



Translation Checking

Chris recently spent two weeks with translators from the Majang language, helping to check their translation of the book of Job.



A consultant check usually involves reading through the translation verse by verse, verifying accuracy with the original Greek or Hebrew. The consultant also asks questions to make sure the translation is clear and unambiguous so that speakers of the language will understand it correctly. It is an important step before a translation is published.

However, Chris' recent check with the Majang team had an additional complication. Chris doesn't speak Majang. The Majang translators don't speak English. The only language that Chris has in common with the team is Amharic.

That means each word in the Majang version had to be "back translated" into Amharic, and all of the technical discussion about the translation was in Amharic. This is a *big* step for Chris, who until very recently was in language school reading children's stories about talking animals.

With the supervision of a certified consultant, the checking went well. Chris' Amharic, though far from perfect, is progressing. He is hoping to be able to independently consult with Amharic-speaking teams by the end of this year.



Timket — Ethiopian Epiphany

On January 19th, the Ethiopian Orthodox church celebrates Timket, a commemoration of both Epiphany and the baptism of Jesus.

On Timket, the *Tabot* (a replica of the Ark of the Covenant) is removed from its usual place on the altar, wrapped in cloth, and carried down to the nearest body of water on the head of the priest. Since there are dozens of churches in the city, there are many parades. Thousands of faithful join in, marching before and after the priests. Incense burners and red carpets, horns and drums, and joyous singing and dancing accompany the procession.

Everyone spends the night at the river for songs, prayers, and preaching before the *Tabot* is returned to the sanctuary the following day.



Lalibela World Heritage Site

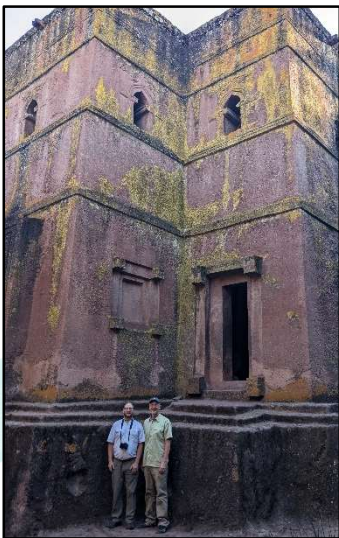
Ethiopia is a country rich in history and steeped in some of the oldest expressions of Christianity on the planet. From early Jewish communities, to the Ethiopian official (Acts 8), to King Ezana of Axum who converted to Christianity in the year 325, the Biblical roots of Ethiopia run deep.

There are few places that show this more clearly than the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela. The eleven churches are arranged to take the visitor on a symbolic journey from the “Tomb of Adam,” past “Golgotha” and “The Cross,” and on to the “Heavenly Jerusalem.” The churches are lavishly detailed, inside and out, with carvings and paintings. Most are symbolic references to Biblical ideas, such as the Church as the Ark of Noah saving people from the wicked world or the Resurrection of Christ defeating the Evil One.

The most amazing thing is that each church was carved out of solid rock, like a sculpture. They are not built *up* by stacking blocks on top of each

other; they were carved *down*, hewn out of the hills on which they stand and then hollowed out on the inside with amazing detail and precision.

Built more than 900 years ago, these churches are still active sites for daily worship by Orthodox faithful. The smoke of incense and the chanting of prayers reminded us that we were not just seeing a monumental construction from the past, but a living connection with generations of fellow Christians — the “great cloud of witnesses” of which Hebrews 12 reminds us.



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for the groups in Ethiopia who are still working to translate the Bible into their own languages, particularly those who suffer persecution for their Christian faith
- Pray for peace and safety for our family, for our world, and for the country in which we serve

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*Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to **proclaim** to those who live on the earth—
to every nation, tribe, language and people.*

—Revelation 14:6