

UNKNOWN EMPIRE

THE TRUE STORY OF MYSTERIOUS ETHIOPIA
AND THE FUTURE ARK OF CIVILIZATION

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It is the glory of God to conceal a matter.

—Solomon

PART ONE

The Barefoot and the Castrated

The Ark for Africa's Greatest Battle with the West

P R O L O G U E



I DID NOT want to ask him *if* the Ark of the Covenant was in Ethiopia. It is a question that is too often asked, and I had already asked the question to a great many people.

As I sat down to interview this theological leader of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, I wanted to know the answer to the deeper question: *Why?*

Why, if the Ark really does exist, is it in Ethiopia of all places?

“Why didn’t God just hide such a relic in a cave somewhere, or let it decompose?” I asked him. “Why, in his wisdom, do you think God decided that this particular artifact would be so preserved by one particular nation? What is the purpose? What is the reason?”

He laughed. Then I laughed. His was not a light-hearted chuckle. It was a sentiment of compassion. He was exhibiting what I have found to be part of the Ethiopian character: a gentle and quiet meekness that disguises an almost incomprehensible confidence.

He smiled again and spoke with hesitation.

“The response... would be somehow difficult for you to accept... or to believe in.”

I waited. I hadn’t traveled to the country three different times to let him off the hook at this critical point.

“There is a belief or a tradition in Ethiopia,” he said, “or a consideration...”

He hesitated again.

“...that Ethiopians are...”

He was right. It was too much to handle right away.¹

CHAPTER ONE



THE RUNNER CREATED a stir at the starting line of the 1960 Olympic marathon in Rome, land of emperors. This thin Ethiopian caught the attention of his Western opponents. “Oh, well, that’s one we can beat,” quipped an Australian runner to his teammates.

No black African had ever won a gold medal, not in any sport. Abebe Bikila, twenty-eight, had only started training four years before. He had one other glaring handicap as he waited for the starting gun to fire. He was barefoot.

Bikila had actually hidden in the tent a few minutes earlier to avoid the snickers from his opponents. He had tried running shoes at various times, but they hadn’t felt right. Boys in Ethiopia grow up walking and running several miles a day in search of good grazing for their livestock. They never seemed bothered by the blazing sun that the ancient Greeks assumed must be closest to mankind in this land of ‘burnt faces,’ as they called it (*Aeth* ‘to burn’ + *ops* ‘face’). Many people in 1960 also used the later Latin-Arab term *Abyssinia*, meaning ‘mixed,’ which shows up even today in the various shades of color and sharp-to-round features across the population. However, the people themselves leaned toward the earlier term, as Greek writings are filled with fantastic compliments of this ancient race. Homer called them the “blameless Ethiopians.”¹

As a child, Bikila spent his days like other barefoot children, caring for animals and attending church school. Like today, they lived in straw-roofed mud huts. The largest building in his village was the church, an institution that likely has modeled heaven for the earthly tribe for over a thousand years. Ethiopia claims one of the most ancient Christian traditions in the world, beginning with the biblical character

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they call “Bacos,” the well-known Ethiopian eunuch of Acts 8 in the New Testament. This secretary of the treasury under Queen Candace was baptized by Philip after asking the apostle questions about the book of Isaiah, which Bacos was reading while sitting in his chariot—adding credence to Ethiopia’s claim to 1,000 years of Old Testament worship before the time of Christ.



ABEBE BIKILA RUNS BAREFOOT IN THE 1960 OLYMPIC MARATHON

For the twenty-six-mile race (forty-two kilometers), Bikila wore bright red shorts and a green shirt with the number 11 on it. Video of the Olympic coverage provides a lengthy shot of the odds-on favorite, Russian runner Sergei Popov, looking confident, laughing and joking with a friend as they wait for the race to begin. For a moment the camera shows Bikila’s face. The commentator asks: “And what’s this Ethiopian called?”²

The *New York Times* provides a description of the beginning of the race: “It started at Campidoglio Square, designed by Michelangelo, skirted the Circus Maximus and the Baths of Caracalla, went along the 2,000-year-old Appian Way, and ended at the Arch of Constantine. As

the lean, little Ethiopian approached the brilliantly illuminated arch, close by the ruins of the Forum and Colosseum, thousands cheered.”³

The Roman imagery was highly ironic. Bikila was forced to move to another village at the age of three when the Italian military invaded his country to claim their long-desired colony. Ethiopia was the last holdout for an African continent otherwise completely conquered by Europe. A few years earlier, Italian Colonel G. B. Luciano objected when colonization was being questioned: “I have no intention of degrading the Abyssinian race, strong, intelligent, and noblest among the indigenous peoples, but I insist that in many respects we are superior to it, especially as to civilization, and we should not renounce the supremacy of the white race over these peoples.” He continued his thoughts on interbreeding, which he felt “causes the downfall and decay of a superior race.”⁴

Bikila was never critical of the Italians. “He was very polite, very humble,” said Onni Niskanen, his Scandinavian trainer. “From the bottom of his heart, he was a good man.” Niskanen told his family back in Sweden that the Ethiopians were rather quiet but “very nice.”

Nevertheless, the people, historically, have never taken a liking to invasion. A few decades before Bikila’s village was occupied, Emperor Yohannes IV gave a clear response to the Italians who first demanded they hand over their country for colonial purposes: “How could I ever agree to sign away the lands over which my local ancestors governed?” said Yohannes. “Christ gave them to me.”

Conflicts inevitably ensued. The “very nice” Ethiopians had a penchant for castrating both their dead trophies and prisoners of war. In one account, it took eight men to hold down one Italian soldier. “I still have my hands,” he said. “When I heal, I want to mow down all the Abyssinians!”⁵

Ethiopia’s reputation existed as far back as 50 BC, when it was described by Diodorus Siculus, one of the most reliable ancient historians: “They have never experienced the rule of an invader from abroad, and although many and powerful rulers have made war upon them, not one of these has succeeded in his undertaking.”

Ethiopia is “the Land of God,” according to other ancient writers, a phrase repeated by a publication approved by the Ethiopian church, which adds: “And she will survive until the end of the world.”⁶

In between fighting colonists in the modern era and defeating invaders in the ancient and classical ages, Ethiopia has spent a millennium fighting Muslims on its borders as a majority Orthodox Christian country. However, within her borders, Ethiopia remains somewhat peaceful today with its thirty-five percent Muslim minority (Muhammad allegedly outlawed jihad there when the Christian Emperor Armah took in Muslim refugees.) However, Islamic countries have relentlessly attempted to encroach on every side of the country, making Ethiopia “the island of Christianity” in Africa and the source of the medieval Prester John legend of the only non-European Christian nation in a land of mountains far, far away.^{7*}

The TV commentator finally dug up the name of the Ethiopian runner among the sixty-nine contestants. “Bikila, the African, hasn’t taken part in international competition before,” he noted. *World Sport Magazine* said Ethiopians “run past farmers driving teams of oxen, ploughing the land in much the same way as their forefathers did in biblical times.”

This statement was no stereotype. They grow the grain *teff* and make the honey wine *tej*. “We Abyssinians are a poor people with no mechanical support,” Bikila said in a later interview. “So we run everywhere on foot. Forty kilometers are nothing to me.”

Before the race, one resourceful reporter found a translator and was able to ask a few questions.

“Why do you run barefoot?”

“Habit.”

“Will you be able to finish the race?”

“If I were not going to finish the race, I would not start it to begin with.”⁸

* An asterisk (*) indicates further commentary with the note at the back of the book. A reference number without an asterisk provides only the source or sources used in the previous section.

Bikila may have been a bit energized by the date, September 10, a day before the Ethiopian New Year—September 11 by the calendar. However, liturgically he was indeed running on the New Year, the eve of which was being celebrated back home. Traditionally, a day begins with prayers in the evening before the celebration of the Eucharist the next morning at the house of worship, and that ritual starts with the priest cutting loaves in a side building they call Bethlehem (“house of bread”)—all corresponding to the pattern in Genesis 1: “And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.”

Ethiopians also celebrate on this day the return of the Queen of Sheba to Ethiopia after visiting Israel’s King Solomon, the two luminaries of ancient Ethiopia. This famous Old Testament story does not include the interesting details in the Ethiopian tradition, which tells us that their visit was so good that they had a son (not beyond the pale for a king with a thousand partners, according to 1 Kings 11). Through this connection, Ethiopia claims to hold the Ark of the Covenant, the golden chest built by Moses, the central object of the Israelite temple and perhaps the greatest treasure in history. Do they? This book will follow the trail.

As the 1960 marathon commenced, Abebe Bikila was not among the leaders. With thousands of spectators nearby, a “mob scene” developed that even the police couldn’t dissolve in the short term. Nevertheless, the runners were able to get through the host of excited onlookers and successfully onto the long road.⁹

One by one, the competitors began to fall off the pace like a flock of birds dissolving. Within a few kilometers, two groups of four or five runners each emerged at the front. Bikila was in the second group with the Russian, Sergei Popov, and a New Zealander, Barry Magee. The lead group included a former French soldier, an Englishman, and a Belgian.

Belgium was an infamous pioneer of colonialism. While Britain was establishing colonies from “the Cape to Cairo,” France gobbled up North Africa and Algeria. Belgium targeted the Congo. Sometime after 1876, Belgium’s King Leopold II sent Henry Morton Stanley on a deep state secret mission inside the Congo. Of the sixteen million people there, only eight million survived the brutality of Leopold’s regime.

However, most people only remember the romantic story of Stanley meeting a missing white missionary in the Congo's interior and saying "Dr. Livingston, I presume."¹⁰

Ethiopia's past success against invaders provided inspiration for African countries in the twentieth century as they fought to gain back their lands from Western occupation and domination.

Many take refuge regarding such harsh views and behaviors by Westerners as being only a thing of the past. But some are still fans of the Belgian emperor: "We need a modern King Leopold to assist the noble savage for a better life," according to a comment on an article by Doug Casey, an author who a few years ago spent weeks as number one on the *New York Times* Best Seller list. "Africans don't have the Protestant work ethic of Europeans," wrote Casey. "The continent has no civilization, no economy, no technology, no military power."

Another *NYT* bestselling author, a Harvard and Oxford scholar, is also quite willing to defend Western civilization: "It's not eurocentrism," writes Niall Ferguson in *Civilization: The West and the Rest*. "It's a statement of the obvious."¹¹

A strategic investment advisor, Casey is actually a fan of the continent's future. "Africa is going to be the epicenter of what's happening in the world for years to come" he admits, basing his conclusions on birthrates, which are below replacement level in the West. They are strong but declining in Asia. In Africa, they are booming. These mathematical certainties point to a civilizational shift that we may not have seen since the Northern European barbarians camped across the Rhine river from Roman territory in the fifth century. When the river froze over, they marched across and defeated the Romans and went on to sack the capital of the 1,000-year-old empire. They had no idea their battle would mark the end of an age. "Ethiopia... is regarded by modern Europeans much in the same way as ancient Britain was regarded by the Romans," says Ethiopian scholar Sergew Hable Selassie.¹²

Another commenter on Casey's article understands what is at stake: "If there is not some form of mandatory birth control, we are in real trouble." This might sound like an offhand remark, but the latter part of this book will address in great detail the substance of his comment.

As the Arch of Constantine, illuminated by the setting sun, faded from the view of the marathon contestants, a shift began to emerge in the leading groups. The shoeless Ethiopian had moved up from the second group of runners. He had now passed the Russian, the favorite at the beginning of the race. By the fifteenth kilometer, he had reached the back of the leading group, a pack of four that included only those associated with Britain, Belgium, and France.

“And there’s that unknown Ethiopian we saw earlier,” announced the commentator. “He’s called Abebe Bikila. He’s barefoot.”¹³

C H A P T E R T W O



I GOT IN his face and yelled at him. I was upset. My guide as I toured the holy city of Axum had been late several days in a row, and I feared my opportunities would soon disappear if we didn't get a move on it.

His name is Bazien, named after one of the Magi, the three wise men that visited Jesus and gave gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Ethiopians believe one of the Magi was Ethiopian.

Bazien is the nicest guy you'll ever meet, but he did share the cultural quality called "maambfak" by British scholar Richard Pankhurst, a tendency to always be late. But in typical Ethiopian fashion, Bazien did not return my anger. He was apologetic. He was kind.¹

The next day, we found ourselves in a small village in the northern Tigray region, enjoying an hour-or-two-long coffee session. Goats and a donkey wandered nearby. We sat on stones with a dirt patio.

Bazien is in his late twenties, tall, striking, a black African with sharp Arabic features. His colleagues call him "The King" because of his royal heritage. He was wearing a white prayer robe, typical of ordained deacons of the church. In this setting, he reminded me of a young prophet.

"Ethiopians come from the tribes of Levi, Judah, and Dan," he told me.

"Who else was Ethiopian?" I asked.

"Enoch was Ethiopian," he replied. "He walked with God."

Bazien was alluding to the cryptic character in Genesis 5 who gets one verse of description—"Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away."

Bazien is fluent in both his tribal tongue, Tigrinya, and Amharic, the national language. He also speaks perfect English, and for good reason. He was raised in Toronto. He moved back to his country of birth four years ago to study at the country's keynote Orthodox seminary. He believes, like all Ethiopian Orthodox, that the Sheba-Solomon story is true.

"Ethiopians don't call themselves Jewish," he said, sipping a small porcelain cup of coffee with no handles. "They followed Old Testament practices in the order of Melchizedek."

Melchizedek, also Ethiopian according to Bazien, is another strange character in the Bible who only appears one time, acting as a priest to Abraham after the founder of Israel wins a key battle. Melchizedek serves him bread and wine (a foreshadowing of the Eucharist) and "blesses" him (Gen. 14:18–19). Abraham responds by treating him as a superior, giving him a tenth of all his possessions, then Melchizedek disappears. The Bible does not provide any hints related to where Melchizedek came from or where he went.

Professor Girma Batu, the man I quoted at the beginning of this book, the vice academic dean of Ethiopia's largest seminary, shied away from articulating Ethiopia's significance, but agrees with Bazien's thoughts on Enoch and Melchizedek.

"It's a position taken by some scholars in the church," Girma told me. "Enoch and Melchizedek lived an ascetic life." He said that the monasticism of Ethiopia preceded even the time of Christ, something that sounded to me like the "school of prophets" discussed in the Old Testament. Today, there are as many as 1,000 monasteries in Ethiopia.^{2*}

"Are there any monasteries today that claim to be part of this tradition of Melchizedek and Enoch?" I asked Girma.

"Each and every monastery," he said.



One hundred years before Abebe Bikila's 1960 marathon, England's Queen Victoria sent an envoy to Ethiopia to present the gift of a pistol to the man they called Theodore, also known as "The Barefoot Emperor," according to the title of his biography by Philip Marsden. In Ethiopia, his name was Tewodros. Neither Victoria nor Tewodros knew this gift of a pistol would lead to the murder of a monarch.

Like most Ethiopians, Tewodros attended a church school to learn the basics and the Bible. He was then sent to a convent at Lake Tana for more training in ancient and modern European history, literature, and even some Shakespeare. Along with the pistol, Victoria sent him a royal letter in 1855 upon his inauguration as Tewodros II, Emperor of Ethiopia. Tewodros's return letter was never answered.³

British envoy Charles Cameron delivered the initial letter and the pistol. After a full year, Cameron continued to insist that the queen would respond to the request in the emperor's return letter for skilled technicians for Ethiopia's advancement. Tewodros was also hopeful for an alliance between two Christian nations against the Muslim countries on his every side—Sudan, Egypt, and Somalia. Finally, Cameron returned home to inquire about the emperor's letter. When Tewodros learned that Cameron traveled back through enemy Egyptian and Turkish territories, the emperor's suspicions mounted.

Victoria was not simply ignoring him. Christian advancement had to be weighed with the priorities of empire—money and trade. The Suez Canal had recently opened on the Red Sea at Ethiopia's northeast border, but Egypt had built a port in Ethiopian territory at Massawa. France—Britain's greatest rival—had built a port near Massawa at Djibouti. Britain needed access to those waters without depending on France and could not afford to upset Muslim powers.

Tewodros's initial instructions were for Cameron to hand deliver the letter to Victoria, which he failed to do. Tewodros was impatient. The technical skills he needed were not only for civilizing Ethiopia. He

needed weapons. Without advanced cannons and rifles, he could not defeat the Muslim enemies on his borders.

When he became emperor, he brought to his court an eleven-year-old prince, the son of a king who fell victim to Tewodros's expansion. This boy would one day be featured on the cover of *Vanity Fair*, the *Time* magazine of its day, sharing the honor with such notables as British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, Charles Darwin, Napoleon III, and Russia's Czar Alexander.⁴



EMPEROR TEWODROS II

The boy's father named him Menelik, meaning "son of the king." More importantly, it was the name of the son born to Solomon and Sheba. Both Tewodros and Menelik—in fact all Ethiopian emperors—claim direct descent from Solomon himself through Menelik I. A 2008 publication of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church says

that "Solomonian descent provides a Divine right for their rule and their claim was confirmed by the church." Twentieth century Emperor Haile Selassie was officially declared in the Ethiopian Constitution to be the 225th descendent of Menelik I, son of Solomon.

The emperor and boy developed a Saul and David type relationship. "Although he killed my father," said Menelik later, "he always loved me as a son. He educated me with the greatest care, and almost showed for me greater affection than for his own son." Like Saul confessed to David, Tewodros told Menelik "more than once" that he would follow him as emperor. But the young Menelik's destiny would lie in wait until the fate of Tewodros and Victoria unfolded.⁵

Tewodros impressed Britain early on as a progressive king who announced the end of castration as a military practice. But he grew irritated with European missionaries, their work seeming redundant in an historic Christian nation, a majority of which attended the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. He allowed missionaries to only proselytize the

minority Muslims, pagans, and Jews. After more delay, he rounded up several missionaries and demanded they make weapons for him. But they failed to deliver, as they were teachers, not technicians.

Further delay from Cameron led Tewodros to arrest a British missionary to Ethiopian Jews, Henry Stern, who had written a pamphlet calling the emperor barbaric, cruel, and unstable. The king held him at gunpoint, but, instead of killing him, he had Stern “chained and severely treated” and his assistant flogged with bamboo rods.⁶

Cameron finally returned, without the long-awaited letter from Queen Victoria, but begged for more time, offering his own head if the letter did not arrive in two months. Instead, the emperor locked him up in prison. Finally, a letter from Victoria arrived. She instructed Cameron to leave for Massawa, the Egyptian port on the Red Sea. Tewodros was not mentioned. Enraged, the emperor imprisoned a dozen more British subjects. Cameron sent a curt message to the queen: “No release until civil answer to king’s letter arrives.” Three years after Tewodros’s initial letter, Victoria sent a message, simply demanding the release of all of her British subjects. This time, it was Tewodros who refused to answer.



The Ethiopian emperor picked a tough opponent. Britain boasted the largest empire in history, a record that still stands. It needed the Ottoman Empire (today’s Turkey) to serve as a buffer with Russia and couldn’t risk that strategic piece to help Ethiopia. In addition, cotton was extremely difficult to obtain after the Confederate defeat in the American Civil War. The Red Sea lanes provided Egyptian-Sudanese cotton. Instead of help, Victoria sent to Ethiopia one of the larger European armies to ever touch African soil, 20,000 strong, which began unloading their weapons just below Djibouti, France’s Red Sea port, one mountain range to the east of Tewodros’s palace. Commanding General Robert Napier navigated Ethiopia’s historic wall of defensive

mountains by using forty-five Indian elephants, with Armstrong field guns strapped to their backs and sides.⁷

Earlier, Tewodros had beaten to death two of Stern's missionary assistants. His erratic behavior, like King Saul's Jekyll and Hyde behavior toward David in the Bible, forced Prince Menelik, three years before Napier's expedition, at the age of twenty, to escape his mentor's clutches. He reclaimed Shewa, the throne of his father in the province to the south, the region of the future Addis Ababa. A Muslim aristocrat, angry with Tewodros for imprisoning her son, helped Menelik get away by providing a river crossing in her territory. For helping Menelik, her imprisoned son and his companions were seized "in the presence of the King and his nobles and hacked and chopped to pieces," not unlike Saul's murder of the priests who helped David in 1 Samuel 22.

Tewodros killed twenty-nine more Muslim dignitaries, as well as twelve Christian aristocrats. His power was waning throughout the empire. Menelik, once a prince but now a king, discerned the shift in power and sent a letter to Queen Victoria in 1867, asking for Britain's friendship with Shewa. He referred to himself as "King of Kings," an early bit of evidence for his larger ambitions.⁸

No Ethiopian force could match the British army approaching Tewodros's stronghold. Would this be the final conquering that the nation had avoided for millennia? Would Protestant England respect Abyssinia's Orthodox Christian heritage? For now, Ethiopia was being ignored in favor of Muslim merchants. And the fact that a Prester John legend even existed proved how unaware Europeans could be of other Christian people. According to the first English voyage to the "Dark Continent" in 1554, all of the people in Africa engaged in "bestly living, without a God, laws, religion, or common wealth; and so scorched and vexed with the heate of the sunne . . . they curse it when it rises."

"Without a God" is not accurate for the Ethiopian part of Africa. Most people would be surprised to learn that Africa in fact boasts the *first* Christian empire. "Ethiopia became the second nation after Israel to believe in Christ," stated the Ethiopian Patriarch, Paulos I, to a synod of bishops at the Vatican in 2009.⁹

Ethiopian leaders also say the Archangel Michael himself instructed the party escorting Sheba's son back to Ethiopia to steal the Ark of the Covenant from the temple. On their return voyage, they, and the Ark, flew a cubit above the Red Sea. Maybe so, but where is the proof? "We don't need proof, because it's a fact," a monk at the Tana Kirkos Monastery told a *Smithsonian Magazine* reporter. "The monks here have passed this down for centuries."

Indeed, the ancient roots of the Ethiopian church have been faithfully passed down by oral tradition since the days of the Ethiopian eunuch. Skeptics abound. Only European man is rational, according to followers of the legendary Western thinker Carl Jung, Sigmund Freud's disciple and chosen torchbearer. In Jung's view, Africans have not reached an evolutionary stage of consciousness that involves creative, critical thinking.^{10*}

The scoffers of Ethiopia's oral tradition regarding their early Christian empire ate some humble pie in 1969 when a Greek inscription was uncovered with a proclamation from Ethiopian Emperor Ezana, dated to AD 330: "I, Ezana, King of Axum [Ethiopia], have been given great victory...by the power of Christ God in whom I have believed." This reference is one of nearly ten references to Christ and the Trinity in the inscription.

At first, Ezana minted his coins—one of only four nations minting coins at the time—with the pagan symbols of the crescent moon and disc. But starting in c. AD 330, the coins included crosses—the first time this Christian symbol occurred on any coin, anywhere. When they did appear on Roman coins, the crosses were much smaller than the prominent symbols encompassing the entire back side of Ethiopian currency. One coin even bears the phrase "In this cross you will conquer," undoubtedly related to Roman Emperor Constantine's famous words from the Battle at Milvian Bridge in AD 312 upon seeing an apparition of the sun with a cross above it and the Greek words: "In this sign, conquer."¹¹

Ancient documents also provide no doubt that the Ethiopian Christian empire was dominant by the year AD 356. In that year, Roman Emperor Constantius II wrote a passionate letter to Ethiopia's

archbishop Frumentius, begging the Trinitarian empire to back his embattled non-Trinitarian kingdom, at that time controlled by the Arian heresy, which taught that Christ was created, not God himself. Frumentius refused. But can such a giant Christian empire, to which the Roman emperor was writing, appear overnight? In fact, estimates of a AD 330 conversion for Ethiopia may be quite conservative. Ezana and his country may have converted years before the first Christian coin was minted.^{12*}

What about Rome as the first Christian empire? Emperor Constantine declared Christianity legal for Rome, along with other religions, in AD 315, but it was not made the official religion of the empire until AD 380 under Emperor Theodosius. Ezana's 330 date wins the day. Ethiopia was the first Christian empire. What Patriarch Paulos proclaimed at the Vatican in 2009 was correct.^{13*}

All this to say, those early English explorers in Africa were quite mistaken when lumping in Ethiopia as godless. Ethiopian Emperor Ezana built the Church of St. Mary of Zion in the city of Axum in AD 340. Oral tradition says the Ark of the Covenant was transferred there from a synagogue in Ethiopia and has remained in the country ever since.

Might the invading British General Robert Napier want the Ark? The British have always been legendary treasure hunters, and what could possibly be better for the British Museum than the world's most coveted artifact? British explorer James Bruce toured Ethiopia in the 1700s. This giant, swashbuckling adventurer was the first of his kind to provide European exposure to Abyssinia and certainly the most prolific as he wrote five volumes on the subject. He also happened to "acquire" a great many ancient manuscripts for himself and the museums back home. Among his prized collection was the book of Enoch, a mystical Jewish book quoted or alluded to several times in the New Testament (Jude 1:14 cites Enoch directly) and considered historically reliable by other Orthodox groups. While not part of the West's Scriptures, it's in the Ethiopic Bible.

Until this time, Europe only had fragments of Enoch and believed that the full scroll had passed out of existence. In the ancient book,

Enoch talks with angels. We are given names for the nine archangels, including Gabriel, Michael, Raphael, and Uriel. We also learn that evil angels decided to mate with human women who gave birth to giants. And we learn from Enoch that the leading evil angel, Amezarak, taught humans how to cast and resist spells. Kokabiel taught fortune-telling and Tamiel taught astrology.

While much of the strange content in Enoch corresponds with a passage in Genesis 6 that has often been interpreted as describing angels mating with women and producing giants, most Western rationalists, their rank and file busy building the British Empire, consider it laughable. But not necessarily their elite. Ironically, the term “British Empire” was coined by a key founder of science and mathematics, John Dee, who, like Enoch, spent many years talking with angels.

A key advisor and top spy to Queen Elizabeth I, Dee spent his final twenty years focused almost exclusively on contacting angels, or, as one of his manuscripts is entitled: “*A True & Faithful Revelation of what passed for many years between Dr. John Dee...and some spirits.*” A spiritual entity he called Uriel gave him prophecies. Other spirits provided hidden insights for science, technology, and astrology. (For those wondering if he was dealing with good or bad spirits, a decent clue given is that all of these angelic discussions led to Dee engaging in wife swapping with his colleague while all four sought esoteric wisdom in the act.)¹⁴

Dee signed his secret correspondence to Elizabeth as “007,” giving the occultist a Hollywood legacy as well. As recently as 1967, the United States’ key intelligence service, the National Security Agency, referred to “our man Dee” in its *NSA Technical Journal*. He is described as “a principal advisor to most of the Tudor monarchs of England, and to certain European rulers as well.... He excelled in mathematics, cryptography, natural science, navigation, library science, and above all in the really rewarding sciences of those days—astrology, alchemy, and psychic phenomenon.”¹⁵

Dee’s work today is known as “Enochian magic.” These contradictions in Western society between rationalism and supernaturalism will be explored in later chapters, but, for our purposes at the moment, we

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Prologue

- 1 Girma Batu, Vice Academic Dean, Holy Trinity Theological College, interview by Dean W. Arnold in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, May 2016, and January 2018. All quotes in this book from Girma Batu are sourced from these two interviews.

Chapter 1

- 1 Homer, *The Iliad*, Book II, Section 1, cited in Frank M. Snowden, Jr., *Before Color Prejudice: The Ancient View of Blacks* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 69.
- 2 Tim Judah, *Bikila: Ethiopia's Barefoot Olympian* (London: Reportage Press, 2008), 78–79.
- 3 Allison Danzig, “Barefoot Bikila First at Rome in Fastest Olympic Marathon,” *New York Times*, Sept. 10, 1960.
- 4 G. B. Luciano, “Colonizzazione e ordimento militare nell’Eritrea,” *L’esplorazione commerciale*, 6 (1891), 115, cited in Harold G. Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik II: Ethiopia 1844–1913* (Lawrenceville, NJ: Red Sea Press, 1995), 122–123.
- 5 *very polite* Judah, *Bikila*, 66.
Christ gave them to me Michela Wrong, *I Didn't Do It for You: How the World Betrayed a Small African Nation* (HarperCollins ebooks, 2006), chap. 2, loc. 541.
eight men Raymond Jonas, *The Battle of Adwa: African Victory in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2015), 134–135.
- 6 *invader* Diodorus Siculus, “Ethiopia and the Gold Mines of Egypt,” *Book III*, Section 2, cited in The Library of History of Diodorus Siculus, published in Vol. II of the Loeb Classical Library edition, 1935, http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Diodorus_Siculus/3A*.html (Retrieved April 11, 2019).
the Land of God John A. Wilson, *The Culture of Ancient Egypt* (The University of Chicago Press, 1958), 169, 176, <https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/culture.pdf> (Retrieved April 28, 2019).
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- 7 “It is said,” according to Richard Pankhurst, that Muhammad wrote the following: “‘Yonder lieth a country wherein no one is wronged. A land of righteousness. Depart thither; and remain until it pleaseth the Lord to open your way before you.’ When the Arab persecutor requested the return of these Muslim refugees, Emperor Armah allegedly responded: ‘If you were to offer me a mountain of gold, I would not give up these people who have found refuge with me.’” Regarding these letters, Sergew Hable Selassie says their “authenticity is dubious.” (Richard Pankhurst, *Travellers in Ethiopia* [Oxford University Press, 1965], v; Sergew Hable Selassie, *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History to 1270*, [Addis Ababa: Haile Selassie University, 1972], 17).
- 8 Judah, *Bikila*, 6, 77, and highlighted quote on unnumbered page in front matter.
- 9 *Bethlehem* Lule Melaku, *History of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, Part I* (Addis Ababa: 2008), 32.
mob scene Allison Danzig, “Barefoot Bikila First at Rome in Fastest Olympic Marathon,” *New York Times*, Sept. 10, 1960.
- 10 Michiko Kakutani, “King Leopold’s Ghost: Genocide With Spin Control,” *New York Times*, August 30, 1998.
- 11 *modern king Leopold* Doug Casey, “Doug Casey on Africa,” interviewed by Louis James, *Casey Daily Dispatch*, Feb. 22, 2012, comment 9/3/18 at 18:48.
work ethic Doug Casey, “Doug Casey on China’s Exploitation of Africa,” *Casey Daily Dispatch*, Aug. 31, 2018.
statement of the obvious Niall Ferguson, *Civilization: The West and the Rest* (New York: Penguin Books ebook, 2011), loc. 561.
- 12 Sergew Hable Selassie, *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History to 1270* (Addis Ababa: Haile Selassie University, 1972), 1.
- 13 “50 stunning Olympic moments. No. 24: Abebe Bikila runs barefoot into history,” *The Guardian*, April 25, 2012.

Chapter 2

- 1 Graham Hancock, *The Sign and the Seal: the Quest for the Lost Ark of the Covenant* (New York, London: Touchstone, 1992), 202.
- 2 *Enoch and Melchizedek* Girma Batu, interview by Dean W. Arnold in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, May 2016 and January 2018.

Ethiopians generally go by their first names. If they give two names, the second is the first name of their father. If they give three, the third is the first name of their grandfather. This practice is difficult at present to standardize, as many Western

books and bibliographies use the second name in the Western style, while many Ethiopian books use the first name. This book leans toward using the first name, although exceptions are made for a few Ethiopians who have been heavily covered in Western media such as Abebe Bikila.

1,000 monasteries This is a number the author heard often repeated in Ethiopia. Certainly, there are hundreds of monasteries, but I could find no objective census. However, the African Studies Center at Michigan State University states: “There are many monasteries found in Ethiopia (one island alone—in Lake Tana—has twenty)—they spread from the islands to isolated mountain tops.” (<http://exploringafrica.matrix.msu.edu/module-twenty-two-activity-three> [Retrieved April 17, 2019]).

- 3 *Shakespeare* Marcus, *Menelik II*, 13.
- 4 *Vanity Fair* Jonas, *Battle of Adwa*, 4, 271.
- 5 *Menelik means son of the king* Abba Abraham Buruk Woldegaber and Mario Alexis Portella, *Abyssinian Christianity: The First Christian Nation? The History and the Identity of the Ethiopian and Eritrean Christians* (Pismo Beach, CA: BP Editing, 2012), 63.
confirmed by the Church Lule Melaku, *History of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, Part I* (Addis Ababa, 2008), 27.
loved me as a son Guglielmo Massaja, *I miei trentacinque anni di missione nell’alta Etiopia* (Tivoli, 1928), ix. 28, cited in Marcus, *Menelik II*, 23.
- 6 *end of castration* Jonas, *Battle of Adwa*, 14.
bamboo rods Marcus, op. cit., 25.
chained and severely treated Donald Crummey, *Priests and Politicians, Protestant and Catholic Missions in Orthodox Ethiopia 1830–1868* (Hollywood: Tsehai, 2007), 137, cited in Wikipedia: Charles Duncan Cameron.
- 7 Jonas, *Battle of Adwa*, 15–16.
- 8 Marcus, *Menelik II*, 24, 28.
- 9 *without a God* Snowden, Jr., *Before Color Prejudice*, 69.
second nation after Israel Abraham and Portella, *The First Christian Nation?* x.
at the Vatican “Patriarch Encourages Bishops in Africa Synod; Says Religious Leaders Have Key Role on Continent,” *Zenit.org*, Vatican City, Oct. 6, 2009, reprinted in <https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2009/10/patriarch-abuna-paulos-addresses.html> (Retrieved March 16, 2019).
- 10 *we don’t need proof* Paul Raffaele, “Keepers of the Lost Ark: Christians in Ethiopia have long claimed to have the ark of the covenant. Our reporter investigated,”

Smithsonian Magazine, December 2007.

only European man is rational J. M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (New York/London: The Guildford Press, 1993), 104, 144.

For his characterization of Jung, Blaut sources Farhad Salal, “The Racism of Jung,” (1988). Blaut also quotes Jung disciple Eric Neumann, *The Origins and History of Consciousness* (1954): “The evolution of consciousness as a form of creative evolution is the peculiar achievement of Western man . . . in primitive societies . . . the earliest stages of man’s psychology predominate” (p. xviii-xix). Blaut quotes Jung himself from *Psychological Types: The Collected Works of C. G. Jung* (1971): “If we go right back to primitive psychology, we find absolutely no trace of the concept of the individual” (p. 10).

- 11 *inscription* Sergew Hable Sellassie, *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History*, 103.

coins Abraham and Portella, *The First Christian Nation?*, 17; Sergew Hable Sellassie, *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History*, 102–103.

in this cross, you will conquer G. W. Bowersock, “Helena’s Bridle and the Chariot in Ethiopia,” in *Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World*, eds. Gregg Gardner and Kevin L. Osterloh (Tubingen: Mohr Sieback, 2007), 390.

- 12 Matthew Bryan, “The Curious Case of Ethiopian Christianity,” *Conciliar Post*, Aug. 4, 2016, see Constantius’s letter, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/2813.htm> (Retrieved Aug. 1, 2019).

Young Emperor Ezana learned about Christ in the early AD 300’s from a Greek-speaking Syrian named Frumentius. His story is provided to us by fourth century historian Rufinus, a generally trusted scholar monk in Italy, who said that Frumentius and another boy were taken on a trip to India by their relative, a philosopher named Meropius. They stopped at an Ethiopian port, and as Rome’s treaty with the region had been broken, the “barbarians” rushed the ship and put everyone to the sword.

“The boys were found studying under a tree and preparing their lessons,” said Rufinus. They were taken to the king, who was familiar with Greek—he [had] used it in an inscription—and saw the great value of two educated, Greek-speaking boys. He later appointed Frumentius as his secretary and treasurer. His companion, Aedesius, was made cupbearer. The king died early while his son was still an infant. In his will, he pronounced Frumentius and Aedesius as free men, but the queen begged them to stay and help train the young prince, who grew to become the future Emperor Ezana, founder of the first Christian empire.

Rufinus called Aedesius “simple,” but said the more sagacious Frumentius focused much of his time growing churches in his adopted country. Rufinus described

the Christian communities as outposts of Roman Christians, merchants scattered around the coast as a result of trade and travel—an important point for the Egyptian Copts, whose position benefited from no existing indigenous Christians before Frumentius’s missionary efforts.

When Ezana became of age, he allowed the two Syrians to return to their homes. Aedesius left for the Mediterranean city of Tyre, where they both originated, but Frumentius headed to Alexandria, Egypt, to meet with Athanasius, the Patriarch of Alexandria, to discuss his concerns for the Ethiopian Christians. Known as St. Athanasius the Great, he was the famous champion of Trinitarianism at the Council of Nicea and defender of the faith against the heresy of Arianism. Frumentius shared with Athanasius the great need for a bishop to oversee this new Christian people. Patriarch Athanasius then declared to Frumentius before a council of priests: “What other man shall we find in whom the Spirit of God is, as in thee?” So, he consecrated Frumentius as bishop, then and there, and sent him back to oversee Ethiopia. “Miracles were wrought” and “barbarians were converted,” according to Rufinus, who claimed he received the entire narrative from Aedesius himself, simple as he was. (Sergew Hable Sellassie, *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History*, 98–99).

- 13 Armenia is often cited as the first Christian nation, with the date AD 301 given as the year of conversion. I have been careful to use the phrase “first Christian empire” for Ethiopia. Armenia was not an empire and was subject to the Romans. According to *Armenica.org*, “[For Rome], it was not essential who sat on the Armenian throne, as long as he was loyal to the Roman Empire and would agree to receiving his throne from the hand of the Roman emperor.”

Beyond the distinction just mentioned, the date for Armenian conversion has been questioned by recent scholarship. The traditional date derives solely from the account of a monk named Agathangelos, a secretary to the Armenian king, who claims to have been an eyewitness of the baptism of King Tiridates III in AD 301 in the Arsenias River. Textual critics lay bare several problems with Agathangelos’s *History of the Armenians*, landing on a date for his work closer to AD 450. The original manuscript is written in Armenian, and the Armenian script was not invented until c. AD 405, making it impossible for the writer to be an eyewitness to the king’s baptism. According to *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, “The *History of Agathangelos* is not of great value as a historical document.”

Also, beyond Agathangelos’s unreliable account, there are no other supporting sources for an early baptism of an Armenian king. Ethiopia’s Ezana, however, is sourced directly from his still-existing inscription and the coins he minted with Christian crosses, along with the more reliable history of St. Frumentius discipling the young prince before he became emperor. In fact, Rufinus’s account of the parents allowing such early catechesis could move the date of the Ethiopian court accepting Christianity far earlier than AD 330 and approach the AD 301 date of the Armenian claim. Beyond that, at the alleged conversion, Armenia “became a nominally Christian kingdom,” according to Peter

Brown (*The Rise of Western Christendom*, 277). Ethiopia, on the other hand, had seen a popular Christian movement for centuries, beginning with the Ethiopian eunuch and a visit from the Apostle Matthew (see endnote 11 for Chapter 8.), to the point that Origen (c. AD 250) provided a clarification to the great movement that not *all* the Ethiopians had yet been converted.

Origen Sergew Hable Sellasie, *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History*, 97.

subject to Rome “History of Armenia,” *Armenica.org*, 55, <http://www.armenica.org/cgi-bin/armenica.cgi?467864590376361=1=1=55=5==1=3=A> (Retrieved July 20, 2019).

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See also Abba Abraham Buruk Woldegaber and Mario Alexis Portella, *Abyssinian Christianity: The First Christian Nation? The History and the Identity of the Ethiopian and Eritrean Christians*, (Pismo Beach, CA: BP Editing, 2012), ix–xii.)

- 14 Jason Louv, *John Dee and the Empire of Angels: Enochian Magick and the Occult Roots of the Modern World* (Rochester, VT; Toronto, Canada: Inner Traditions, 2018), 252, 332.
- 15 Louv, *John Dee and the Empire of Angels*, 36, 2–3.

Chapter 3

- 1 For raw data on birthrates in every country, 1960–2016, see World Bank statistics, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN> (Retrieved March 16, 2019).
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- 2 *Russia struggling to recover* Anatoly Karlin, “The ‘Normalization’ of Russia’s Demographics,” *The Unz Review*, Nov. 25, 2014, <http://www.unz.com/akarlin/normalization-of-russias-demographic> (Retrieved March 16, 2019); “Russia May Have Turned the Corner in Demographic Crisis,” *Breitbart*, June 14, 2017 <https://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2017/06/14/russia-may-turned-corner-demographic-crisis> (Retrieved March 16, 2019); “Russia’s rising birth rate gives new life to health care providers,” *Reuters*, March 20, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/russia-md-medical-group-results-idUSL5N1GX2AU> (Retrieved March 28, 2019); Nick Gutteridge, “‘We’re OUTBREEDING you!’ Putin taunts West as