



WORLDVIEW MADE PRACTICAL
Volume 21 Number 34
September 9, 2026

What's So Special About the Ethiopian Bible?

By Tal Davis

Introduction

Perhaps you have noticed lately on YouTube, and other internet networks, advertisements for purchasing English translations of the *Ethiopian Bible*. The ads usually extol the virtues of the *Ethiopian Bible* as being one of the earliest translations of the Scriptures from the original languages of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Copies are available online at Amazon and other book sellers. It is also promoted to be the most truly complete canon of the whole Bible including some books not found in the Protestant, Catholic, or Eastern Orthodox standard versions. The ads sometimes hint that the Ethiopian Bible contains special “truths” and codes not found in other versions. These are “truths” that the mainline denominations want kept hidden from their followers.

Another significant feature is that the English version is translated from the authorized version published by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church or “The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church.” We will explore the history of this interesting branch of ancient Christianity later.

The language of the authorized Ethiopian Bible version is the ancient Ethiopian language of Ge’ez and contains 81 books in its canon (or 88 if the books are arranged differently). Of course, this differs significantly from both the Protestant canon containing 66 books, and the Roman Catholic Bible with 73. According to the Ethiopian Church, this Bible version can be traced back to about the 4th century A.D.

As you probably know (or should know) the 66 books of the Protestant Bible are as follows.

39 Old Testament (same as in the Hebrew Bible called the Tanakh);

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy
6. Joshua
7. Judges
8. Ruth

9. 1 Samuel
10. 2 Samuel
11. 1 Kings
12. 2 Kings
13. 1 Chronicles
14. 2 Chronicles
15. Ezra
16. Nehemiah
17. Esther
18. Job
19. Psalms (The middle of the Bible*)
20. Proverbs
21. Ecclesiastes
22. Song of Solomon
23. Isaiah
24. Jeremiah
25. Lamentations
26. Ezekiel
27. Daniel
28. Hosea
29. Joel
30. Amos
31. Obadiah
32. Jonah
33. Micah
34. Nahum
35. Habakkuk
36. Zephaniah
37. Haggai
38. Zechariah
39. Malachi

27 New Testament:

1. Matthew
2. Mark
3. Luke
4. John
5. Acts
6. Romans
7. 1 Corinthians
8. 2 Corinthians
9. Galatians

Permission to Reprint

If you wish to reprint this article in your own print or electronic newsletter, please include the following text:

*Reprinted from **Worldview Made Practical**; a free e-zine produced by **MarketFaith Ministries** featuring practical teaching and life tools to help Christians become more effective in their faith life. Discover **MarketFaith Ministries** at www.marketfaith.org.*

Speaking Schedule

If you are interested in having Freddy Davis or Tal Davis present one of our **Worldview Seminars** or to share about worldview and its practical implications at your church or organization, please contact **MarketFaith Ministries** to schedule your event. All contact information is at the bottom of this e-zine.

Worldview Resources

It is one of the primary purposes of **MarketFaith Ministries** to provide resources to help Christians understand the practical implications of worldview. You can find many free resources that will help you in your quest at <http://www.marketfaith.org>.

10. Ephesians
11. Philippians
12. Colossians
13. 1 Thessalonians
14. 2 Thessalonians
15. 1 Timothy
16. 2 Timothy
17. Titus
18. Philemon
19. Hebrews
20. James
21. 1 Peter
22. 2 Peter
23. 1 John
24. 2 John
25. 3 John
26. Jude
27. Revelation

The Roman Catholic Bible has those 66 books plus 7 others, along with additions to Esther and Daniel not found in Protestant Bibles.

1. Tobit
2. Judith
3. 1 Maccabees
4. 2 Maccabees,
5. Wisdom
6. Sirach
7. Baruch

The Ethiopian Bible has the same books as the Protestant and Catholic Bibles including the following 8, for a total of 81 (some number them to 88).

Unique Old Testament / Wider Canon Books

1. 1 Enoch
2. Jubilees
3. Meqabyan (1, 2, and 3)
4. Josippon (The Book of Joseph ben Gorion)
5. Reproof (Tegsats)

Unique New Testament / Church Order Books

1. Sinodos / Sirate Tsion
2. Ethiopic Clement
3. Didascalia

These extra books of the Ethiopian Bible have some strange content that have influenced people to embrace unusual doctrines. We will discuss some of those later, but let's first turn to the unique history of the Ethiopian Christian Church.

History of the Ethiopian Church

Ethiopian Christianity traces its roots to the eighth chapter of Acts (vss. 8:26-40). Philip was one of the Greek speaking Jewish men chosen by the Apostles to minister to the neglected Greek speaking widows in

Jerusalem after the founding of the church at Pentecost. However, like Stephen, he took his responsibility beyond just feeding those poor women and was actively preaching the Gospel around the territory of Judea.

At one point an angel directed Philip to go down to the road in Gaza where travelers from Egypt and other African countries traveled back and forth to Jerusalem. There he encountered an entourage of an official from the royal court of Kandake (or Candace, a title meaning "Queen of the Ethiopians"). At that time, Ethiopia (from the Septuagint, or "Cush") was a flourishing kingdom south of Egypt. The royal official was apparently a gentile God-fearing eunuch who had been worshipping in Jerusalem. As he rode in his carriage the official was reading a scroll from the book of Isaiah, chapter 53, but could not understand its meaning. So Philip jumped up on his carriage with him and showed how it was a prophecy of Jesus the Messiah. The man was led by the Spirit to believe in Jesus and was baptized right there in water by the road. Tradition says the man went back to his home country and spread the news of Christ. A church was founded and flourished for several centuries on its own. The church was formally organized in the early fourth century A.D. along lines similar to those of Eastern Orthodox bodies.

The church suffered various periods of persecution down through the centuries. Queen Yodit (960-1000 AD) for forty years caused great damage to the life of the church. The 16th century Islamic invasion was even more destructive. Again, during the 17th century, the church suffered persecution at the hands of the Roman Catholic Jesuit Alphonzo Mendez and his followers. In modern times, the occupation by Mussolini's Italian army, from 1935 to 1940, cost several bishops, many priests, and thousands of faithful to lose their lives. More than 2,000 churches were destroyed and numerous church manuscripts taken away. (World Council of Churches - <https://www.oikoumene.org/member-churches/ethiopian-orthodox-tewahedo-church>)

The land of Ethiopia, or Cush, mentioned in Scripture is not the same geographically as the modern East African land-locked nation of Ethiopia. Nonetheless, Ethiopians for centuries have believed the converted eunuch of Acts 8 went back to Ethiopia and established one of the oldest indigenous churches in the world. When Christian missionaries from Europe went to Africa in the middle ages, they were astonished to find

Subscription Information SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE:

A subscription to **Worldview Made Practical** is complementary for anyone interested in receiving it. If you received this email as a forward from a family member or a friend and wish to subscribe for yourself, you may do so at www.marketfaith.org. If you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, simply follow the instructions found at the bottom of each edition.

Contact Information

If you wish to contact us directly, you may do so by the following methods:

321 Anton Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312

E-mail:
info@marketfaith.org
Phone: 850-383-9756

You can order our products and examine our services at
<http://www.marketfaith.org>.

This issue of **Worldview Made Practical** is a production of **MarketFaith Ministries**, © 2026. All rights reserved.

a thriving body of Christian believers (and Jews) already established in that area of eastern Africa. One of the most remarkable sites in the country is Lalibela, where Christian churches were cut completely out of solid rock during the 12th-13th centuries A.D. Another is the ruins of Aksum, an ancient city with obelisks, tombs, castles, and Our Lady Mary of Zion church.

Remarkably, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church managed to evade much of the internecine conflicts of the Middle Ages between the Western (Roman Catholic) Church and the Eastern Orthodox churches. And, though the Ethiopian church is theologically and ecclesiology more like the Eastern churches, it has maintained its independence from Eastern Orthodox ecclesiological governance and doctrinal creedalism. It is estimated that today about 38 million to 51 million members live in Ethiopia (40%-43% of the country's population), and about 50 million to 60 million members live worldwide. So it is a significant portion of the world Christian community.

Since 1951 the church has been totally self governing. The language of the liturgy is Ge'ez, the ancient language of Ethiopia and the official translation of the Ethiopian Bible. Today, however, portions of the liturgy are also done in Amharic, the common language of the majority of modern Ethiopians. The church has seven official fasting periods: (1) all Wednesdays and Fridays (except during the 50 days after Easter); (2) the Lenten fast; (3) the Neneveh (meaning unknown) fast; (4) the vigils or Gahad of Christmas and Epiphany; (5) the fast of the apostles; (6) the fast of the prophets; and (7) the fast of the Assumption of Mary. The supreme authority in matters of church administration and justice falls to the holy synod which meets twice a year, under the chairmanship of His Holiness the Patriarch.

Content of the Ethiopian Bible

Now that we have examined the Ethiopian Tewahedo Church, let's turn back to the unusual content of the extra-biblical canonical books in the Ethiopian Bible.

Perhaps the one book that has drawn the most interest in recent years from the Ethiopian Bible is the Book of Enoch. The Book of Enoch is actually referenced in the New Testament. The Epistle of Jude quotes a short passage from it (Enoch 1:9).

It was also about these people that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord has

come with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." (Jude 14-15 NASB)

The fact that Jude referenced Enoch does not mean he regarded it as inspired Scripture, only that the people he was writing to were familiar with it. The book was probably written originally in Hebrew and/or Aramaic, the earliest part around 300-200 BC and later sections around 100 BC. The author, or authors, whoever he or they were, likely took what was in Genesis 6 and greatly enhanced the story; perhaps based on legends circulating in his day. No copies in Hebrew survived. And we only possess about one-third of the Book of Enoch translated into Greek. Copies of the earlier sections of Enoch were found in Aramaic among the Dead Sea Scrolls. In any case, the only complete texts now in existence are in Ge'ez.

The Book of Enoch has gotten a lot of attention from some ancient secret history buffs because it purports to contain greater information about the world at the time preceding the flood. It speaks of angelic beings called "Watchers" who, led by a fallen angel named Sēmīāzāz, were attracted by human women and took them as their wives. The result of those relations was the birth of a race of destructive giants called the Nephilim ("fallen ones") or Anakim ("long necked ones"). Another fallen angel named Azazel was charged with teaching humans to do evil violent behaviors. Thus, God sent His archangels to tell Noah that He would soon destroy the world.

The book of Genesis does indeed mention the Nephilim in the context of Noah and the flood, and later during the invasion of the promised land (Gen. 6:1-4; Num. 13:3). Evangelical Bible scholars differ as to the actual identity of the Nephilim. Some agree with the theory, not based on the book of Enoch, that they were the offspring of fallen angels ("Sons of God") and human women, and were a major cause for God sending the flood. This view depends to some extent on the support of Jude 6. It is problematic, however, identifying the "Sons of God" as fallen angels who married human women. This seems to contradict Jesus' own words:

For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. (Matthew 22:30 NASB)

For that reason, and others, many scholars identify the “Sons of God” with the godly line of Seth, the third son of Adam and Eve (Gen. 4:25; 5:3). He was an ancestor of Jesus (Luke 3:38). So they are less inclined to identify the Nephilim as supernatural in origin but believe they were the descendants of Seth. They are mentioned as still being in the promised land when Moses sent his spies, so they obviously were not all wiped out in the flood.

So they brought a bad report of the land which they had spied out to the sons of Israel, saying, “The land through which we have gone to spy out is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are people of great stature. We also saw the Nephilim there (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.” (Numbers 13:32-33 NASB)

The identity of the Nephilim has made for something of a cult in some modern circles. Some writers and radio Bible teachers have built a whole conspiratorial worldview around the notion that Nephilim are still in the world. They are convinced that world events and economic trends are being secretly determined by Nephilim in high places of government and international business. Some even claim that they can be identified if we look carefully enough at their family and ethnic backgrounds. [By the way, as far as we know, the Ethiopian Tewahedo Church does not teach or endorse these bizarre ideas.]

Does this all sound like nonsense? For most of us it does. But for some who take the Book of Enoch seriously and overlay it on a bizarre philosophy of history, it may make perfect sense. Crazier ideas have taken hold in the past and influenced thousands to embrace dangerous ideologies. Remember Nazism and Marxism? A lot of people still believe those evil ideologies.

So what is our responsibility as Bible believing Christians? First, we must affirm that only the 66 books of the Protestant Bible are the inspired Word of God. No other texts, whether ancient or modern, can substitute for genuine biblical truth. Though the Book of Enoch is an interesting ancient text, it has no place in the canon of authoritative Scripture. The same can be said for the other extra books in the Ethiopian Tewahedo Church canon. That is also the case for the Apocryphal books in the Roman Catholic Church canon.

Second, if we hear someone expounding strange doctrines about angels and modern Nephilim, we should regard them as spurious. We should also help our friends who are buying in to this teaching not to be led astray by so-called experts who expound false teachings based on non-biblical texts. We should stick to the clear teaching of the 66 books of the real Bible.

And third, we must encourage our churches to teach their people sound biblical truth and doctrine. Every church should include basic age-appropriate classes on Christian doctrine and biblical interpretation – starting with young teenagers. They also should have classes on the different worldviews and how to distinguish between them. The materials we produce here at MarketFaith Ministries is designed to provide just what is necessary to accomplish these goals.

Would You Consider Supporting Us?

Would you consider financial support for **MarketFaith Ministries**? I feel confident that what we are doing is consistent with your beliefs about spreading the gospel and equipping the saints for ministry. Would you let us be one element of your hands and feet in this process? **MarketFaith Ministries** is a 501 (c) (3) not for profit corporation, so your contributions are tax deductible. If you would consider this we would be very grateful. Also, if you would like to know more about the ministry, it would be my pleasure to share with you personally what we are working on and how you can plug in. I can be reached at 850-383-9756 or by e-mail at Freddy@marketfaith.org. As for any donations, they may be sent directly to **MarketFaith Ministries** at 321 Anton Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312, or you can contribute through our secure website at www.marketfaith.org. Simply click on the “Donate” button at the bottom of the homepage. We are deeply grateful for your support of this ministry.

And, as always, if you have any thoughts, opinions or suggestions about how **MarketFaith Ministries** can help you, please feel free, at any time, to call (850-383-9756) or e-mail (info@marketfaith.org). We are here to serve you.