ አርቆ የካህናተ ሐዲስ

ምሳሌ የሚሆኑ አራቱን ኪናቤል ከመንበሩ አቅርቦ ያሳየዋል፤ ተከፍሎበትም አይደል።

(ራእይ 4÷8)

[To prove] That it has not been partially withheld-[God] shows him the twenty-four clergy of Heaven, who are the example of the old Testament clergy, distant from the throne, and the four cherubim, who are the example of the New Testament clergy, near the throne, to certify that the mystery revealed to the people in the new dispensation is greater than the mystery revealed to the people in the old dispensation. It has not been partially withheld from him.

(Rev.4v.8)

3.1.1.2. --- ስኩላ /...ላ

In the *andämta* commentary, the scholar also gives a resolution for an apparent disagreement between different texts by using the term --- ስኩላ /...ላ. For example, in the following text, we see the commentator trying to create an agreement between two different terms from different sources.

ወዘየሐውር በማእከል መኃትው ዘወርቅ

በሰባቱ የወርቅ መቅረዝ መካከል የሚሄድ ፋናም ቢል አንድ ነው። ሐተታ ከዚያ ይነብር አለ። ከዚህ የሐውር አለ። እንደ ምን ነው ቢሉ ኃጢአት ሲሠሩ ይለያቸዋልና ከዚህ የሐውር አለ ጽድቅ ሲሠሩ ያድርባቸዋልና ከዚያ ይነብር ሲል ነው።

(ራእይ 2÷1)

And he who walks among the lamp stands of gold,

It is the same as saying he who walks in the midst of the seven gold candlesticks or 'lamps' *Hatäta*. If it is asked how it is that it said there '*he sits*' and here it said '*He walks*', it is because when they sin he departs from them, so here it says '*He walks*'

and because when they do righteousness he dwells in them, and there it said, '*He sits*'.

(Rev.2v.1)

In this extracted text, we see the commentator giving the resolution by using the strategic term discussed why the words 'sits' and 'walks' in different places.

To conclude this chapter, I have discussed some of the strategic terms being implemented in the Amharic *andāmta* commentary tradition. As the terms categorically discussed in the chapter with exemplary texts, they fit into the overall interpretative strategy. As they are many in number, I couldn't discuss each of them in the chapter. But I have annexed them at the end of the thesis.

Chapter Four

Conclusion

The impetus for this thesis emerged from the researcher's dissatisfaction with this vast area of study which is not yet explored by indigenous and foreign scholars, and a desire to introduce the area to those who have the calibre to conduct more research works on the area.

As pointed out in the introductory chapter, though the scholars of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church have developed their own body of Biblical commentary, this huge area of study does not seem to have attracted the attention of many researchers. This thesis, therefore, set out by providing the possible reasons for the negligence of the subject.

As pointed out in chapter three, commentators usually give an introductory remark for their commented upon book. Though their intention in giving this introductory remark is believed to be more than that of imparting information about authors, they also provide background information about content, canonicity, etc. that have significance to the overall interpretative strategy.

According to the Biblical canon of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church, the whole Books of the Old Testament are broadly categorized as Octateuch, the Historical Books, the Psalms and Wisdom Literature and the Prophetical Books.

In these categories, we get introductory comments which deal with more than one Book. For example, the introductory comment on Genesis deals with the Pentateuch in general, in the Historical Books category, the introductory material to 1 Sam. deals with the 4 books of kings, and with the 3 Ethiopian Books of Maccabees.

Another important point here is that, in the *andጳmta* commentary tradition, we get materials which are common in between different introductory materials to different Books. For example, the introductions to Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Hosea contain much

material in common with the Isaiah introduction. The introduction to Ezekiel also contains interpretations of his prophecies to show that the Trinity, incarnation, perpetual virginity of Mary, Baptism, the Eucharist and the resurrection of the dead were revealed to Ezekiel. The introduction to Hosea also contains an account of alternative interpretations of Hosea's marriage, that Hosea did not actually marry, or that he did in fact marry one woman, or that he married two women.

The New Testament introductory material in the *andəmta* commentary tradition is more varied in form and scope than the Old Testament material, but it possesses similar characteristics and deals with matters of authorship, background, content and canonicity.

On the New Testament, the Gospel of Matthew has introductory material entitled *tarik*, repeated for each of the other three Gospels. In the Pauline corpus, each epistle has a historical introduction (*tarik*), following the *məknjat* and preceding the comment on the text. The Acts, Catholic Epistles and Revelation are together known as *haddisat* (a term also applied to the whole New Testament). The introduction to 2 Peter says that it was written to oppose those who said that this world has no governor, or who denied the resurrection and the passing of this world, or who said that good work is not important. The introduction to 1 John says that John was imprisoned by Domitian and released by Trajan, and that he wrote this Epistle to oppose those who denied Christ's resurrection, who denied God's knowledge of sins of the mind, and who said good work is not important. The introduction to 2 John says that it was written to Romna, a woman who lived on the island where John was confined and who believed after seeing a miracle done by John and Prochorus. The introduction to 3 John says that it was written to praise Gaius, a good man who used to help Christians persecuted in the time of Claudius Caesar. The introduction to Jude is very brief, and speculates about the writer's identity.

In the course of the study, it was found out that the presentation of text and comment in the *andəmta* commentary tradition follows a standard pattern. A sentence of the Ge'ez text is followed by its Amharic translation, often somewhat interpretative. This is followed by the commentary proper in which a chain of successive comments is given.

The Ge'ez text commented-upon which comes at the beginning is regarded as the "scholars' text" (*yäliqawənt Zär*). According to the traditional Ethiopian point of view, this text is correct and that texts found to be differing from it are wrong.

The literal interpretation of the Ge'ez text, which follows the *yaliqawnt Zär* is named as *nät'äla tərguame*, i.e a simple direct translation of the text without commentary. In this process of the translation, there are clearly many levels of potential reinterpretation involved. For example, the semantic contents of the words in the Ge'ez language may have been broadened or narrowed, or a Ge'ez word may have been employed in a sense it did not formerly possess. This is mentioned because the nature of the Ge'ez text commented upon is predisposed to certain patterns of exegesis in the *andəmta* commentary, and because the *andəmta* commentary employs certain common Amharic words in theological contexts which require their meanings to be determined by the Ge'ez words they interpret. E.g. Ge'ez *šdq* 'to be righteous' is commonly represented in the *andəmta* commentary by Amharic *kəbr*, which normally means 'to be honoured.' This semantic change in the formation of Amharic *zäybe* happens because the translator does not have the same idea as the original interpreter of the text. This may take us to the conclusion that, in the *andəmta* commentary tradition, there might be a sort of addition or subtraction of meanings or ideas.

Andəmta is an exegetical clarification in Amharic (the language that since the 18th century has increasingly become the state language of Ethiopia) a translation and clarification of the Ge'ez text of the Biblical and certain patristic and liturgical books. It intends to clarify and illustrate the meaning of the translated Ge'ez text.

Thus, after the Ge'ez has been translated literally, the commentary proper is presented. As it has been discussed in chapter one, the commentary proper is broadly composed of the interpretation of the meaning which is known as the *mǝstir tǝrguame*, which is a classification based on the sense without too much attention to the words.

This *mǝstir tǝrguame* is introduced by different terms, for example, by *andǝm* when it contains alternative interpretations, by *hatāta* when it is a note on unfamiliar custom, the meanings of a work etc.; by *tarik* when a story illustrating the point is introduced; by *yǝlal*, or *yǝmmil yǝggaññal* when there are references to actual variants found in MSS, *gǝdfätä šāhafi* when there is apparent errors and discrepancies, notably scribal errors.

Referring to the *andǝmta* commentary as an integral whole, it must be remarked once again that there are variant traditions within it, notably the 'upper and lower houses' (*lay bet* and *tač bet*), which are said to date from the time of *mǝmhǝr* Esdros in the mid-eighteenth century. The *andǝmta* commentary occasionally refers to the Ge'ez text, or to the Amharic interpretation, favored by one of these 'houses'; e.g. having translated the Ge'ez, 'Lead us not, O Lord, into destruction into Amharic as, 'Do not lead us into sin, into apostasy, into tribulation into Gehenna', (presumably the 'lower house' interpretation), the commentary continues by saying that the 'upper house' translates, 'save us from receiving your flesh and blood presumptuously, when we are not worthy.'

To conclude, the *andǝmta* commentary material is a source that should not be neglected in the study of many things. This research has attempted to introduce the subject, which was neglected by scholars, so that they may pick up and explore it part by part. As it has undergone little stylistic change over a long period of time and at least some parts of it have been transmitted with little change since the seventeenth century, one may proceed in his study of older Amharic. High calibre researchers can also conduct their research by comparing this Ethiopic way of exegesis with other exegetical traditions.

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End notes

¹ Frederich Heyer, 1966, p. 140.

² Cowley, 1971, p. 9.

³ Cowley, 1974, p. 162.

⁴ Habtä Maryam (*Liqä sǎltanat*), 1948, p. 217.

⁵ Cowley, 1974, p. 162.

⁶ For example *wǎddase maryam*.

⁷ Cowley, 1974, p. 162.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ AC 2 Pet. 3v.16.

¹⁰ OTIAC pp. 162 – 3; ML chapters 1 – 7; KWK pp. 16 – 22.

¹¹ *mārha lǎbbuna*, pp.11-12.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *yämäjämmäriyaw ityopyawi patrǎyarǎk*, 1956 E.C., pp. 129 - 31.

¹⁴ ML, p. 14.

¹⁵ *mǎshetä amin*, p. 102.

¹⁶ The name given to scholars who have gone through all the four categories of books; namely, the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Fathers and the Books of the Monks.

¹⁷ Mähari Tǎrfe */Liqä Liqawǎnt/*, 1948, pp. 213-214.

¹⁸ Taken from the Interview with *Mämhǎ Dǎggu Aläm Kasa*; see appendice.

¹⁹ OTIAC, p. 165

²⁰ OTIAC: 164-65.

²¹ Jn. 13 v.15, FN:163.

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- ²² Dt. 32v.8..
- ²³ Colophon to Acts.
- ²⁴ Gen. 37 v.34; 2 Kgs. 21 v.18.
- ²⁵ Ps. 71 v.10.
- ²⁶ Rom. Int.
- ²⁷ YaWD: 364.
- ²⁸ Ecclus. 30 v.18.
- ²⁹ YaWT: 110–11.
- ³⁰ Ps.11v.2.
- ³¹ Ez. 29 v.11.
- ³² Ps. 150 v.4, Rev.14v.20, Ex.2 v.5.
- ³³ Rev. Int., YaWT:110–11.
- ³⁴ Ps.113.
- ³⁵ FN:291, Qid.:271.
- ³⁶ Qid.: 271.
- ³⁷ YaWT: 20, Qid.: 271.
- ³⁸ YaWT: 110-11.
- ³⁹ *ibid.*
- ⁴⁰ *ibid.*
- ⁴¹ 1 Kgs.14v.28, Ps.2 v.11, Ecclus. 9 v.13.
- ⁴² Cyr E..
- ⁴³ FN: 256.
- ⁴⁴ *ibid*
- ⁴⁵ Ez. 29 v. 11
- ⁴⁶ Ex. 2v.5

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- ⁴⁷ Ex. 2v.5.
- ⁴⁸ Rev. 14 v. 20.
- ⁴⁹ Dan.3V.4.
- ⁵⁰ FN 113.
- ⁵¹ Ecclus. 37v. 31.
- ⁵² MY 104.
- ⁵³ FN 394.
- ⁵⁴ Mt. 23v.5.
- ⁵⁵ Ex. 19v.25.
- ⁵⁶ E.g. Is.39v.2.
- ⁵⁷ E.g. Ps.73v.15, Jn.18v.1.
- ⁵⁸ E.g. 2 kgs.20v.13, Heb.6v.8.
- ⁵⁹ E.g. Qid.: 423.
- ⁶⁰ Ezra S.13v.1, Esdras 14v.1
- ⁶¹ HA Alexandros of Alexandria.
- ⁶² E.g. Lk. 2v.26, Jn. 5v.8, WM.:56, 75, 81.
- ⁶³ E.g. YaWT:117-18.
- ⁶⁴ Is.34v.8.
- ⁶⁵ Rev.14v.3.
- ⁶⁶ Is.34v.8.
- ⁶⁷ Pederson, Kirsten S. 1995, P. 5
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 1
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid*
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 2.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid*

⁷² Däbbäbä, 1974, p. 33–34.

⁷³ Cowley, 1971, p.10

⁷⁴ The introductory materials translated are Genesis, Jubilees, Kings, Maccabees, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiasticus, Isaiah, Enoch and the Apocalypse of Ezra.

⁷⁵ Cowley, 1974, 2

⁷⁶ *təntawi yäityopya Səṛ'atä təmhərt*, Addis Ababa, 1971 A.D

⁷⁷ Cowley, 1983: 167

⁷⁸ R.W. Cowley, "Old Testament Introduction in the *Andəmta* Commentary Tradition", *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Vol. II, No. 1, p. 133

⁷⁹ For example we find the author of Psalms (Dawit) mentioned along with its three alternative meanings.

⁸⁰ For example the book of Maccabess

⁸¹ Deut.6v.4.

⁸² Dan. 4v.10. Besides, Abba Markos Täfära told me that Er in Aramaic means light.

⁸³ *Aläqa* Ayalew disagrees with this way of revealing the content in advance, because it weakens the interest of the readers or hearers of the commentary. See the annexed interview 'A'.

⁸⁴ Qäleməntos, Clement of Rome, appears in the tradition as the trustee of the canonical literature and the intermediary through whom the Apostles passed on their teachings.

⁸⁵ Rom. 15 v. 4.

⁸⁶ Sunday- darkness, fire, wind, earth, water, the 7 heavens, angels, light; Monday- Firmament; Tuesday- small plants, grain plants, trees; Wednesday- Sun, moon, stars; Thursday- fish, crawling animals, birds; Friday- land creatures that slither, walk or fly, man.

⁸⁷ These start at Ex. 20, and go on to the end of Deut.

⁸⁸ Cowley, 1971, p. 10.

⁸⁹ The translation of words and quotations in Ge'ez is printed in italics.

⁹⁰ The noun light is plural as it says 'and God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God create two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night:he made the stars also.' (Gen. 1v. 13-16).

⁹¹ Cowley, 1971, p. 10.

⁹² *Mämhər Däggü Aläm Kasa*: see appendix.

⁹³ The text with the highest number of *andəms* is Rev. 6 v. 2, where “the white horse” has nineteen different explanations. And in the Ge'ez commentary material the synonym for the term is አዎ (or) or ቦ (there is another meaning).

⁹⁴ Cowley, 1974, pp. 133 – 75.

⁹⁵ Translation and comment on this variant appear to have been omitted by the scholars.

⁹⁶ For non-Biblical sources, see the section in which I discuss the Sources of *andəmta* commentary in chapter one of this paper.

⁹⁷ As it is briefly discussed in chapter one, commentators use different kinds of Biblical and non – Biblical sources for the stories they incorporate into their commentary proper. Among these sources, *Sənkəssar* is the best source for the exegete to take different stories from different sources to use in the commentary proper. For example, the *tarik* that follows the text found in Rev. 3 V. 11 is taken from *Sənkəssar* to be read on *Mägabit* 13.

⁹⁸ The story is entitled by the church scholars as “የመላእክት ጦርነት” meaning the war of the angels.

⁹⁹ This story appears more fully in the *andämta* on commentary Rev. 12 v. 17; a similar material is found in the *andämta* commentary of *maqdamä wängel, sänä fäträt* by Mogäs Equbä Gädyorgis, and *Aximarus for Wednesday*:

¹⁰⁰ For more on this see the section “cross-reference” in this chapter.

¹⁰¹ Kekros, 'one sixtieth part of 24 hours', i.e. 60 minutes; Dilmann, *Lexicon* Col. 859, KWK p. 531.

¹⁰² Ps. 103 (104). 19

¹⁰³ Ecclus. 43 v. 4.

¹⁰⁴ En. 72 v. 37.

¹⁰⁵ Ecclus. 43 v.7-8. Similar examples in En. 80 v. 1, Ez. 21 v. 15.

¹⁰⁶ AM, p.316, WM, p.24.

¹⁰⁷ *aryannä* understood as ‘he separated us’; *aryanä* , ‘ we separated’. Further, examples in see Rev. 3 v. 20.

¹⁰⁸ I was to use the phrase 'uses of figurative language' for the section. But Dr. Yonas gave me this title which, I think, is acceptable.

¹⁰⁹ *I would like to thank Dr. Yonas for this sub-title Annex 2*

አንድምታ ማለት ምን ማለት ነው?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው:- አንድምታ በመጻሕፍት ትርጓሜ የትምህርት ደረጃ የሚገኝ ምሥጢራትን የመበታተኛ መሣሪያ ነው። በዜማም አለ። በንግግር ወቅት የአንድን ነገር ገጽታ በተለያዩ መልኩ ከገለጽን በኋላ በሌላ በኩልም እንላለን። እንደዚሁ ሁሉ በመጻሕፍት ትርጓሜም የአንድን ዘር ትርጉም በማስቀመጥ ምሥጢሩን በምናመሠጥርበት ጊዜ አንድም እንደዚህ ነው፤ አንድም እንደዚህ ነው እያልን የዘፋን የተለያዩ መልኮች እናሳያለን። ስለዚህ አንድምታ የአንድን ዘር ሦስት አራት ትርጓሜ ለማሳየት ሲባል የተፈለሰፈ ቀመር አንድም ጥበብ ነው።

አንድምታ ትርጓሜ ታሪኩ እንደምን ነው?

!!q l!"WNT xÄI@WÝ- _, nWÝÝ XNGÄ!H k-¶µ* XNdMNRÄW x!T×ùÄ

kmjm¶ÄW jMé yXú*N h#n¾ _bB ll@§W lmS-T úT-KT yl@§W xXMé
yflfWN _bB úTNQ lmQsM STtU yöyC hgR ÂTYÝ bmç•M yNg#l
slÖän z@Ä _bB b>IM íé btÂß g!z@ hg%oCN bNGla x¥µYnT qD¥
kNg## zND bmdrS xM` xQRÆ kNg#\# _bB tµF§ICÝÝ NGlt úÆ bz!Ä
_bBN FIU g#øê µmÈCW _bB l@§ kNg#\# }NSN xSqR- nbRÝÝ wd
hg... ktmlsC b"§ L©*N wldCÝÝ SÑNM Mn!LK B§ -%oCWÝÝ

;É@ Mn!LK qÄ¥êE lxQm xÄM XNddrs xÆt\$N ¥yT b!š XÄt\$N

xSfQì wd x!y,,úl@M bmyD Xs#M XNd XÄt\$ kxÆt\$ _bBNÄ !Y¥ñTN
tMé BI#Y bx!T×ùÄ ToÄ zND mÚ?Ft BI#ÄTN knTRÙ» mR¥¶ÄcW½
xSfÚ ,êN -it A×NNM Yø wd x!T×ùÄ m_aLÝÝ bz!Ä g!z@ ymÚ?FT
TRÙ» SLT wd hg%oCN gBaLÝÝ mÚ?Ft\$ XyttgÖÑ MXmÂN Xyt¥,,
BI#Y bx!T×ùÄ XyoÂC STÿD x!T×ùÄWÄn# !!"WNT y%oúCW yçn
x!T×ùÄW¾ yTRg#M SLT flsûÝÝ mÚ?Ft\$N bGXZ «i'½ «ã' XÄI#
mtRgÖM jm,,ÝÝ öYèM BI#Y b/Ä!S s!oÄ /Ä!úT wd hg%oCN gb#ÝÝ
l#"WNt\$ bBI#Ät\$ XNd ,ÄdRg#T /Ä!úT\$N bTRg#M MI-!%oCW
XÄd\$dl# ¥St¥R jm,,ÝÝ bz!H h#l# -¶K YÿÄLÂ öYè öYè yGXZ ÌNÌ
bx¥R¾ s!tµ yx¥R¾W yxNDM- yTRg#M SLT tjmrÝÝ YH bGLA tjmr
y ,ÆIW bxÉ@ zR; Ä:qB zmn mNGIT s!çN mLK XyÄz ymÈW bgÖNdR
zmn mNGIT nWÝÝ

bgÖNdR zmn mNGIT yxNDM- TRÙ» mLK XyÄz mÈ s!ÆL xBé bwQt\$
!"WNT mukL L†nT tklè XNdnBR Yng%oLYÝ bz!H L†nT ytnœM ²ÊM b!çN
y\$Y b@TÂ y-C b@T TRÙ» s!ÆL Ys¥LYÝ lmcn# YH mkÍfL XNdT !!mÈ Ò!?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው፡- አይ! ይህ የቤት ጉዳይ ነው። ምንም ያህል አትጨነቅበት። እንግዲህ
በታሪክ ስናየው ሊቃውንቱ ይናናቁ ነበር። ወሳኝና ፍርድ የሚሰጥ ደግሞ አልነበራቸውም።

ከዚህ አትላፉ፤ ከዚህ አትቀንሱ የሚል ሰው አልነበረም። እና አንዱ የጨመረውን ሌላው ይቀንሳል፤ ሌላው የቀነሰውን አንዱ ይጨምራል። ስለዚህ ይህ የሊቃውንቱ አስተሳሰብ በእኔ ግምት ስሕተት እንጂ የቤተ ክርስቲያን ሥርዓት በዚህም ታሪክ ሆኖ የሚወረስ አይደለም። አትጨነቅበት።

ÃW -¶k# µl zND m- wQ xlbT b, L nW xÆ- CN?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው፡- ይኸ የሚታወቅ ነገር አይደለም ነው የምልህ። ሌላ ጥያቄ ካለህ ጠይቀኝ።

X!ÝÝ yçñW çñ gÖ©äC y§Y b@T gÖNdéC dGä y-C b@T nW msl" y,l#T?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው፡- አዎ ይላሉ።

bxNDM- yTRÙ» SLT mœ¶ÃnT y,s-W ymÚ?FT TRÙ» TMHRT bb@t KRStEÃ• |R>t TMHRT kFt³⁄⁄W XNdçñ Y- w”LÝÝ l mçñ# yz!H TMHRT -Q§§ YzT MN YmS§L?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው፡- እንግዲህ የአንድምታ ትርጓሜ ትምህርት አራት ክፍሎች አሉት። አራቱ ገባኤያት ይባላሉ። ከአራቱ ገባኤያት የመጀመሪያው ብሉያት ናቸው። 46 መጻሕፍትን የሚያካትቱ ናቸው። ከዚያ ቀጥሎ ሐዲሳት ይባላሉ። በዚህ ሥር 35 መጻሕፍት ይካተታሉ። ከእነዚህ ውስጥ ሃያ ስምንቱ በቤተ ክርስቲያን በልዩ ልዩ ሥፍራ በግልጥ በትምህርት የሚሰጡ ናቸው። ስምንቱ ግን የሥርዓት መጻሕፍት ስለሆኑ ጥቂት ሊቃውንት ከሚያውቋቸው ከሚመረምሯቸው በቀር ሁሉም አያውቋቸውም፤ አይጠቀሙባቸውምም። ስለዚህ 46 መጻሕፍት ብሉያት፣ 35 መጻሕፍት ሐዲሳት፣ በድምሩ 81 የኢትዮጵያ ቤተ ክርስቲያን የምትቀበላቸው መጻሕፍት አሉ ማለት ነው። እነዚህም በአንድ ተጠርዘው መጽሐፍ ቅዱስ ይባላሉ። አርባ ስድስቱ የብሉይ ኪዳን መጻሕፍት አንድም ተብለው ሲተረጎሙ እምብዛም አከራካሪ ነገር የላቸውም። ብዛ ቢል ታሪክ ነው። ከዚያ ቢያልፍ ሕግ ነው። በእግርጥ እንደ መዝሙረ ዳዊት ያሉት መጻሕፍት ጠንከር ያለ ትርጓሜ አላቸው። እነዚህ መጻሕፍት ስምንቱ ብሔረ አራት፣ ዐሥራ ሰባቱ መጻሕፍት ታሪክ፣ ስምንቱ የግጥምና የጥበብ መጻሕፍት እና ዐሥራ ስድስቱ መጻሕፍት ነቢያት ናቸው። ሠላሳ አምስቱ ሐዲሳት ግን እነዚያን አርባ ስድስቱን ብሉያት ከሐዲሳት ጋር የሚያስማሙ የተስፋን ጅማሬ ከፍጻሜ የሚያደርሱ በመሆናቸው ቃላታቸውም ጥጥሮች ናቸው። ጌታ ከተናገራቸው ሐዋርያትም ካስተማሯቸው የተመሠረቱ መጻሕፍት ናቸው። እነዚህም አራቱ ወንጌላት፣ የመጀመሪያይቱን ቤተ ክርስቲያን አቋም የሚያሳዩው ግብረ

ሐዋርያት /የሐዋርያት ሥራ/፣ ዐሥራ አራቱ የቅዱስ ጳውሎስ መልእክታት፣ አንዱ የያዕቆብ መልእክት፣ አንዱ የይሁዳ መልእክት እና ራእይ ዮሐንስ ይባላሉ። እነዚህ የጉባኤ ማለትም በጉባኤ የሚሰጡ መጻሕፍት ናቸው። ትምህርታቸው ጠንካራ ነው። ክርክርም አለባቸው። ችግር የሚፈጥሩ ነገሮችም አሉ። በሚገባ ካላስተዋሏቸው ወደ ሃይማኖት በመግባት ፈንታ ከሃይማኖት ውጭ ያደርጋሉ። ከእነዚህም ውጭ የሆኑ ስምንት መጻሕፍት አሉ። እነሱም የሥርዓት አፈጻጸም መጻሕፍት ናቸው።

ከዚህ በኋላ አርባ ስድስቱን ብሉያት ሠላሳ አምስቱን ሐዲሳት እያራቀቁ እየተረገሙ በየጠባያቸው ይህ ቃል ይኸን ያሳያል ብለው ለቤተ ክርስቲያን ያስተላለፉ ሊቃውንት ናቸው ከአበው ሐዋርያት በኋላ። እነሱ የጻፏቸው መጻሕፍት በሦስተኛ ጉባኤነት ይመደባሉ። ጉባኤ ሊቃውንት ይባላል። እነሱም ሃይማኖተ አበው፣ ቄርሎስ፣ ዮሐንስ አፈ ወርቅ፣ ፍትሐ ነገሥት፣ ቅዳሴያትና ውዳሴና ቅዳሴ ማርያም ናቸው። ቀጥሎ ያለው ጉባኤ መነኮሳት ነው። መጻሕፍቱ ከዚህ ዓለም ወጥተው በምናኔ የሚኖሩ አባቶችና እናቶች በምን ዓይነት ሥርዓት ሕይወታቸውን መግፋት እንደሚችሉ የሚያሳዩ፣ በዚያ ሕይወት ሲኖሩ ጦርነታቸው ከሰይጣን ጋር በመሆኑ እንዴት ሊዋጉ እንደሚገባቸው ሁለተኛ ከጠላታቸው የሚወረወሩባቸውን የጦር ዓይነቶች የሚያመለክቱ ያንንም እንዴት ድል ማድረግ እንደሚችሉ የሚያሳዩ መጻሕፍት ናቸው። በዚህም ማር ይሥሐቅ፣ ፊልክስስዩስ እና አረጋዊ መንፈሳዊ የሚባሉት መጻሕፍት ይካተታሉ። ዛሬ በጉባኤ አይሰጡም እንጂ የቁጥር ጉባኤም ነበር።

ለመሆኑ እርስዎ ከእነዚህ ጉባኤያት የትኞቹን ተምረዋል?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው፡- እኔ በእውነቱ ሁሉንም በሚገባ ተምራያቸዋለሁ ለማለት አልችልም።

ማለት ካለብኝ ግን ልል የምችለው ሁሉንም እየላስኩ ቀምሻቸዋለሁ ነው።

የአንድምታ ትርጓሜ ስልት አካሄዱ እንደምንድን ነው?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው፡- የኢትዮጵያ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ስንዱ እመቤት የምትባልበት ምክንያቱ ለሁሉም የበቃ የደላ ሥርዓት ስላላት ነው። ታዲያ የአንድምታ ትርጓሜም የራሱ የሆነ የአካሄድ ሥርዓት አለው። ሊቁ አንድም ብሎ ምሥጢ ሩን ከማፍላቱ በፊት ዘሩን ከባሕር መዝገቡ ይመዘና ያስቀምጣል። ይህ ሊሰለቅ የሚመዘዘው ምንባብ ግእዝ በመሆኑ ወደ አማርኛ ይተረጎመዋል። በዚህ ጊዜ ነጠላውን ተረጎመው ይባላል። ይትበሃሉም ነጠላ ትርጓሜ ይባላል። ያንን አድርጎ አይተወውም። ለምን እንደዚያ እንዳለው ሐተታ እያመጣ ከተለያዩ ቅዱሳን መጻሕፍት ታሪኮችን እያጣቀሰ ምሥጢሩን ያቀርባል። ይህ የትርጓሜ ይትበሃል የምሥጢር ትርጓሜ ይባላል።

bxNDM- TRÜ» £dT !!q\$ xNDM½ xNDM XÃI xNDN zR btlÃ† mNgìC
Ytrg#¥LÝÝ k,drD%ccW ytlÃ† TRÜ»ãC z,,N bTKKL Ytrg#ML¾L BIÖ
y,ÃSbWN xNÄ#N mRõ b¥Sqm_ fN- IMNDN nW bRkT ÃI# TRÜ»ãCN
y,ÃSqm-W?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው፡- ይህ የሚደረገው በተቻለ መጠን የደቀ መዝሙሩን ዓይን ለማስፋት ነው። አእምሮው አንድ አቅጣጫ ብቻ ተከትሎ እንዳይሄድ ለማድረግ ነው። የደቀ መዝሙሩን የማስተዋል ዐይን ለማስፋት ነው። መንገድ ለማሳየት ነው። የያዘውን ብቻ ቋጥሮ እንዳይቀመጥ ለማድረግ ነው። በዚያ አንጻር ምሥጢራትን እያፈላ እንዲኖር ነው።

SI xmyÃ# mucœN zND xNDM tBIW bttrgÖÑ bh#I#M mÚ?FT I!”Wnt\$
bmGb!ÃnT SImA/û o/ð½ SImA/û YzT XÂ -’ ,nt\$ ÃSt\$LÍI#ÝÝ YH zÁ yxNDN
mA/F ÑI# TRÜ» lmrÄT y,ÃbrKtW xStê}å MNDN nW Y\$I#?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው፡- እኔ በአውነቱ ምነው ቅንኦት ነወይ እንዳትሉኝ እንጂ ይህን አካሄድ አልወደውም። አስቀድሞ ማሳየት ተገቢ አይደለም። አንድም የትርጉሙን አንባቢ መብት ይጋፋል። አንድም ያሰንፋል። ሊቁ ማታለያ አስቀድሞ ከሚያመጣ በቀጥታ ከምሥጢሩ በያደርሳቸው ይሻላል።

xNÄND g!z@ !!q\$ yGXz#N MNÆEB wd x¥R¾ ktrgÖm b“\$ /t- BIÖ zYb@WN
mtNtN YjM%oLÝÝ Imçn# YH /t- BIÖ y,ÃmÈW MNÆEB _QÑ MNDN nW?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው፡- ሐተታ ማለት በቋንቋችን ምርምር ማለት ነው። አንድን ዘር ወደ አማርኛው ከተረጎመ በኋላ ሐተታ ማለቱ ማብራሪያ ለማቅረብ ሲያስብ ነው። አንድም ብሎ የሚያመጣው ምሥጢር ግቡን እንዲመታለት ቀደም አድርጎ ማብራሪያ ሲያዘጋጅ ለሚመሠጠረው ነገር ሐተታ ያቀርባል። መገርደፍ በለው። ኋላ አንድም ብሎ የሚሰልቀው ምሥጢር ግርድፍ ነው ማለት ይቻላል።

bxNDM- TRÜ» £dT ytlÃ† ”\$TN XÂg¾INÝÝ Xnz!HN ”\$T bQRbT s!mrM...cW
ITRg#Ñ ¥kÂw¾ XNÄ!ÃglG!# çnW yqrb# mçÂcWN lmrÄT xÃÄGTMÝÝ Imçn#
y,ktl#T ”\$T tGÆR MNDN nW?

1.. . ሲል ነው?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው:- መምህሩ ይህንን ቃል የሚጠቀመው ሊቃውንትን ለማስተባበር አንድም የምስጢሩ ምንጭ አንድ ነው ለማለት ነው። ይህን ለመግለጥ ቀደም ያለውን ሊቅ አባባል ጠቅሶ «ሲል ነው» ይላል።

2 ቢሉ?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው:- እንደዚህ ብሎ የሚጠይቅ ሰው ካለ መልሱ እንዲያ ነው ለማለት ሲፈልግ ነው። ምስጢር የማፍላት ችሎታው ኃይል ከመሆኑ የተነሣ ያልበላውን እያከከ ያልተጠየቀውን ይመልሳል። ለደቀ መዝሙሩም እንደዚህ በሚል ከተጠየክ እንዲህ በለው እያለ ያስታጥቀዋል። ስለዚህ ለምን እንደዚህ ሆነ ቢሉ በዚህ ምክንያት ነው እያለ ምስጢር ያሰፋል፣ ያመላል።

3 ቢመጡ?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው:- መምህሩ ተማሪዎቹን ሲያስተምር ማንኛውንም ጥያቄ እንዲመልስ አድርጎ ስለሆነ ወደፊት እንደዚህ ብለው ቢመጡ ይህንን ቢጠይቁ እንደዚህ ብለህ መልስላቸው ብሎ የሚመክርበት ቃል ነው።

4 ግጠም?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው:- ይህ ቃል የሚያገለግለው የሚስማሙ አባባሎችን ወይም ዘሮችን ለማገናኘት ነው። እኔ ያልኩት ወይም ሌላ ሰው የተናገረው ነገር በሐሳብ አንድ ከሆነ እገሌም እንዲህ ብሏል እገሌም እንዲህ ብሏል በማለት ስሙን ከመጥራት «ግጥም» ብሎ ቃላቱን ከቃላት ዐረፍተ ነገሩን ከዐረፍተ ነገር አገጣጥሞ ያቀርባል።

5 አያስተረጉም?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው:- በአንድምታ ትርጓሜ አንዳንድ ጊዜ እንደፈለጉ ሊተረጉሙት የማይቻል ዘር ያጋጥማል። በመሆኑም ሊቁ ልተርጉምህ ሲሉት የሚከብድ ምናልባትም ሊያሳስት የሚችል ዘር ሲያጋጥመው «አያስተረጉም» ይልና ያልፈዋል። ይህም ለጥንቃቄ ሲባል ነው።

6 የገነፈለ ነው?

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው:- አዎ፣ ካለቦታው የመጣ ምስጢር ሲያጋጥም የገነፈለ ነው ይባላል። ካለቦታው የመጣ ነውና ብዙም አትጨነቅበት፣ እመረምራለሁ ብለህም እንዳትደክም አንድም እንዳትሳሳት ለማለት ሊቁ የገነፈለ ነው ይላል።

አባታችን ላደረጉልኝ ከፍተኛ ትብብር ምስጋና አቀርብልዎታለሁ።

ሊቀ ሊቃውንት አያሌው፡- ደስ ብሎኛል። እግዚአብሔር ይስጥልኝ። አንተንም የድካምህን ፍሬ ለመብላት ያብቃህ።

አሜን።

Annex 3

መምህር ደጉ ዓለም ካሳ ከ1986 ዓ.ም ጀምሮ በቅድስት ሥላሴ መንፈሳዊ ኮሌጅ በሐዲሳት መምህርነት በማገልገል ላይ ናቸው። ከዚህም በተጨማሪ በቤተ ክህነትም ሆነ በአጥቢያ አብያተ ክርስቲያናት ደረጃ በሚዘጋጁ ልዩ ልዩ መንፈሳዊያት መርሐ ግብራት ላይ በመገኘት ወንጌልን ይሰብካሉ።

አንድምታ ማለት ምን ማለት ነው?

መምህር ደጉ ዓለም ካሳ፡- አንድምታ አንድ ጊዜ የተነገረው ቃል በተለያዩ መልክ አሻሽሎ እያሳመሩ የሚተረጉምበት መንገድ ነው። በምሳሌ ብገልጠው አንድ ባዕለጸጋ ተጋባዮቹን ከአሥር እስከ ዐሥራ አምስት ከዚያም በላይ የወጥ ዓይነት አቅርቦ ይጋብዛል። ሊቃውንት መምህራንም ባዕለጸጎች ናቸው። ጸጋቸው በትርጉም መንፈስ ቅዱስ ነው። እግዚአብሔር መንፈስ ቅዱስ አንደበታቸውን መናገሪያ አእምሮአቸውን ደግሞ መስፈሪያ አድርጎ ባዘጋጀላቸው መሠረት ምሥጢርን ከምሥጢር አስማምተው ሰማዕያኑ በሚረዱት ቋንቋ ይናገራሉ። ስለዚህ አንድምታ ምሥጢርን ከምሥጢር አስማምተው መልክና ቅርፅ ሰጥተው ለተጠቃሚ የሚያቀርቡበት መሣሪያ ነው።

የአንድምታ ትርጓሜ ታሪኩ እንደምን ነው?

መምህር ደጉ ዓለም ካሳ፡- እንግዲህ ቅዱሳት መጻሕፍት ከተለያዩ ቋንቋዎች በተለይም ከዕብራይስጥ ወደ አረብኛ ወደ ግሪክ ተተርጉመዋል። ከዚያም በሰብዓ ሊቃናት አማካይነት ከግሪኩ ወደ ግእዙ መጥተው ነው የተተረጎሙት። ከግእዙ ደግሞ ወደአማርኛ ሲመጡ ግን ቋንቋው በማሕፀን ግእዝ ያለውን በቀጥታ ለመተርጎም ስላልቻለ አንድም የተባለው ምሥጢር መዘርዘሪያ መሣሪያ ተፈለሰ። በወቅቱ አማርኛው ከአባቱ ከግእዝ ጉያ የወጣ እንደመሆኑ ራሱን መቻል አቅቶት ሲፍገመገም ቢቆይም ዛሬም ቢሆን ጨርሶ ራሱን ችሎ ከአባቱ ቤት ወጥቷል ባይባልም እየዋለ እያደረ ሲሄድ በግእዝ ምርኩዝነት በእግሩ ለመቆም ሲችል የአንድምታው ትርጓሜም

መልክ እየያዘ መጣ። ዛሬ በቅድስት ቤተ ክርስቲያናችን የትምህርቶች ሁሉ ቁንጮ ሆኖ በአብነት ትምህርት ቤቶች እየተሰጠ ይገኛል።

bxNDM- TRÛ» -¶K y§Y b@TÂ y-C b@T y,ÆL L†nT xIÝÝ Imçn# YH L†nT kyT mÈ) bh#lt\$ b@èC µµkL ÑIW yTRÛ» YTb:LS L†nt\$ MNDN nW)

መምህር ደጉ ዓለም ካሳ፡- በእውነቱ ይህ ልዩነት ሊኖር ባልተገባ ነበር። የሆነው ሆኖ ልዩነቱ ከመፈጠሩ በፊት የላይ ቤት ትርጓሜ ነበር ጸንቶ የሚኖር። ዛሬ የሁለቱን አካሄድ ተመልክተን ከልዩነቱ በፊት የተመሠጠረውን ምሥጢር ስናይ ማለት ነው። ታዲያ ኋላ ላይ መምህራ ኤስድሮስ የተባሉ የታወቁ የጉንደር ሊቅ የመጻሕፍቱን ትርጓሜ እንመርምርና እናስተካክል፤ የረዘመውን እናሳጥር፤ የአጠራውን እናስረዝም የሚል ጥሪ በየቦታው /በጉንደርና በጉጃም እንዲሁም በሸዋ/ ለነበሩ ሊቃውንት ባስተላለፉ ጊዜ ለጥሪያቸው አሉታዊ ምላሽ የሰጡት በአንድ ጉን ሆነው የላይ ቤት የሚል ስያሜን አገኙ። እሺ በሳ ብለው ወደመምህሩ የሄዱት በአንድ ጉን ሆነው የታች ቤት ተባሉ። እንግዲህ ላይ ቤት የጉጃሙ አብነት ሲሆን ታች ቤት የሚባለው ደግሞ የጉንደሩ ነው። ላይ ቤት ጠንከር ያለ ስልት ነው። ለምሳሌ «ወትወልድ ወልደ» የሚለውን ገጸ ንባብ ታች ቤቶች «ወንድ ልጅ ትወልዳለች» ብለው ይተረጉሙታል። የላይ ቤቱ ግን «ወልድን ትወልዳለች» ይለዋል። በእኔ አስተያየት ይኸኛው ትክክለኛ ትርጉም ነው። ሲተረጉሙ እንደታችኞቹ ጥሬውን ወስደው አይደሉም። ይልቁንስ በኢሳይያስ የትንቢት መጽሐፍ የተገለጠውን ወስደው ምሥጢርን ከምሥጢር አገናኝተው ተርጉመውታል። የታች ቤቱን የወሰድን እንደሆነ ግን አይስማማም። ወንድ ልጅንም ማንም ሴት የሆነች ነገር ግን መካን ያልሆነች፤ ባል ያላት ሴት ሁሉ ትወልዳለች። እመቤታችን ግን ለዘላለሙ ወልድ የተባለን እግዚአብሔር ወልድን ወልዳለችና ከሦስቱ አካላት አንዱን ወልድ ትወልዳለች ተብሎ መተርጎሙ ግሩም ነው። ስለዚህ የላይ ቤት ትርጓሜ በተለያዩ መጻሕፍት የተገለጡትን ምሥጢራት ጠብቆ የሚሄድ ለመናፍቅ በር የማይከፍት የትርጓሜ ስልት ነው። የታች ቤቱ ትርጓሜ ግን ለአነጋገር ቀላል የሆነ ቋንቋውም ከዘመኑ ቋንቋ ብዙም ያልራቀ ነው።

yxNDM- TRÛ» xµÿÇ XNdMNDN nW)

መምህር ደጉ ዓለም ካሳ፡- አንድምታ በሚመሠጠርበት ጊዜ የራሱ የሆነ አካሄድ አለው። በመጀመሪያ የግእዙ ገጸ ንባብ ይቀርባል። ከዚያ ገጸ ንባቡ ወደአማርኛ ይተረጎማል። ዘይቤው

ከመመሥጠፍ በፊት መሠለቅ የሚፈልግ ከሆነ ሐተታ ይቀርብለታል። ከዚያም አንድም ብለን የቀረበውን ገጸ ንባብ በልዩ ልዩ መንገድ እንተረገጥለን። ለምሳሌ በማቴዎስ ወንጌል በምዕራፍ ስድስት ውስጥ እንዲህ የሚል ገጸ ንባብ እናገኛለን። «ወአንተስ ሶበ ትገብር ምጽዋተክ ኢታእምር ጸጋምክ፤ ዘትገብር የማንክ» የሚል ነው። «አንተ ግን በምትመጸውትበት ጊዜ ቀኝ እጅህ የምትሰጠውን ግራ እጅህ አትወቀው» ማለት ነው ዘይቤው። ከዚያ ለዚህ ዘይቤ ሐተታውን ያቀርባል። ማለት በቀኝ እጅህ የያዝኸውን በግራ እጅህ አትያዘው። ግራ ደካማ ነው፤ ጥቂቱን ብዙ ያስመስለዋልና። ልክፈልለት ያሰኛልና። ይህን ካደረገ በኋላ ወደምሥጢፍ ይገባል። አንድም ሚስትህ አትወቅብህ ሲለው ነው። ጸጋም አላት የባልና የሚስት ከብት ሎሚ ከሁለት እያለች ታዳክማለችና እንዳታዳክመው። ከሚስት የሚሰወር ምን አለ ቢሉ ቅንነቱማ ካለ ገንዘቡ ሁሉ ያለ በእሱ እጅ አይደለምን ከዚያም ይስጥ። ይህም ስርቆት አይሆንበትም ቢሉ ሰጥቶ ይንገራት። አይሆንም ብትለውሳ ቢሉ ይለያዩ፤ ጥንቱን መጋባታቸው ሰጥተው መጽውተው ሊጸድቁ ነውና። አንድም ልጆችህ አይወቁብህ ሲል ነው። ጸጋም አላቸው የአባታችሁን የቁም ወራሽ የሙት አልቃሽ እያሉ ያዳክማሉና እንዳያዳክሙት። አንድም ቤተሰቦችህ አይወቁብህ፤ ጸጋም አላቸው የጌታችን ወርቁ ለዝና ልብሱ ለእርዝና እህሉ ለቀጣና እያሉ ያዳክማሉና እንዳያዳክሙት። በዚህ ዓይነት ነው እንግዲህ የአንድምታ ጥበብ አካሄዱ።

xNDM→ x%oT yTMHRT KFIÖC ¼BI#ÃT½ /Ä!úT½ mn÷úTÂ I!WNT¼ XNÄI#T

Y→w”LYÝ Imçn# Xnz!HN x%ot\$N yTMHRT KFIÖC IÏ-ÂqQ xND sW MN ÄHL >m→T

YfJb→L) kh#I#S kbD y,lW yT¾W nW)

መምህር ደገ ዓለም ካሳ፡- በእውነቱ ዛሬ ዛሬ ሁሉም ለብለብ አድርጎ እየወጣ የመጸሕፍት ዐዋቂ ነኝ ባይ ሆኗል። በእውነቱ ይህ ጥሩ አይደለም። አንዳንድ ጊዜ ይህንን አይቼ ባዘንም የአባቶቼን አለመኖር ስመለከት ደግሞ ደስ ይለኛል። እኔ ሰነፋ እንደዚህ ያዘንኩ እነሱ ቢኖሩ ኖሮ ምንኛ ባዘኑ። እነሱ እኮ በሆነ ነገር እዘን ሲሉ «ከዚህ ሁሉ እዛው ሂጄ አንድም እያልኩ ብኖር ይሻለኛል» ይሉ ነበር። እንግዲህ እነዚህን ቀደም ያሉ አባቶቻችን በሚገባ አደላድለው ለመማር ብቁ ሆነው ለመውጣት ከ25 እስከ 30 ዓመት ይፈጅባቸዋል።

kbD ÄIW yt\$ nW §LkW /Ä!S kbD Y\$LYÝ YHM SIh#IT MKNÄT nWÝÝ

ymjmq[ÄW bmÚ?FT TRÛ» TMHRT bqÄ,nT y,s-W /Ä!S nWÝÝ ymjmq[Ä XNdmçn#

It¶¶W /Ä!S nWÝÝ ymj¶¶Ä XNdm¶¶# It¶¶W kbD Y§LÝÝ MKNÄt\$M ¶¶¶¶W xNDM-ŵ
YTb!L XNGÄ bm¶¶# nWÝÝ Xyöy s!yD GN q!L XÄIWÄ XytF-IT SI,yD XyqllW
YyÄLÝÝ yh#lt¼W MKNÄT dGä /Ä!S MI-!R nW¿ BI#Y -¶¶K nW !''WNT dGä
Ä%Q''LÝÝ mn÷úT ÄSmNÄLÝÝ Slz!H /Ä!S bÑI# MI-!R bm¶¶# TRÜ»WM bMI-!%T
ytm§ bm¶¶# kbD ÄI nWÝÝ

trÜ,W xNDN zYb@ b,trg#MbT g!z@ !!L yflgWN xND ngR q\$+ xDR- b¶IF fN-

xNDM½ xNDM½ xNDM XÄI Bz# TRg#äCN ÄSqMÈLÝÝ IMN)

መምህር ደጉ ዓለም ካሳ፡- አዎ። ምክንያት አለው። በመንፈስ ቅዱስ የተደረሰ፣ ልሳነ መንፈስ ቅዱስ የእግዚአብሔር እስትንፋስ እንደመሆኑ የብዙ ስመ ጥር ባለቤት መንፈስ ቅዱስ ቃሉ ብዙ እንደሆነ ለማሳየት ነው። ለዚህም ነው «እስመ በብዙኅ አኮ በብዙኅ ንባብ አላ በኅዳጥ» የሚለው። በብዙ ንባብ አይደለም በጥቂት ነው እንጂ ለማለት ነው። መጻሕፍት ንባባቸው ጥቂት ትርጓሜያቸው ብዙ ነው ማለት ነው። መጻሕፍት ሁልጊዜም ነፍስ ጡሮች ናቸው። በአንድ ማሕፀን ጸንሰው ነው ያሉ። የጽንሱ አዋላጆች ደግሞ ሊቃውንት ናቸው። ማዋለጃ መሣሪያው አንድምታ።

እዚህ ላይ መነሣት ያለበት አንድ ነገር አለ። ይኸውም ምንድን ነው? በአንድምታ ትርጓሜ አካሄድ ሊቁ አንድን ገጽ ንባብ በሚያገኝበት ጊዜ ገጽ ንባቡን ሊገልጥ የሚችለውን ቃል ብቻ ይወስዳል። ኃይለ ቃሉን ማለት ነው። በዚያች ቃል ወይም ሐረግ መሣሪያነት ብቻ ነው የገጽ ንባቡን ምሥጢር የሚደረድረው፤ የሚያወርደው፤ የሚያዘንበው። ለምሳሌ ደንጊያ በዓለም የታወቀ ግዑዝ ነገር ነው። ጴጥሮስ ደንጊያ ይባላል። ደንጊያ በበጋ እየፈጋ ክረምት ደግሞ አረንጓዴ እየለበሰ ይሄዳል። ደንጊያ የቀን ሐሩር የሌሊት ቁር የማይለውጠው ነው። ይህ ይታወቃል። ደንጊያ ተሰብሮ ሻፌ ሆኖ እንጨት ይቆርጣል። እነዚህን የደንጊያ ባሕርያት ለጴጥሮስ በመስጠት በደንጊያ መስሎታል።

ደንጊያውን የሌሊቱ ቁር የቀኑ ሐሩር ሳይለውጠው እንደሚኖር ጴጥሮስም በመከራ ሳይሰቀቅ ዓላማውን ሳይለውጥ የሚኖር እንደደንጊያ ያለ ነው። ደንጊያ በበጋ እየፈጋ በክረምት ደግሞ አረንጓዴ እየለበሰ ይሄዳል። ጴጥሮስም ከወሥራ አንዱ ደቀ መዛሙርት ወንድሞቹ ቀድሞ እየሄደ ወንጌልን ሰብኳልና። ዓለምን ከአሕዛብነት ጭጋግ ወደ ወንጌል ብርሃን አድርጋልና። ሻፌ ድንጋይ ሥጋን ከአጥንት ይለያል።

ጴጥሮስም አስተምሮ መናፍቅን ከአማኒ ከሐዲን ከክርስቲያን ስለለዩ ደንጊያ ተብሏል። ሌላም መልክ አለው።

ደንጊያ ከተራራ ወደታች ሲናድ ያስፈራል። ጴጥሮስም «ሞተ በሥጋ ወሐይወ በመንፈስ፤ በሥጋ ሞተ ተቀበረ። በመንፈስ ቅዱስ ሕያው ሆነ» ሲል መናፍቃን አጋንንት ይደነግጣሉና። በዚህ ዓይነት ደንጊያን በምሳሌ ለጴጥሮስ ሲሰጠው እናያለን።

xNÄND g!z@ !!q\$ b,Ãm_RbT g!z@ <yzi!H MKNÃt\$ xNDM Y-w”Lj xNDM

xY-wQM´ b¥IT s!ÂgR Ys¥LY´Y IMN)

መምህር ደጉ ዓለም ካሳ፡- እውነት ነው ይላል። ይኸ ደግሞ ውሸት አይደለም። ነገር ግን ይህንን የሚለው በሰው ልቡና ያልተመዘነ ነገር ሲኖር ነው። ለምሳሌ ክርስቶስ ዓለምን ለማሳለፍ ይመጣል። ግን የሚመጣበት ቀን አይታወቅም። እንዴት ታውቆ ተለይቶ የሚኖር አይደለም እንዴት? ዘመነ ዮሐንስ፣ ዕለቱ ዕለተ እሑድ፣ ወሩ ወርጎ መጋቢት፣ ሰዓቱ መንፈቀ ሌሊት ነው ተብሎ ተነግሮ የለም? እንዴት አይታወቅም ይባላል። ቢሉ በማለት ራሱን ይጠይቅና የዘንድሮው ዘመን ዮሐንስ ይሁን የአራት ዓመቱ አይታወቅም። ብዙ ዘመን ዮሐንስ ይመጣል፤ ይመላለሳል። ብዙ ዕለተ እሑዶች አሉ፤ ይመላለሳሉ። ብዙ ወርጎ መጋቢቶች አሉ፤ ይመላለሳሉ። ስለዚህ የጌታችን መምጣት አይታወቅም ይለዋል። ዕለቷ በፈጣሪ ኅሊና የማትመዘን ስለሆነች እሷንና እሷን ለመሳሰሉት ምንጣባት ሁሉ አንድም አይታወቅም ብለው ያልፉታል።

bmZÑr ÄêET mZÑR 6 q\$_R 1 §Y <XGz!â bm>Tk x!TQlfn!´ b,]W g[NÆB Ng#l

ÄêET õ,Â -iit {xN zMtW IMN kõR ;WD¥ XNdqr MKNÃt\$N I¥QrB s!nce <yqrbT

MKNÃT xL-wqMj xNDM -WİL´ BIÖ YjM%oLY´Y XNÁT)

መምህር ደጉ ዓለም ካሳ፡- እውነት ነው። እንዳነበብከው በምክንያትነት የተዘረዘሩት ሁሉ ሆነዋል። ኮሶ ተጣብቶት፤ መድኃኒት ጠጥቶ፤ እንግዳ መጥቶበት፤ ደክሞት፤ ንጉሥ እንዳይዘምት የሚል ድንጋጌ በመተላለፉ ሌላም ሌላም። ይህ ሁሉ በዚያች ቀን ሆኗል። ነገር ግን መንፈስ ቅዱስ በዚያች ቀን እንዳይወጣ ያደረገበት ምክንያት አይታወቅም። ያንን የመንፈስ ቅዱስ መሰናክል ነው አይታወቅም የሚለው።

በጥቅል ከሰው አእምሮ በላይ የሆነ ነገር ሲመጣ የዚህ ምክንያቱ አይታወቅም ብሎት ያልፋል።