

At Long Last, Our National Treasure Is Commanding The Sky In Axum

By Mezgebe Gebrekiristos, September 05, 2008

The restoration of the 78-foot Obelisk in its original place--the ancient and holy city of Axum--after enduring nearly Seven decades of isolation from its siblings is indeed a jubilant moment for all Ethiopians and friends of Ethiopia. What delightful news to all Ethiopians around the globe!



This good news couldn't have come at a better time than the dawn of the Third Ethiopian Millennium. It is truly a well-timed gift for our generation as we embark upon our journey into the future with great optimism and determined sense of working hard to once again place our country in the annals of "Great Powers" that it deserves to be in.

We know that we are equipped to make that happen, because we have the genetic material of the Axumites who chiseled the monolithic Obelisks and of the people who hewn the 8th wonder of the world--the Lalibela churches-- out of solid rock at a time when civilization itself was a rare commodity in the rest of the world. We are the direct descendants of the people who built the city of Gondar that is often referred as "the Camelot of Africa"; and of the people who created the historic town of Harrar that houses the magnificent City Walls. We are the siblings of athletics heroes such as Abebe Bikilla, Miruts Yifter, Haile Gebreselassie, Kenenisa Bekele, Deraritu Tillu, Tirunesh Dibaba, and others who made us proud by waving the Ethiopian flag in the world stage. We are the people of Ethiopia that is the cradle of humankind as evidenced by the scientific discovery of the more than 3.5 million year old Lucy—the 1st upright walking hominid. Yes, we were the 1st creatures to walk on two legs on the planet earth.

During his appearance at the celebration of the re-erection of the Axum stela, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi said, "This event reminds us of the glorious past on one hand and a new era of renaissance on the other." Resurgence of its past good days is what Ethiopia needs; and if one is to judge from the fervent enthusiasm of the Ethiopian people to work together, coupled with the sound strategy of the current government, for the common good of our country, the rebirth of Ethiopia is in sight. We shall make poverty a thing of the past! China and India are doing it; though not completely 'out of the woods' yet.

In order to make poverty a history that will never revisit us, and to continue the proud legacy of our ancestors, we need to work together. Most importantly, we have to concentrate on the things that unite us rather than the ones that divide us. We have to embrace each others culture and tradition for we are different in these areas, and not expected to be one. That is our country's unique beauty—a country where more than eighty ethnic groups live in harmony. If truth be told, Ethiopia is simply a mosaic of ethnic groups unparalleled by any other country in the world. The Obelisks in Axum, the rock-hewn churches in Lalibela, the Gondar palace, the Harrar Walls, and other heritages belong to all of us, and we must be equally proud of our inheritances.

In a nutshell, the return and ultimate re-erection of our Obelisk in Axum is an indication that Ethiopia's superb times of yore are in good hands on one hand, and a clear sign that our country's better days are still ahead of us on the other. At long last, our national treasure is once again commanding the sky at the center of Axum, thanks to the relentless efforts made by the current government and other pertinent groups. While safeguarding our historical icons from the past, we, sure, are making a history of our generation—to be proudly narrated by the next generation. The recent restoration of the Axum Obelisk is a case in point.

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