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Article

*A Short Apocalyptic Text Based on the Prophecy of Ezra (Esdras Salathiel)*

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Introduction

Goʿazor literature recognizes three books ascribed to the Prophet Ezra: 1 Ezra (Sutuʾel or Salathiel = 4 Ezra, Chapters 3–14); 2 Ezra (= 3 Esdras); and 3 Ezra (Ezra and Nehemiah = 1 and 2 Esdras). The text under study is an extension of or elaboration on 1 Ezra (Sutuʾel or Salathiel = 4 Ezra, Chapters 3–14), which I call Ethiopian Ezra (= EthE) and have had to edit, unfortunately, from a single manuscript: Collegeville, MN, Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library (= EMML), 6429, fols 9v–39r.¹

A version of the EthE was published by J. Halévy with a French translation from his carelessly copied manuscript, and W. Leslau published an English translation from a third version,² as a Fālaša or Betā Ǝsrʾel Scription.

¹ Not yet catalogued. Parchment, 12.1 × 15.5 cm, 41 fols, seventeenth/eighteenth century: (A) Fols 1r–9v: excerpt from Māṣḥaf Sabela or Prophecy of Sybil. (B) Fols 9v–39r = EthE: (I) Fols 9v–10r, col. 1, line 14: introduction (= H = Halévy 1902, p. 63, line 21 to p. 64, line 9); (II) Fol. 10r, col. 1, line 14–39: text with the following divisions marked in red ink: (1) Fol. 10r, col. 1, line 14 to fol. 11v, col. 2, line 2 = H, p. 63, line 21 to p. 65, line 26. (2) Fol. 11v, col. 2, line 3 to fol. 16r, col. 1, line 13 = H, p. 67, line 30 to fol. 71, line 9 (with fol. 14v, col. 2, line 11 to fol. 15v, col. 2, line 3 wanting in H). (3) Fol. 16r, col. 1, line 14 to fol. 19v, col. 1 (wanting in H). (4) Fol. 19v, col. 2 to fol. 29v, col. 1, line 3 = H, p. 71, line 9 to p. 79 (with fol. 25v, col. 1, line 1 to fol. 26r, col. 1, line 8 wanting in H). (5) Fol. 29v, col. 1, line 4 to fol. 30r, col. 1, line 8 = H, p. 62, line 29 to p. 63, line 21. (6) Fol. 30r, col. 1, line 9 to fol. 38r, col. 2, line 6 = H, p. 57, line 1 to p. 62, line 29 (with fol. 31r, col. 1, line 1 to fol. 31v, col. 1, line 7, and fol. 33r, col. 1, line 14 to fol. 33v, col. 1, line 4 wanting in H). (7) Fol. 38r, col. 2, line 7 to fol. 39r (on the Sabbaths, wanting in H). (C) Fols. 39v–41r: divination (on what one should and should not do on each of the thirty days of the month). Rebound in some disorder.

² Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (= BnF), Éthiopien d’Abbadie 107.

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ture.\textsuperscript{3} But the similarity between the Christian and Fälaša versions is minimal. The book also interested Professor Walter Harrelson of Vanderbilt University.\textsuperscript{4}

The main themes of the \textit{EthE} are the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the end of the world, and the honouring of the Sabbaths. The text is written in the spirit of 4 Ezra, quoting it occasionally and quite extensively. As in 4 Ezra, its author is interested in knowing the future, and the reckoning of time in cycles provides him with the revelations. In both sources, the angel sent to talk to Ezra is Uriel.

This book was adopted by the Fälaša or Betä Ḥisraʾel, eliminating every reference to Christianity. The present article (based on EMML 6429) is interested in the text because it is a further source on Ethiopian eschatology,\textsuperscript{5} and because of the focus it has on the history of Ethiopia, including the following:

1) The reign of Gäbrä Mäsqäl:

In 1982, I published a short Gaʾaz text that would place the beginning of the reign of Gäbrä Mäsqäl, king of Aksum, in 884 EC (Ethiopian Calendar).\textsuperscript{6} The excerpt from the \textit{EthE}, which I present here in translation, corroborates the information found in the text I published. It states, ‘And in the 912th Sabbatical, a God-fearing king called Gäbrä Mäsqäl will reign.’\textsuperscript{7}

In the Ethiopian tradition, the reckoning of time begins with the beginning of the world (or the Creation of Adam and Eve), which took place in 5500 BCE (= Anno Mundi = AM). According to the \textit{EthE}, from the beginning of the world to King Gäbrä Mäsqäl there were 912 Sabbaticals. One Sabbatical or ‘week’ is seven years. Therefore, 912 Sabbaticals are $912 \times 7 = 6,384$ years since the Creation of the world. This would place the beginning of the reign of King Gäbrä Mäsqäl in $6384 - 5500 = 884$ EC.

It is interesting to note that another locally composed apocalyptic work, \textit{Barok} (Baruch), also a holy book of the Betä Ḥisraʾel, offers information supporting the claim made by the \textit{EthE}. It states that the time from the reigns of Emperors Constantine (the Great, r 312–337 CE) and Theodosius

\textsuperscript{3} D’Abbadie 1859, 121; Halévy 1902, 57–79 (ed.), 178–195 (tr.); and Leslau 1951, 11–39. As of late, the Fälaša prefer to be identified as Betä Ḥisraʾel analogous to the identification of their neighbours, the Betä Amhara.

\textsuperscript{4} I am grateful to the late Professor Harrelson for showing me his tentative English translation preserved in the paper he read at the 11\textsuperscript{th} International Conference of Ethiopian Studies held in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in April 1991.

\textsuperscript{5} For more information, see ‘Eschatology’, \textit{EAe}, II (2005), 379a–382b (G. Lusini).

\textsuperscript{6} Getatchew Haile 1982.

\textsuperscript{7} Cf. EMML 6429, fol. 19v. H omits this paragraph.
(the Great, r 379–395 CE) ‘to King Gäbrä Máṣqāl, king of Aksum, is 530 years.’ Since these two emperors did not reign at the same time and since the account in Barok is imprecise, the most reasonable date to which these 530 years should be added is either the beginning of the reign of Theodosius (379 CE) or the end of the reign of Constantine (337 CE). This would place the beginning of the reign of King Gäbrä Máṣqāl very close to our 884 EC (i.e. 379 + 530 = 909 EC; or 337 + 530 = 867 EC, respectively).

It is tempting to add to the list of supportive witnesses the Ts’ozazā sānbāt of the Betā Ḣsrā’el which has ‘[t]he first day (God) created heaven and earth. After 912 Sabbaticals, King Gäbrä Máṣqāl will reign.’ But the paragraph that contains these two sentences is most likely taken from EthE by the author of the Ts’ozazā sānbāt. In other words, this does not seem to be an independent witness.

To summarize, at least four sources agree that King Gäbrä Máṣqāl reigned in or about 884 EC: these are the text published in 1982,10 the Kḥbrā nāgāšt,11 the EthE, and Barok. Is this Gäbrä Máṣqāl the son of Kaleb, who is believed to have reigned in the sixth century, or another monarch? If this is a different Gäbrä Máṣqāl, why is he portrayed as being so famous in these sources but remains unknown in the historical documents?

2) The disastrous campaign:

The EthE prophesies a set of twenty-five kings (a dynasty?), some of whom will be wicked, crooked, rebellious (against God), tyrannical, and extortionist. [...] Therefore, God will forsake these kings, because their demeanour will displease him. One of them will make a military expedition in the 929th Sabbatical. But he will not come back. He will be consumed by fire, together with his army. They will perish and be as though they had not been created.12

Now 929 Sabbaticals are 929 × 7 = 6503 AM and 6503 − 5500 = 1003 EC. At this time, Ethiopian political power was in the hands of the Zagwé dynasty known for the political weakness of its kings. As for their relation with the Church, some were righteous—in fact, saints—but some were suspected...

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8 Cf. EMML 6978, fol. 85r, where the text is less corrupt than in the sources used by Leslau 1951, 75.
9 Leslau 1951, 34.
10 Getatchew Haile 1982.
11 Bezold 1909, 170.
12 EMML 6429, fol. 19r.
of harbouring heretical theological views. Does this report deal with this dynasty?

Apparently, it does. The dynasty was on the throne until 1270 CE. One of the miracles of Saint Yared relates an incident that might be a corroboration. It recounts a disastrous military campaign of King Zena Petros of the Zagwe dynasty against Mätálomi, governor of Damot.

Zena Petros set out to campaign in the land of Damot, (taking) with him a huge army and the clergy of the (royal) church, who had their tabot. In those days, the ruler (mäk-ännən) of Damot was one whose name was Mätálomi, one who worshipped an idol. He made war with him. Mätálomi defeated Zena Petros and cut his head off; and his entire army fled.13

Considering the heat that the King and his men are said to have suffered (from the fire which consumed them), the reference could be to another campaign, possibly in the direction of the White Nile. The King and his army may have perished in the Sudd. But this has to be yet attested.

3) Other matters:

Influenced by the style of the apocalyptic work called Qälemantos, past stories in the Ethiopic are written in the future tense (i.e. as an apocalypse), and the names of (the past/future) kings are given as abbreviations, mostly initials. However, since the manuscripts at our disposal are so carelessly copied, the abbreviations are not always reliable, leading to the possibility of inaccurate identification of the full names. For example, EMML 6429 (on which this study is based) gives አ, (/si/) where H has አ, (/li/) for the king who reigned in the 967th Sabbatical, which is 967 × 7 = 6769 AM = 1269 EC (i.e. 6769 − 5500). It is not difficult to explain why the Gaʿaz symbol for /si/ and /li/ are confused by uneducated copyists. And the Ethiopic’s description of /si/ or /li/ may well refer to King Lalibāla: ‘This man will be a powerful, meek, God-fearing lover of the faith and an alms giver; he will live according to the laws of Christ. During his days many churches will be built of rock and (hewn) out of monolith.’14

But the date given for this king’s reign, 1269 EC, does not tally with the reign of Lalibāla, but rather with the end of his dynasty. If it is indeed Lalibāla, then the abbreviation of the names is not always done by keeping the initial letter of the name.

13 Conti Rossini 1904, 23; translated by the article’s author.
14 EMML 6429, fol. 20r; translated by the article’s author.
The king at that time was Yǝkunno Amlak, of a new dynasty, who also had built monolithic churches. We must also keep in mind that the EthE’s interest is not limited to the history of Ethiopia. Some of these abbreviations might refer to kings of other countries known to the Christian world.

With the limited information that we have about the EthE, it is not easy to estimate the date of composition. However, it is clear that it was composed when the Christian kings were unable to defend the Christian kingdom against Islamic incursions, possibly from the east. The author is so depressed with the situation (weakness of the Ethiopian rulers) that he has lost confidence in the ability of his monarchs to save the kingdom. He has come to realize that they were not ‘able to act’. But, at the same time, he refuses to accuse the descendants of David of weakness. So he allows ‘another’ son of David from ‘Rome’ to come as the expected Lion Cub and to resolve matters, taking over the Ethiopian Christian kingdom. When the king of Ethiopia hears of the coming of the Lion Cub, he goes to him with tribute: ‘At this time, the king of Ethiopia will go to him with many presents and meet that man, and deliver (to him) his kingdom. He (the Lion Cub) will then reign over Ethiopia three years.’

This subjugation to a non-Ethiopian leader has been made bearable not only by depicting the stranger as a descendant of David (following, of course, the Kǝbrǝ nágāś), but also by putting the whole world under his rule: ‘After him (after the surrender of the king of Ethiopia) and all (other) kings, everyone from east to west will bring (him) presents. And he will rule the whole earth. He will appoint kings, governors, and (other) officials.’ The Lion Cub could be Jesus, the descendant of David at his second coming, and Rome might be Jerusalem.

Both the EthE and the Ethiopian Fǝkkare Iyäsus (‘Interpretation of Jesus’, an apocalyptic work) may have appeared in the fifteenth century. The ideas and expressions common to both works show that one has been influenced by the other, although which has influenced which is not clear, and there is no definite proof that they appeared simultaneously. The EthE was authored by a theologian who believed in the tradition that the end of the world would come at the end of the seventh or at the beginning of the eighth millennium after Creation, which was 1500 EC (1507/1508 CE). In fact, the year 6916 AM ‘which is 988 Sabbaticals (= 1416 EC)’ (given as the time of the beginning of the end) may have taken place during or soon after

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15 Ibid., fol. 21r.
16 Ibid., fol. 25r.
17 Ibid.
its composition. Furthermore, the fact that it starts with 'በአማት የለት ከኩ እስ' ('In thanksgiving to the Father') and not 'በአማት የለት እስ' ('In the name of the Father') is another indication that it is old by Ethiopian standards, possibly fifteenth century. Moreover, the author uses in this text the old form of the subjunctive of the verb ይሖ፡ (ይሖ ግ፡ imperative ይሖ፡). The much beloved Emperor Tewodros I, whose untimely death after a few months on the throne is assumed to have inspired the composition of the ይወጆ ከያስስ (that predicts his return), ruled in 1412 CE, a few years short of 988 Sabbatics. If the names of kings who would come after this time are unidentifiable, it is not only because the abbreviations of their names are garbled, but also because the predictions are guess-work.

The author had a respectable knowledge of world history in general and of Ethiopian history in particular. He knows the stories of the Ptolemys, although their names are garbled in the manuscripts. For example, the accepted form for Ptolemy in Gaʾaz is Bältimos. In the EthE it is ጓለማየስ, ጓለማየስ, and ጓለማየስ (BnF d’Abbadie 107: ጓለመማይስ, ጓለመማይስ, and ጓለማይስ). The copyists’ errors notwithstanding, it seems that the author’s source on these Egypto-Roman kings might not only be Gaʾaz literature. Note that the name does not begin with ‘ነሎ’. This is further evidenced by his knowledge of Ptolemy Philadelphus and the form he gives to his name: ጓለመማይስ ጓልወ። Ptolemy the Second is ጓራ ጓለማየስ (BnF d’Abbadie 107: ጓራ ጓለማየስ). But the manner in which biblical quotations are preserved shows that the copyists are unreliable. The text is badly affected by the errors of the copyists who, appallingly, disregard the difference between the two cases (nominative and accusative) and the mode of the verb (present/future as against subjunctive). Furthermore, the copyists’ first order of some letters looks like their fourth order; and the difference between their third order and fifth order is unclear. Moreover, with such copyists, it cannot be expected that numbers are always transmitted faithfully. Nevertheless, the text is worth publishing because it is old by Ethiopian standards and contains thoughts and ideas relevant to the time.

18 EMML 6429, fol. 27r.
19 Ibid., fol. 18r–v; Halévy 1902, 67.
Selected Images of MS EMML 6429

Fig. 1 EMML 6429, fol. 9v.

20 Photos courtesy of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library, Saint John’s University, MN.
ወኵሎ፡ ዘገብሙ፡ ያገኙተ፡ ገዳወኳሎ፡ ያለኵሉ፡ ዘመድኳት፡ ዕዝርማት፡ ይቤ፡ ጠቢብ፡ ይቅዱزين፡ ወቁለ早晨፡ ኃይለ፡ ብላ፡ በእንበላ፡ ወዘይማወኳቦም፡ ኃይለ፡ ብወስኡ፡ ያለኵሉ፡ ዘዲበ፡ ዋለኵሉ፡ ዘለኵሉ፡ ወውስኡ፡ ወመልድ፡ ወመብሉ። ወው ኃይለ፡ ብወስኡ፡ ያለኵሉ፡ ዘዲበ፡ ዋለኵሉ፡ ዘለኵሉ፡ ወውስኡ፡ ወመልድ፡ ወመብлу። ወው ኃይለ፡ ብወስኡ፡ ያለኵሉ፡ ዘዲበ፡ ዋለኵሉ፡ ዘለኵሉ:

ወኵሎ፡ ዘገብሙ:

1. That is the clergy, including the author.

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Translation

Fol. 9v  (I begin) by giving thanks to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This reckoning of time (that I write) is what God revealed to Ezra from the beginning of time to the end of time. May the same God reveal to you these wonders of the glory of God, as he revealed to us* the secrets of heavens and earth—the visible and the invisible, of the past and of the future.

He spread (a void) in the sky and called it a sphere. And he planted on it stars that shine and do not shine. And he gave names to all that are on the earth. And he gave the power of light to the sun and the moon. And with them, he created counterparts <for each> in the sea, and for all that moves in it. (On) the earth, too, <whatever> is created on | it—the birth of the prophets and all people—has a counterpart. There are also counterparts of kings and being (kings). It is amazing that they are represented in the stars. People, (such as) the wise prophets—Herma, David, Ezra—and all the prophets, toiled while <wanting> to have heavenly knowledge relative to the stars. But no one was able to know the secrets of the Lord.

Then the wise, the holy, and the mathematician, Ezra, said, ‘I went to the desert, glorifying and thanking God for all things he has made, each at its different time, how he arranged the years, what would take place annually, and how he <calculated> the times to the end of the world.’ There, I saw the power of God. Having seen it, I admired, and said, crying, ‘Oh Lord, my Lord, if I have found favour before you, tell me and make me know all your secrets.’

Then I cried till the next day in the desert, without eating or drinking. And on the next day, the same angel, who appeared to me earlier that night, whose name is Archangel Uriel, was sent to me. He said to me, ‘Oh Ezra, why are you troubled? What obliged you to toil? What makes you cry? And why do you want to know the mystery of the Most High and his secrets? <It would not be revealed> to any of the flesh, other than to people like you—the holy prophets, the righteous and generous ones.’ I said to him, ‘It is not because of my being of the flesh that I (dare) to talk or by my righteousness that I speak, but I cry rather because of what my

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2 Cf. 4 Ezra 4:44–45 and 6:11–12.
3 Cf. 4 Ezra 4:1–3.
reins showed me. And now, too, I will not be silent until I find the place and a bit of the work of my God.' Then the angel came again to me and said to me, 'Oh Ezra, go to the desert where there are no people, where no human creature comes to. He will reveal to you there all the secrets of God that you want to know.'

Then I rose up the next day and walked, not knowing where I would come to. And my God brought me by his will (to a certain place) as I rejoiced. I spent that night glorifying and thanking my Lord. The next day in the morning, I was alone, thinking and crying with tears and feeling distressed, and having eaten nothing. When the day changed to evening, the same angel who appeared to me before was sent to me again. He said to me, 'Oh Ezra, fast three complete weeks.' I fasted as the angel ordered me to. When I finished, immediately, (the angel) shook place where I was. At that time, I was frightened. I said, 'Oh Lord, my Lord, do not remember my sin.' At that time, the angel, whose name is Uriel, said to me, 'Oh Ezra, your prayer has been heard, and the power of your righteousness has appeared to the Most High. Now, take (and) drink (this) cup which God gave you.' I took and drank the cup with (something) whose colour looks like fire. When I drank the cup, understanding and knowledge filled my heart, and (the secrets) were revealed. And (so) I caused the writing of the Scriptures. (The angel) said to me, 'Some are revealed and some are hidden, which you have to see.'

This is the way of the living truth, which I, Ezra, wrote at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, in the first month of the months, which is Miyazya (April), as I was in the desert—in the desert where he revealed his hidden mystery. He said to me, 'I have told you and have shown you all my mysteries and my secrets, as I had told to Moses at Mount Sinai. I told (Moses) in the third month on its day saying, "Come up to me on the mount, and I will give you two tablets of stone of the law and the ordinance of justice pertaining to the commandments that you may explain to them as I have written." And Moses went up into the mount of God, into Mount Sinai,

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5 Cf. 4 Ezra 6:29.
6 4 Ezra 6:32.
7 Cf. 4 Ezra 14:38–42.
8 MS ‘106th’.
and the glory of God filled (the mount), and clouds overshadowed it for six days. And on the seventh day, (the Lord) called Moses out of the midst of the cloud. (Moses) saw the glory of God like a flaming fire on the top of the mount. And Moses was on the mount forty days and forty nights. And I (the Lord) made him know the past and the later (events). I also told him about the future (regarding) the times for the law and the testimony. And I said to him, 'Put your heart into everything that I shall tell you on this mount. And write (them) in a book so that their generations may see | that they may not forsake me for the evil they have wrought in transgressing my ordinances, <which> I establish today between me and you for later generations. And it will happen thus, when all these things come upon them, they will recognize—and it will be a sign for them—that I <am more righteous> than they in all their judgments and in all their actions; and they will recognize that <I> am, and have been, with them.' And I said to him, ‘You, too, write for yourself all the words of mine that I will declare to you today, for I know the bitterness of this people and their stiff neck. And this witness shall be heard (as) <testimony> against them. For they will forget all my commandments and all that I command them, and <they will walk> after gods, after their filth, and after their shame. And they will serve filthy gods, and these will be stumbling blocks to them, (causing) tribulation, agony, and | snares. Many will perish and be captured, and will fall into the hands of the enemy, because they have for- saken my ordinances, my commandments, the holy days of my covenant, my Sabbath, my holy things that I hallowed in their midst, my tabernacle, and my sanctuary, which I have hallowed in the midst of the land, that I <should set> my name upon them, and that it should dwell (there).’

And I, God, said to the angel of the presence, ‘<Write> for Moses so they may know about the creation from the beginning of the Creation of the world until my sanctuary is built among them for all eternity. And God will appear to the eyes of all that I am, the God of Israel and the father of all the children of Jacob, and king on Mount Zion for all eternity. And Zion and Jerusalem shall be holy.’

\[11\] Cf. Jub. 1:1–9.
\[12\] MS ‘You are’.
\[13\] Cf. Jub. 1:25–26.
Getachew Haile

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And the angel of the presence who walks in the midst of the camp of the Israelites brought out the tablet of the division of the years—from the time of the Creation of the world—concerning the law and the testimony of the weeks of the jubilees annually according to all their numbers; and jubilees annually, from the day of the new creation until the heavens and the earth will be renewed, with all their creations according to the powers of the heaven, and all the creatures of the earth, until the sanctuary of God is built in Jerusalem, on Mount Zion, and all luminaries are renewed for healing, for peace, and for blessing for all the elect of Israel, and that it may be from that day unto all the days of the earth.

And the angel of the presence spoke to Moses in the words of God, saying, ‘Write the complete history of the Creation, how on the sixth day God, the God, finished all his works and all he created, and kept Sabbath on the day of the Sabbath and allowed it for all creatures, and set it as a sign for all his works. For on the first day, he created heavens, which are above, and the earth, the waters, and all the spirits, which serve before him. These are the angels of the presence, the angels of the spirits of fire, (the angels of the spirit of) winds, the angels of the spirit of the clouds and of darkness, and of snow, and of the frost, of the abysses, of the thunder, of the lightening, and the angels of the spirits, of cold and heat, and of the winter, and of the autumn, of the harvest, and of the summer, and all the spirits of his works in the heavens and earth, and all the abysses and darkness, and the light, and dawn and dusk, which he has prepared in the knowledge of his heart.’

At that time, they saw the works that he worked, and blessed him with praise before him on account of all his works, because he created seven great creatures on the first day. And on the second day, he created firmaments in the middle of the water, and the waters were divided on that day, half of them went up above

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14 Cf. Jub. 2:1–3.
15 Or ‘in six’.
16 For ‘on the seventh day’.
17 Jub. ʿalamat ‘ages’.
18 Jub. 2:4–7.
and half of them went down below the firmament—(which was) in the midst over the face of the whole earth—to one place for the dry land to appear. And the waters <passed off> (from the land) as <he ordered them>. And <they> retired from the face of the earth into one <place> yonder outside of the firmament, and the s dry land appeared. And on that day he created pools for the seas according to their separate gathering places <and all the rivers and their separated gathering places> for the waters in the mountains and on the entire earth. (He authorized man) above all (creatures) on land and in the seas, on animals and on all that moves on the earth, and on the entire earth itself. He authorized him on all | these.

On the sixth day he created four classes. And in all there were twenty-two classes. Having finished all his works on the sixth day, all in heaven and on earth, in the seas and abysses, in the light and in the darkness and in the signs, he gave us great days of Sabbaths to be resting from all works. There are two days of Sabbaths. He said this to all the angels of the presence and all angels of sanctification, the two classes, ‘Let us keep the day of the Sabbaths in heaven and on earth.’

He said to them, ‘Behold, I will separate unto myself a people from among nations. And these shall keep the Sabbath and <shall be sanctified> for me as my people. I shall bless them, and they shall be my people, and I shall be their God. I have chosen to be sanctified by the seed of Jacob, | from (all) that I have seen, and I have written him down as my firstborn son, and have sanctified him unto me forever and ever. And <I will make them know> the day of the Sabbaths that they may keep it (by resting) from all works. And I gave them a sign in accordance with which they should keep the Sabbath with us on the day of the Sabbath with the angels in heaven. And he caused his will to ascend as acceptable sweet savour before him on all the days. There were twenty-<two>23 heads of mankind.

And on the third day, he created all reservoirs, dew of the earth, seeds that are sown, all that is edible, trees that bear fruit,
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wood-trees, the Garden of Eden for joy, and all the four great generations.  

On the fourth day, he created the sun, the moon, and the stars, and placed them on the firmaments of the sky so they may give light to earth. He made them govern the day and the night, and for the separation between light and darkness. He gave the sun for a big sign on earth, and for the days, for the weeks, for the months, and for the years, for the feasts of the years, for the Jubilees, for all the time for the years. It divides between (light and) darkness for health, that it may give health to all that comes forth from earth and grows. On the fourth day, he created (these) three classes.

And on the fifth day, he created the big whales in the midst of the deep oceans. He created these first with his hands, those that have flesh and all that move in the waters, (including) fish, and all birds that fly, and all their kinds. The sun came out on them for health, and on all that | exists on earth and sprouts from the earth, and on all trees that bear fruit and on everything with flesh. He created these three classes on the fifth day.

On the sixth day, he created all wild animals of the earth, and all beasts, and all that moves on the earth. And after all <this>, he created mankind; he created both man and woman, and gave them authorization over <all>.

<From> Adam to Moses, twenty-four kinds of creatures were created, from the first day to the seventh day. This (first day) is blessed and holy. And this, with this (seventh day), was for sanctification and blessing. To this has been given that <they> may be blessed and holy for the testimony and <the> law always. The first <that> was sanctified and blessed was the seventh day. And on this first day, he created heaven and earth. This day is holy for all his works. Therefore, he ordered about this particular day that anyone who works | on it any work, <let> him die, forever and ever. Amen. And the people said, 'Amen'.
That these are all the years given to the world—from its beginning to its end—was firmly believed until it was over in 1500 EC. Its source is Giyorgis Wäldä’s Amid, e.g. EMML 192, fol. 3r. Although not clear why, they calculated these years in periods of...
Ezra’s reckoning

I, Ezra, reckoned, and all secrets of my Lord have been revealed. All the times that will take place on its date, from Adam until the end of 7,000 years, the periods of God are (approximately) 1,001 weeks of years, (and) 141 Jubilees of 49 years. With these are known all works, all holy days, Sabbaths, days, months, praises, and honouring of God. In those days, God is working in heaven as well as on earth until Judgement Day. And everything that is written in the tablet of heaven in the hands of his angel will be fulfilled within (the time of) these numbers. And the holy angels were commanded within it in heaven. And within them, they sanctify, praise, bless, glorify, and exalt | the non-mendacious God who created them. And he ordained the sun and the moon and installed them. And the stars in the number of all human souls. (This) has been ordained (to last) till the end of the world so that good and evil may be known. And he arranged the dates of the past and future world within them. And you, Ezra, take, know, and understand everything from Adam to the coming of the Lord—to the end of all his computation (of time)—and the happenings that will take place annually, and reveal (them) to the deserving faithful. But hide them from, and do not reveal to, those who are not deserving.

Calculation

From the first (year) of Adam until the 97th year of Enoch, the 25 weeks are 76, and the great cycle is 1. <From> the 97th year of Enoch to the 104th year of Yared, there are 76 weeks, and the great cycle is 2. <From> the 105th year of Yared until the 143rd year of Lameh there are 76 weeks, and the great cycle is 3.

And a week of years (seven years), a jubilee of years (forty-nine years), and a qâmār of 532 years (the common name of the last one is ‘awdā qâmār and ‘abīyy qâmār). They were puzzled by the fact that the 7,000 years have a remainder of eighty-four when calculated by the great cycle of 532.

33 $1001 \times 7 = 7,001$ years.
34 $141 \times 49 = 6,909$ years.
35 No attempt has been made to note every error in rendering the numbers in this section, as they are too many and too obvious.
36 That is $76 \times 7 = 532$ AM.
37 That is $532 \times 2 = 1064$ AM.
38 That is $532 \times 3 = 1596$ AM.
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10 That is 532 × 4 = 2128 AM.

The calculation is wrong, since each of these ancients has lived years that are greater than one great cycle (‟awdä qämär), and going from one cycle to the next ought to

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there are 76 weeks, and the great cycle is 4. And <from> the 87th year of Noah to the 22nd year of Ibor there are 76 weeks, and the great cycle is 5. And <from> the 23rd year of Ibor to the 28th year of Nachor there are 76 weeks, and the great cycle is 6. <From> the 24th year of Nachor to the 64th year of Abraham there are 76 weeks, and the great cycle is <7>. <From> the 65th year of Abraham to the 6th year of ḳʷalu there are 76 weeks, <and> the great cycle is 8. <From> the 6th year of Agaalom to the 6th year of Jonathan, king of the Jews, there are 76 weeks, and the great cycle is 9. <From> the 8th year of Jonathan, king of the Jews, to the 37th (year in the reign) of Ptolemy Philadelfus, the second Ptolemy, there are 76 weeks, and the great cycle is 10. <From> | the 37th (year in the reign) of Ptolemy to the 2nd year (of the reign) of Diocletian, there are 76 weeks, and the great cycle is 11. <From> the 2nd year (of the reign) of Diocletian to (the beginning of the great cycle of) 532 years, there are 76 weeks, and the great cycle is 12.

And <from> the 532nd year (cycle) of Diocletian to 106<4>, there are 76 weeks, and the great cycle is 12. And <from> the year 1064 of Diocletian to 1069 year. And from the first year of Adam to the 1060th year of Diocletian there are 988 weeks, the time is 49, the Jubilees 4,000, and the week 1,000.

And the number of days from Adam to the (Second) Coming of

take place within their lifetime. But at least either forty-six should be eighty-six or the other way around. This kind of error is repeated in the following calculations.

41 That is $532 \times 5 = 2660 \text{ AM}$. 
42 That is $532 \times 6 = 3192 \text{ AM}$. 
43 That is $532 \times 7 = 3724 \text{ AM}$. 
44 And Agaalom, unidentified. 
45 That is $532 \times 8 = 4256 \text{ AM}$. 
46 That is $532 \times 9 = 4788 \text{ AM}$. 
47 Jotham? 
48 That is $532 \times 10 = 5320 \text{ AM}$. 
49 That is $532 \times 11 = 5852 \text{ AM}$. 
50 That is $532 \times 12 = 6384 \text{ AM}$, i.e. $6384 - 5500 = 884 \text{ CE}$. The connection in time of Caesar Dioclete to King Gäbrä Māsqāl shows that the calculation is off by more than one great cycle. Also Caesar Dioclete and King Gäbrä Māsqāl are not contemporaries as this calculation implies.
51 MS ‘1062’.
52 This shows how unreliable the copyist is.
53 The sentence is incomplete.
ወንድል፡ ይለታት፡ ዆ምአዳም፡ ይስከ፡ የደግም፡ ይምጽአቱ፡ ይለክርስቶስ፡ ይከውን፡ ይፋ፻ፋ፷ፏ፫። ይሰአቅማሪሁ፡ ይለእግዚአብሔር፡ ይ፲፻። ይኵ። ይል፡ ይእምአዳም፡ ይስከ፡ የዳግም፡ ይምጽአቱ፡ ይበዘ፡ ይይመልእ፡ ይ፧፻ ይከመ፡ ይታእምር፡ ይከም፲፲ወ፪አቅمراት። ይወካዕበ፡ ይለእመ፡ ይፈቀድከ፡ ይtaşእምር፡ ይዕ ይ| ይለተ፡ ይይመጽእ፡ ይወይወል፲፪። ይያከውን፡ ይ፲፻ዓመት፡ ይወሱባዔያት፡ ይ፲፻ ይዓመት፡ ይበበ፲፻ዓመት፡ ይይ ይለክርስቶስ፡ ይወይተር፲፫። ይቀመር፡ ይለሰንበተ፡ ይሰንበታት፡ ይይእቲ፤ ይትትሔደስ፡ ይዳግመ፡ ይቀዳሚ ይ10 ይ፡ ይወሱባዔያት፡ ይ፲፴፫፵፫፪ወኵሎን፡ ይወለታት፡ ይበበ፲፻ዓመት፡ ይይ ይለክርስቶስ፡ ይወይተር፲፫። ይቀመር፡ ይለሰንበተ፡ ይሰንበታት፡ ይይእቲ፤ ይትትሔደስ፡ ይዳግመ፡ ይቀዳሚ ይ10 ይ፡ ይወሱባዔያት፡ ይ፲፴፫፵፫፪ወኵሎን፡ ይወለታት፡ ይበበ፲፻ዓመት፡ ይይ ይለክርስቶስ፡ ይወይተር፲፫። ይቀመር፡ ይለሰንበተ;br> ይሰንበታት፡ ይይእቲ፤ ይትትሔደስ፡ ይዳግመ፡ ይቀዳሚ ይ10 ይ፡ ይወሱባዔያት፡ ይ፲፴፫፵፫፪ወኵሎን፡ ይወለታት፡ ይበበ፲፻ዓመት፡ ይይ ይለክርስቶስ፡ ይወይተር፲፫። ይቀመር፡ ይለሰንበተ;br> ይሰንበታት፡ ይይእቲ፤ ይትትሔደስ፡ ይዳግመ፡ ይቀዳሚ ይ10 ይ፡ ይወሱባዔያት፡ ይ፲፴፫፵፫፪ወኵሎን፡ ይወለታት;br> ይበበ፲፻ዓመት፡ ይይ ይለክርስቶስ፡ ይወይተር፲፫። ይቀመር፡ ይለሰንበተ;br> ይሰንበታት;br> ይይእቲ፤ ይትትሔደስ;br> ይዳግመ;br> ይቀዳሚ ይ10 ይ፡ ይወሱባዔያት;br> ይ፲፴፫፵፫፫፪ወኵሎን;br> ይወለታት;br> ይበበ፲፻_ACL_65970486 multitude of years by the days in a year. Christ was expected to come a second time at the end of the seventh millennium or the end of the thirteenth great cycle (13 × 532 = 6,916 + 84 = 7,000 years). The days of the 7,000 years would be 7,000 × 365 = 2,555,000 + 1,750 (the days of the leap years) = 2,556,750 days. I, the fifth figure, should be ፲. I thank the mathematician Ato Amha Asfaw, who is greatly interested in Ethiopian tradition, for suggesting this correction.

The instruction is not clear but the problem is how to calculate the number (eighty-four) needed to get the thirteen cycles to equal 7,000.
A Short Apocalyptic Text

Jesus is 2,567,500. And the cycles of God (of 7) are 1,000. The way you would know the total (years) from Adam until his Second Coming is when the 7,000 is completed, you will have to add at each 7 of the 12 cycles.

Furthermore, if you want to know the day of Christ—on which he will come and judge the living and the dead—it will be on the first Sunday Sabbath (of the cycle of) 1,000 years, and the weeks will be 146. This produces all the days at each 1,000 years until it is 7,000, and the weeks 1,000, which generates 133 until it is 12 cycles, so you know the day of Christ and that one cycle remains, which is the Sabbath of the Sabbaths. The first day will be renewed again. But the other days will cease to exist. Heaven and earth, the sun and the moon, every time and epoch, weeks, and jubilees, all will pass. But (Sunday, the Sabbath of the Sabbaths) will live forever. Whoever rests on it will never perish. He will enjoy an endless joy with the righteous. It is the memorial of (Christ’s) Resurrection. On a latter day, he will come (on it) to judge the living and the dead. Glory to him forever and ever.

In the 912th week a God-fearing king, whose name is Gäbrä Mäsqäl, will reign. During his time, a cycle will be added. After him twenty-five (kings) will reign. Some of them are good and generous; they will walk in righteousness. Some of them are wicked, unjust, outlaws, oppressive, and robbers. They will not do any righteous deed. They will rob people’s property freely, they will overpower (others), and they will revile old women and orphans. Therefore, God will forsake these kings, (as) they will not please him with their demeanour.

One of them will take a (military) expedition during the 929th week, and he will not come back. He will be burned with fire with his army, and they will die. They will be as if they were not created. And their kingship will depart (from them). Then (other)

56 Probably, 3 is a correction of 6, i.e. 143, which is closer to 1,000 (143 × 7 = 1,001 years).
57 This is a literal translation of yet another unclear instruction.
58 i.e. ‘Sunday’.
59 Not clear.
60 Also in the $Tǝʾezazä sənbät$, see Leslau 1951, 34; and in Baruch, Leslau 1951, 75.
61 A number is missing.
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Obviously a number is missing.

Here there is an upright line with horizontal lines above and below it so that it looks like the number 10. The lines above and below it could be strokes the copyists used to delete an unwanted symbol.
kings will reign in their place. They, too, will be powerful, and will not please <God> in any of their walks and demeanour. And God will consent to remove their kingship from them.

(In) the 900th week | their king will die together with his army in a battle. After this, a king with good demeanour will reign. But his own people will kill him in his bed. Then their kingship will go to alien people who are humble (and) new, who have no wickedness or guile or violence in their hearts. They will reign by the will of God.

In the 959th week, sixteen kings will rise. The name of the first king is Mǝ; and the second is (?); the name of the third is Lä; the name of the fourth is A; the name of the fifth is Rǝ; the name of the sixth is Mǝ; the name of the seventh is Bä; the name of the eighth is Si; (the latter will reign) in the 987th (week). This man is powerful, meek, God-fearing, a lover of the faith, and a lover of almsgiving. He will walk according to the law of God. Many churches, hewn from a rock and a single stone, will be built during his time. During the time of this king, the powerful of the earth will disappear, and he will increase <the faithful>. He will fight (the powerful) and he will be victorious. He will destroy the nobility; he will arrest them, imprison them, and scatter them all over the face of the earth. He will let other people inherit their inheritance by the will of God.

At that time, the entire earth will be his. During his time, grain and clothes will be abundant. The poor and the wretched will rejoice. And all will live in love (of each other). During his time, secrets will be revealed. He will reign over a firm kingdom. After him, in the 972nd week, one of his relatives, whose name is Dä, will take his kingship. During his time, wickedness, violence, and partiality will increase. The rulers, too, will be violent; they will disregard righteousness, justice, and fairness. None of them will behave righteously and fairly, but swear in falsehood.

At that time, persecution of the children of man will increase. They will sell them to the children of Ishmael. Famine, pestilence, and suffering will fall upon every city. All people will die and perish. (Only) a few will remain. And those who remain will be wicked, and injustice will increase. There will be no love and

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64 Or ‘Armenians’.
65 This is the Amharic yä-säw log that contrasts to barya.
66 i.e. ‘Arabs’, ‘Muslims’.
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peace in them, but only hate. The king will die agonizingly from illness.

After him, four kings will rise from one family (but) from four origins. One whose name is $Ǝ$ will reign first. During his time, evil will increase. Many churches from nearby, in fact, from close to him as well, and from the country of his own reign, will be plundered. The Orthodox faith, which our father received through Christ, will be abolished. But the king is good in his heart. He will be saddened in the love of Christ, but he will be able to do nothing. The week at that time will be 973.

After him, three kings will rise from the tribe of the same king. The one whose name is $Na$ will reign (first?). The one whose name is $<...>$ will come and rob him (of his kingship). After him will come the one whose name is $Tǝ$. He will rob him and take (his authority) and reign. He will be powerful. On his head there is a sign like a horn. He will not listen to the advice of the people; rather, he will walk according to his heart’s desire. All this will happen because of the wickedness of those who live on the earth.

In those days, Satan will belch a bitter poison on earth. And he will enter the hearts of people through the breath of his poison. And he will make them all his. They will act according to the law of the heathen. They will fornicate with wives of their comrades and with their friends. They will pollute their body; and they will swear falsely. They will not know God who created them, and they will forsake his ordinance, making the living God a liar. They will also forsake the ordinance of righteousness, which he gave them for salvation, which is baptism and the body and blood of our Lord, which he gave for the forgiveness of sin. But they will despise it in their heart and receive it (only) for (the sake of) appearance. All this will take place in the time of the 974th week. He will take his people to a campaign to kill an enemy. But he will be defeated and will fall there and die with his army between two mountains, with many countless people. Some will be scattered and some will be taken prisoner. All this will take place from God because these people have angered him with their evil deeds as David has said, “They are all the same; they all violated together; there is no one who does good, no, not one.”

Then the kingship will go to the third king. He is a humble

\[68 \text{ Ps. 13/14:3; 52:4/53:3.}\]
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The adjective ይንታን 'pure' does not fit in the context.

Lit. 'children of Ishmael'.

A number might be missing.
man, wise, and God-fearing. He loves (going to) church, but his days will be more wicked than (those) of his predecessor. | Inferior and indifferent people, who hasten to sin, will rise. They will fornicate with the wives of their brothers and with the wives of their masters, and take over their country. They will boast, ‘Who is like us? We are stronger than they.’ They will eat and drink excessively. (In reality) they have no power. Every act of theirs is in wickedness.

In those days, travellers to trade will be many, and there will be no one among them who will work in the fields. (The Christians) will act like the Muslims (in commercial activities). They will go along with them. They will sell their Christian brothers, relatives, and friends for useless clothes, which they will put on and wear. What they eat will be to them food of suffering. And the clothes they wear will be worm-eaten, and will be worn-out on their body before time. In those days, the road of Satan will be widened. Priests will forsake the work of their priesthood, which was ordained for them formerly. They will fornicate with the wives of others, forsaking their own wives, and enter the church of God where there is the altar. They will kick like donkeys and mules. Woe to those who do this. They will go to Sheol alive, without any mercy.

In those days, (other) kings will arise. The name of the first is Lā. The name of the second is Ǝ; the third is ǝ. In those days, everything that has been written will be annulled. And the earth will wane daily and annually. Turmoils will increase in every region. (There will be) famine, illness, and war. And in the 977th week, a generous and God-fearing king will rise from another tribe—anointed with the royal ointment of the Holy Spirit—whose name is Sā. There will be tranquility in his time. All this will take place before the Second Coming of Christ.

That time will be the end of the reign (of the descendants) of Ishmael, son of Agar of the desert, the maid-servant of Sarah, wife of Abraham. When the reign (of the descendants) of Ishmael ends in the 700th year, in the 977th week, at that time, the Lion Cub will rise ‘as though waking from sleep’, unexpectedly. ‘This is he whom the Most High preserved for the latter day from the...’

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72 Effaced, not sure.
73 i.e. ‘Muslims’.
74 Cf. Ps. 12/13:20.
A sentence identifying ‘these kings’ is missing.

Ps. 91:8/92:7.

Ps. 109/110:5

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seed of David. He is the one who will appear and come, and tell all nations to leave all their countries, <and forsake> fighting among themselves. Many countless people will gather together by him. These kings are violent and apostates who do not know God. The law of Christ will be abolished during their time. At that time, the man whom (the Lord) kept will take revenge against them. He will shatter the children of Ishmael. Fire, blaze, and hot charcoal will come out from their mouths like a hurricane. He will kill them, and scatter them all in the wind. At that time, what David said—‘though sinners sprout like grass, and all evildoers flourish, all are doomed to be destroyed forever’—will come upon them. He has also said, ‘He will shatter the kings on the day of his wrath, and he will judge the nations; he will increase corpses, and he will break the heads of many on earth. They drank water from the stream by the path. Therefore, (his) head will be lifted up.

Also listen, his coming will be with people who are allies with him; ‘These are the nine nations who were taken captive from their country during the days of Shalmanesser (V), king of Persia, who took (them) captive into his kingdom, and settled them across the river Täkkäzi. They returned and became a different (nation) all on their own. They brought up this idea so that they might forsake the tribe of their nation. They intentionally went to the interior of a country where no humans lived so that they could keep their law, which they could not keep in their own country. They returned through a difficult entrance of Euphrates. The Most High worked a miracle (for them); he stopped sources of the (river) Täkkäzi) until they passed through. And the country is a distance of one year’s journey, and the name of the country is Azaf. They will stay there till that (definite) day. And on the day when they will have to return, the Most High will again stop the sources of the river Täkkäzi so that they may be able (to pass through).

At that time, he will strengthen the remaining people. And the man, the Lion Cub, will bring them with him, and will make them his. They will go with him, and he will make them inherit

79 727–722 BCE.
80 The name given to big rivers. Here it is the Euphrates.
81 Cf. 4 Ezra 13:39–48.
82 Cf. 4 Ezra 12:34.
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the blessed city of God. After he gives the city to all (these) people, they will go with him to the country of the blacks to wage war. He will march with great splendor. The power of the Holy Spirit will be upon him. There are four stars with him, one on his right, one on his left, one before him, and one behind him, like 5 <torches>. 83 | And the priests will carry his tabot and proceed before it. They will come to the land of the Arabs. 84

Then the king of Ethiopia will go to him with many presents, and meet the man, and deliver to him his kingdom, too. And he will reign over his country, Ethiopia, three years. 85 After him, all kings from east and west will bring him presents. 86 And he will rule the whole earth. He will appoint kings, governors, and princes. And all people of the earth will obey his orders.

During the time of this man, the Holy Spirit will come down for three days like rain without clouds; during the day, like oil without one being cleansed from sin. The drops of the mercy of God will be spilled on the entire earth. In those days, there will be peace, and no quarrel, or disturbance, or robbery | but only love, joy, almsgiving, mercy, and honouring each other. No one will be in debt. Everyone will be willing to give his money and let it be borrowed.

In those days, the fear of God will increase; and many churches in the world 87 that have been formerly ruined will be (re)built. A metropolitan of the Orthodox faith will come and sanctify the whole earth. Matters are decided upon by the word of the metropolitan and the king. The faithful will increase, and the faith will be straightened out and strengthened. At that time, priests will go according to the law and the ordinances of righteousness of Melchesedek, Moses, and Aaron, the saintly priests. Similarly, these (priests), too, will please God with their purity. 88

In those days, love, peace, joy, pleasure, and the knowledge of God will increase. In those days, there will be neither hunger nor thirst; there will be neither | litigation nor dispute. In those days, the laity and the clergy will be equally of <one> mind and one

84 The reference is to the dark-skinned Islamic people in the west on the Ethio–Sudan border.
85 Cf. ‘Ethiopians will bow down before him’, Ps. 71/72:9.
86 Cf. 71/72:10.
87 That means all over Ethiopia.
88 Baruch; see Leslau 1951, 67.
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Baruch; see Leslau 1951, 67.

On fol. 25r, the years of his reign over Ethiopia were limited to three years.

i.e. ‘in bed comfortably’, as opposed to those who are assassinated or fall in battle; cf. Ps. 115/116:15 as opposed to Ps. 33:22/34:21.

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thought. They will walk through a straight path with the will of the Holy Spirit. In those days, there will be neither sin nor violence, but only justice and righteousness. In those days, the gift of God (will increase); it will be a time of compassion and mercy. Blessed are those who live in those days.\footnote{Ps. 67:32/68:31.}

After a time of thirty\footnote{Cf. Ps. 109/110:2.} years, the man, the Lion Cub, will return his kingship to the king of Ethiopia by the consent of God. But he will go to Alexandria and lay waste the people of Egypt who are wicked, and return to the land of Rome, to the capital of his kingdom, and reign forty years. Others states, too, are his. He will dispatch his allies to rule the whole earth and the cities as are ordained for them because of the sins (of those who are ruled). The people of the nine tribes (the allies) are those who did not worship Baal in the days of Prophet Elijah. Therefore, God had saved those who kept his law, until the later time. These are from the seed of David. Therefore, they will inherit the city of God, the chosen Jerusalem. And this king of Ethiopia is a good one and pleasing in all his demeanour. His name is Sä. He will reign twenty-one years and will die a good death.\footnote{Ps. 67:32/68:31.}

After him, he whose name is Qä will reign nineteen years. He, too, is good, a lover of God, and a lover of almsgiving. During the time of these kings, there will be neither war nor quarrel nor violations, but only trust and the worship of God. During the time of these kings, Satan will be vanquished and weakened. (He) will have no power. He will be feeble because of the faith of the inhabitants of the earth. There will be joy especially for the people of Ethiopia. At that time, what David said will be fulfilled, ‘Ethiopia stretches out her hands to God.’\footnote{Cf. Ps. 109/110:2.} He has also said, ‘God will send you a scepter of power in the midst of your enemies.’ What he called ‘your enemies’ is Satan (who) will rule in those days. What he called ‘scepter of power’ is faith. What he called ‘Ethiopia stretches out her hands to God’ is how the kingdom of the Lion Cub will be renewed, and the kingdom of Ethiopia will be strengthened, and Satan will be feeble and weakened for forty years. We will all walk in righteousness.\footnote{Ps. 67:32/68:31.}

After 100 years, the Lion (Cub) will leave as is ordained for him. He will be hidden in a certain place and live hidden. After
This is the end of the reign of Zăr’a Ya’qob. The three kings could be Tewodros, Yshaq, and Zăr’a Ya’qob.
<that>, three kings will reign forty-eight years in the 6916th year and the 988th week.\(^94\) And after this time, <there will be (no)> good reckoning for mankind.\(^95\) The (time of) earthly kingdoms <will be curbed>. The wise, the erudite, and the understanding metropolitans, bishops, deacons, readers, virgins, monks, and all the faithful Christian people will die. And the Sabbaths and holy-days will be forgotten. Fast, prayer, mätq̣̣ạ, and mäsäḷḷät\(^96\) will be abolished. Churches will be closed. Wild animals, flies, moles, and rabbits will inherit (the earth) for seventeen years. In those days, no one will be saved except a few individuals here and there.

In those days, there will be no one who knows the truth. Satan will be powerful. He will say, ‘I alone am the king over all. There is no one like me. Behold, I will make all who look like Christians forsake (their faith).’ He will boast, saying, ‘I did | all this by the strength of my power.’ At that time, God will send Elijah so he may straighten out all remaining people, for he has already said, ‘Elijah will come and straighten out all who remained in the worship of the Lord before my Second Coming.’\(^97\) When he comes, when he has to appear, he will straighten out all who stayed (away?) from the worship of Satan. Elijah will straighten the Orthodox faith fifty-three years in the belief in the Lord.\(^98\)

After him the Gog Magog will come, who will have to come at the end of time, and lay the whole world to waste.\(^99\) These are those whom King Alexander confined between the two mountains by his prayer.\(^100\) They, indeed, will lay the world to waste. They will eat flesh of carcasses and of the dead, dogs, and mice, and drink menstruation blood and (all kinds of) filth. Also they will eat human flesh alive. They will rule three years, four months, and two days. They will lay the world to waste.\(^101\) Woe to those who live in those days.

After that time, the king of Rome will reign six years. He will

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94 At this point in time the clergy were reluctant to start reckoning the time with a new qämär of 532 because, they said, it will not be finished, as life on earth as we know it will end before it ends.
95 At this point in time the clergy were reluctant to start reckoning the time with a new qämär of 532 because, they said, it will not be finished, as life on earth as we know it will end before it ends.
96 That means that the mathematical significance of the reckoning will be lost.
97 Cf. Matt. 17:11; Mark 9:12.
98 This is probably the best that one can do with this sentence.
99 Cf. Ezek. 38–39.
100 Giyorgis Wäldä ‘Amid, e.g. EMML 192, fol. 45r.
101 Cf. Baruch; see Leslau 1951, 76.
Cf. 4 Ezra 5:4.

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wait (that much long) and go to the place where Our Lord was crucified, which is named Golgotha. He will stand there and deliver all earthly kingdoms to heaven, to the hands of the angels. And God, the Father, will receive (them). At that time, there will be neither a king nor any governor, 'until his enemies fall under his footstool.' After this, the false prophet will come and say, 'I am the king over all. There is no other than I in heaven or earth.' He will bring forth the sun at midnight until the cry of the cock. Then he will bring darkness. He will work many miracles and wonders until all people believe in him. He will reign three years, six months, and three days. After that, two men, who did not taste death, will come. And they will say to him, '<You are not> the Lord, but the false prophet.' At that time, he will slay the two men with a sword. They will stay (dead) three days and three nights, and then they will rise. Then God will smite him with a rod of punishment of his wrath, and will destroy his glory. He will strip him of his regnal vestment and also of his crown, and bring him down to Sheol alive, way under all who live there, as David has said, 'You disgraced the arrogant like a carcass.' For the devil has become a carcass by his arrogance. Therefore, his habitation is in Sheol with his own, forever and ever. Amen.

The reckoning of the years and the reckoning of the days, the times, the jubilees, and the weeks from Adam to the coming the Son of Man to judge the living and the dead is completed. I, Ezra, wrote it as my Lord made me write so that the faithful who will come after me may know, and their minds be bright in the knowledge and fear of God. Glory be to him forever and ever. Amen.

On the portent of the end of the world.

Before anything, animals of the desert will vanish; after this, all mountains and cleft hills and whales will vanish. After that, rivers, abysses, sources of the seas, (and) lakes with water will vanish. After that, clouds and rains will vanish. After that, skies will vanish. After that, stars and all powers of heaven will vanish. After

105 Ps. 88:11/89:10.
106 Acts 2:17–22.
107 An expression taken from S. of S. 2:17.
108 This is in the wrong grouping.
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1 <br>2.<br>3.<br>4.<br>5.<br>6.<br>7.<br>8.<br>9.<br>10.<br>11.<br>12.<br>13.<br>14.<br>15.<br>16.<br>17.<br>18.<br>19.<br>20.<br>21.<br>22.<br>23.<br>24.<br>25.<br>26.<br>27.<br>28.<br>29.<br>30.<br>
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that, the sun and the moon will be darkened and vanish. After that, day and night (will vanish). After that, the two cows, which are one in the east and one in the west, will vanish. The name of one is Leviathan and of the other is Behemoth; both will vanish. This is the end of mankind, (as) I calculated the ends of the earth. 

'End' means the end of the world. I, Ezra, have written | it. All these things are reckoned in sequence (as) he told me and showed me all his secrets from the first year until his Second Coming. He said to me, ‘Some of it you should reveal and some you should hide and keep concealed forever and ever.’ A<men>.

On the Second Coming of Christ

Things that God told to Ezra: he said to him, ‘Know, understand, and perceive (what will happen) in my kingdom at my Second Coming. When I come <to judge> the living and the dead, at that time, the word that has been said, “For the Son of Man will come like the lightning; he will come forth from the east and will appear until the west”, will be fulfilled. And after that, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will be blood, and will not give its light. And the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken. At that time, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven.’ At that time, heaven and earth will be inflamed. And angels will be sent | from God to blow the horn. And the Archangel Raphael will blow a huge horn. At that time, the dead will rise immediately in the blink of an eye—all of them, the sinners and the righteous, who died since Adam to that day. And they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven in great glory and power. At that time, all nations of the earth will cry. A new heaven will be spread. Also a clean and bright earth like the sun will be planted anew. And the Lord, the Father, will come down with his Son escorted with his myriads of angels. He will be seated on the throne of his glory in great majesty. 

And he will gather his elects from the four places of the ends of heaven. At that time, the Son will appear in the clothes of the flesh, which he took from Mary, the Holy Virgin, at his incarna-
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\[ \text{Fol. 31r} \]

\[ \text{Fol. 31v} \]

\[ \text{Fol. 32r} \]

11 "Aethiopica 21 (2018)"

115 Cf. Ps. 113/114:4–6.

116 Cf. 4 Ezra 7:3–19.
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Fol. 31r tion. He will come again and appear to all who denied him. They will say to him, ‘You are not the Son of God.’ He will show them the piercing of his side with a spear, the nailed place in his hands where they nailed him, the striking of his head that they struck with a reed, and his cheeks where they slapped him. He will show them the trace of their fingers on his face. He will tell them, ‘I am he, I am not another one. I am he whom you hated, accused, crucified, and killed. But my father raised me on the third day. After I resurrected, I ascended to my Father in glory, having received honour.’

‘I also sent my saints, but you did the same to them: you crucified them on wood, and killed them because of my name.’ Behold, they, too, will appear in glory. These are those who rejected this transient world—holy fathers who endured suffering, tribulation, and hate for hope in the coming of the Son, all the prophets who preached and announced like the blast of the horn, and all priests, deacons, and the faithful who had hope in him and believed a beautiful belief. These will stand on the right of God with great glory, with their faces shining seven times more than the sun. They will shine in righteousness, and appear in honour and with praise.

Their crowns will be on their heads and their thrones will be placed before their faces. At that time, the righteous will skip like satiated lambs. They (will) sing when they see their Lord whom they served in their life. He will show them the seven ordinances (they observed): first, they will see how they passed the narrow (path) filled with toil, to enter the wide (space) where there is no illness or pain, where they will not die from now on a second time. Their hearts will rejoice before the Father who will have mercy on them. Furthermore, all creatures rise naked ‘as though waking up from sleep’. All who (will) rise would look like Adam. There will be no (different) male or female (gender). They will all stand in one appearance and bodily image, fearing, trembling, and weeping with bitter tears. And they will cringe in shame and disgrace. They will not be able to see the face of their creator.

At that time, the wicked angels will come and separate the sin-

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117 Cf. Ps. 12/13:20. In poor societies like Ethiopians, people sleep without underwear and pyjamas.
118 Adam was naked.
119 Cf. 4 Ezra 7:45–52.
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ners from among the righteous, and make them stand on the left. Then also, sixty powerful angels will bring Bǝryal, the angel of power, called Devil, from wherever he is, dragging him with a chain of fire, beating him and driving him with clubs of fire. He will come crowned with his crown. His eyes are crossed, and drenched in blood. He will look right and left, trembling and sweating from much fear, knowing his deeds that he has done.

They will make him stand before the Lord, | the most high God, who is in his majestic and exalted throne in great glory and much sanctification. His appearance will be in holiness and wonderfully, while the heavenly and earthly, and myriads and myriads of countless angels glorify him.

All will say in one voice, ‘Glory to you, oh Lord, and thanksgiving to your kingdom, oh Lord.’ At that time, the sinners will scream and wail in much howling with tears, saying, ‘Woe to us, and alas for us, that we had been in the teaching of this wretched one who cannot save (even) himself. He led us astray and led us into darkness, while there is light and life. We thought he was God in heaven and on earth, that he was king over all creatures. Woe to us, alas for us, what excuse shall we give? Behold, the day of vengeance and repayment is at hand. On the Day of Judgement, what will we reply then to the Lord of glory? And with what face shall we look at him? Woe to us, and alas for us!’

They will pour bitter tears like water and like a stream. At that time, the Lord will reply in crying with tears, and wiping his tears with his robe. He will also say to his Son, ‘Take all these; I have delivered (them) to you. Reward them according to their deeds.’ And he will put a crown on the head of his Son, and clothe him with regnal vestment.

At that time, the Son will bring together his saints who gave their lives for his name. Then he will say to those who belong to him, ‘Come here (and) see your enemy, Satan, who used to torture you, inflict suffering on you, shout at you, and did with you as he wanted. Behold, see (him) bound and disgraced. But now he is restless. He will be dumb; he will be unable to be powerful. He

120 Cf. 4 Ezra 7:38.
121 They use their clothes, especially the šamma, as a handkerchief.
122 An allusion to Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22.
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will not defend (himself).’ At that time, he will order his angels, saying, ‘Take off this crown from his head, and his garment with which he is clothed.’ They will strip him, and make him stand naked.

At that time, he will address the outlaws who denied the Son.5 (The angels) will make them, too, stand (but) far outside. They <will also open> Sheol, as it is a closed pit of stinking and foul fire. Its boiling sparks (?) like thunder and like lightnings of fire. At that time, he will order those who drive Bǝryal, whose name is Satan and Devil, (to drive him away) with all his power and those who belong to him, who believed in him. He will go, as they beat him and drag him with chains of fire, and they will bring him there—they will bring him to the fire. Those who belong to him, who were under his teaching, will go with him and live at ‘the gates of Sheol’,123 1,000 years, wailing and screaming in great agony, and groaning.

After 1,000 years, assize and accusation will take place for all of the flesh, the living as well as the dead. What I call ‘the living’ are those who received holy baptism and the seal of the Lord, who appear to be Christians, but who neglected his law and forsook his ordinance. They did not keep his Sabbath and the holy days, which he gave them for rest.124 They, too, will live in hell 1,000 years being tortured in the sea of fire—<some> (immersed) up to their heels, some up to their knees, some up to their waist, and some up to half of their body, and some completely until their entirities.125 He will give (them) to Telemachus, the angel of hell, who will place them according to their deeds. There will be a great cry, screaming, and wailing. That day is the Christian Sabbath. Its length will be 1,000 years.

Then (the Martyrs,) the righteous, and the generous, who despised this ephemeral world,126 who put Christ first in their lives, who kept his law and ordinance, and who honoured the Christian Sabbath, will enter <heaven> with Christ, their God. They will enter and take a real rest, and enjoy an immeasurable pleasure. For it is their lot127 that he prepared for them before the world—which the eye has not seen nor the ear heard nor has been thought <by> the mind of man, that God has prepared for his elects who love

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125 Cf. Baruch; see Leslau 1951, 70–71.
126 Cf. Baruch; see Leslau 1951, 65.
127 MS ‘way’.

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 Cf. 1 Cor. 2:9; Isa. 64:4; the quotation is included in a few of the anaphoras, e.g. Cyril, John Chrysostom, and the Three Hundred Eighteen.

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Then a second blast of the horn will take place. The angel Michael will blow a huge horn. The seven archangels will be with him, each with his own horn. There will be great fear. The Most Holy will sit on his throne in much honour, great majesty, and lightning. All (the dead) from (the beginning of) | the Creation of the world—from Adam to that day, sinners as well as righteous—will shudder and rise. As for the deniers, they will stand at the gates of Sheol from afar, and look at the Lord with great tribulation, sorrow, agony, and cry with the Devil, their father and teacher. It will not be possible for them to discuss escaping the fiery torture <and> fire. Behold, they will become dumb. They will not hope for a shore, knowing the deeds they did during their lives.

At that time, the Father will wear requital, and will be vested in garments of vengeance. And the Son will sit on the right of the Father, and the host of fiery angels will be on the right and left hovering with their wings with great fear and shudder (to usher) the martyrs, the righteous, the saints, and the generous who pleased the Lord during their lives. And they, too, will come with their crowns to hear the accusation with which he will accuse the sinners of the earth who (overtly) look Christian. They, too, will stand | on the right of the Lord, waiting for their reward.

At that time, those who are in hell in great tribulation and sorrow will come out. At that time, they will stand at the court (of justice), and the Father will start accusing. He will say to them, 'Why did you refuse (keeping) my laws, commandments, and ordinance, and pollute my holy things, my Sabbaths, and my holy-days that I hallowed for me in your midst, so you may be hallowed and rested from all your deeds and toils? But you considered these despised and reviled; and you worshipped a god that would not benefit you or save you on this day. I also sent my Son to save you from the hand of the hater, and redeem you from the worship of idols. He came down to you from high; he came down to earth from his high abode, and put on your flesh and looked like you. But | you saw him, you despised him and reviled him. He worked miracles and wonders the like of which never happened since the Creation of the world. With this, too, you did not believe.

\[129\] Lit. ‘crossing’.
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1. "A" MS | 3. "C<CHR>" MS | 5. "A<CHR>" MS | 9. "E<CHR>" MS | 10. "C<CHR>" MS | 12. "C<CHR>" MS | 13. "C<CHR>" MS | om. MS | 132 An Amharic expression.
him. He suffered, he was crucified, he died, and he rose from the dead on the third day. He gave his body and blood for the redemption of the whole world, so it be for your salvation <on> this day, and a sign and seal for his coming. With this, too, you did not believe.’

Then he will say to <Ezra>, ‘Reveal, and read out loud the deeds of the children of man that they did from Adam to this day, the good and the evil, which is there written in the book’, so he may read out loud and reveal all. Nothing will remain hidden on that day. When they hear their deeds being read, they will wail, saying, ‘Yes, oh Lord, all this is true. We cannot (deny it).’ All of them will stand naked, as (on the day) they were born.135 ‘The father will not save | his son,131 nor a servant his master, nor a maiden-servant her mistress, nor a mother her children, nor a brother his brother, nor a friend his friend.’132

That day is awful, difficult, and dreadful. For the King of Kings will sit ready on his chair of the court (of justice). Kings, rulers, princes who had been ruling in violence on earth—these, too, will stand trembling, and walk and cringe in shame before the righteous judge.

At that time, the Father will say to his Son, ‘Take charge, judge according to your righteous judgment. Behold, I have delivered everything into your hands.’133 After the Son has received his kingdom from the Father, at that time, the Son will reward each according to his deeds. He will neither fear the rich nor have mercy upon the poor. There will be no partiality or having regard to appearances. At that time, they will cry and shed bitter tears. And the sinners will be separated from | the righteous, and the pure from the polluted. They will bring cows, one from the east and one from the west. The name (of the first) is Compassion and of the second is Mercy. At that time, they will slaughter them. And prayer <of Mass> will be held in the hands of the Saviour. John (the Evangelist) will be a tabot, Stephen a deacon, David will sing, Ezra will glorify, ‘He said to me’.134 At that time (the mǝsmak) ‘They will remove the sinner, lest he sees the glory of God’ will be sung before the Most High. And they will read from the Gospel of

131 Lit. ‘father’.
132 Cf. 4 Ezra 7:67–71.
133 An allusion to Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22.
134 Possibly Ps. 2:7.
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1. "እር" MS 13  "ወ" MS 14  "ወ" MS 15  "ወ" MS 16  "ወ" MS 17  "ወ" MS 18  "ወ" MS 19  "ወ" MS 20  "ወ" MS 21  "ወ" MS 22  "ወ" MS 23  "ወ" MS 24  "ወ" MS 25  "ወ" MS

135 MS 'mḥbrātu' ‘forgiveness of’.
136 That is Matt. 25:31-46.
137 In accordance with the order in the pre-anaphora.
138 4 Ezra 4:24: 'Behold, we pass from the world like locusts, and our life like smoke. We do not deserve that they have mercy upon us.'
Matthew, the periscope ‘About the <Coming> of Christ’, up to what it says, ‘And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’

After it is read, at that time, Stephen will say, ‘Go forth, you, who will not take Communion.’ At that time, after he said (so), 5 the sinners will cry in Sheol, falling (?) like locusts with the Devil, their father, and their teacher. He will be first in entering into the abyss of Sheol. And all sinners of the earth will follow him. And they will be sealed with the seal of the wicked forever and ever.

Then they will bring out those who are in hell so they may receive prayer from the hands of our Lord. After they have received the prayer, they will be taken to their dwelling in the Garden of Joy, and <in> the place of rest. Depending on their deeds, some (receive) equal justification. The just and the martyrs will enter into the heavenly wedding, (in) the city of Christ, the pure and bright Jerusalem, into eternal life. He will give them that ‘which eye has not seen nor ear has heard, which he has prepared for his elect who love him’.

After this, there will be neither hour nor day, there will be neither dusk nor dawn; there will be neither night nor day. That day is the Christian Sabbath; it is the Sabbath of the Sabbaths, and (holy-day) of the holy-days. It is a joy. Nothing compares to this day, the beginning and the end. The other days will vanish and cease (to exist). It, however, will live forever and ever. The rest in it is indescribable. There will be no end the honour, blessing, and glory of those who loved him. <They will live> in a light that will have no darkness, <in> a joy that will have no sorrow, in a health that will have no pain, in a satiety that will have no hunger, (and) in a life that will have no thirst.  They will always live in that city; they will reign forever and ever with Christ, their God.

That is the story that God told to Ezra regarding the honour of the Sabbaths, his hidden mystery since ancient time, which he re-
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The Sabbath was there before all things, created at the beginning. It will not be counted or changed. Its time has no origin. It was before the world, being the first in the Creation. He honoured it, and exalted it. Before the angels were created, before the heavens and the earth were created, before all the creation which God created, <it was first> in the knowledge of his mind (to make) it his rest (day), his joy, and his prevailing kingdom. Nothing compares to this day. It is greater than all. It is the beginning and the end, and firstborn of all creatures. It is about that that our Lord said, "No one knows that day and that hour, neither the angels of heaven nor the Son, but only the Father."\textsuperscript{143} What our Lord said about this is true. What he said, ‘No one knows it, neither the angels of heaven’, is (because) the angels of heaven do not know it (since) it was created before (them). They honoured it and exalted it because it is honoured. But the Son knows it himself; (for) he is not separated from his Father. He only said regarding himself, ‘No one knows that day and that hour’ (to indicate) that the Father will come with his Son at (the appointed) age and deliver all things into his hands. <On> that day and hour, he will receive everything from his Father, and judge the living and the dead. And that day is the Christian Sabbath, (an eternal day of) joy and rest for the righteous. It will have no end. They will live (in it) forever and ever with Christ, their God.

And now, my beloved brothers, let us honour that day. So, let us fear and keep his commandments so we may enter into his rest and reign with Christ, our God, forever and ever. Amen.

\textsuperscript{143} Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:32.
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Abstract

The main themes of the text, occasionally ascribed to Ezra (Salathiel), are the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the end of the world, the future rulers of Ethiopia, and the honouring of the Sabbaths. It is cast in the spirit of 4 Ezra, quoting it and Jubilees occasionally and extensively. As in 4 Ezra, its author is interested in knowing and declaring the future to call the faithful to observe the law and the ordinances. Reckoning the time by cycles, *aqmar*, provides him the revelation of future events ‘with exact dates’. The text, composed before the sixteenth century, is one more source of Gaʾaz apocalyptic literature. The article is an edition and translation of it as preserved in EMML 6429, fols 9v–39r.