Greetings in the precious name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has revealed Himself to us through the personality of His Imperial Majesty, Emperor Haile Selassie 1st.

As we prepare to celebrate the 82nd Coronation Anniversary of His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie 1st, it is only wise that we look deeply, not merely into the event, but into the life, example and teachings of His Imperial Majesty and what it should mean to us who claim to be followers of Him.

As I prepared this message, a statement by one of my brethren at the 50th Anniversary of the Report on the Rastafarian Movement by the University of the West Indies, came to mind. He accurately noted:

“The Buddhist follow the teachings of Buddha; the Islamist the teachings of Muhammad; the Jews the teachings of Moses; the Christians the teaching of Jesus. But many who call themselves Rastafari do not obey the teachings of the one they claim to follow i.e., the first Ras Tafari, His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie 1st.”

Over these 82 years since the Coronation took place, definitions have been put forth as to who is a Rastafarian. Most definitions have veered far and wide, from and even contradict the teaching and character of the man that the movement is supposed to be inspired by. Understandably the Coronation of an African King with Messianic titles, King of Kings, Lion of Judah and Elect of God, in a time when all Africa (except Ethiopia) was under colonial rule, should spark zealous hopes of redemption, especially amongst people oppressed and already influenced by the teachings of Marcus Mosiah Garvey. However the traditional definition given by journalists and authors on the movement based upon the views of most elders and those who wish to succeed them in status, is that Rastafarians are those who see His Imperial Majesty as the Almighty or/reincarnation of Jesus Christ.

I put forward this definition because the one given and held to over the past 82 years by many, contradict the very teachings and position of His Imperial Majesty, as I am obligated to share with all who genuinely seek to follow His Imperial Majesty, Defender of The Faith.

As to the concept of His Majesty being the Almighty or/reincarnation of Jesus Christ, His Majesty has definitively made a statement on this, and many literate and educated ones in our movement are afraid even to mention or address.

Note:
Project 67 presents: "The Conquering Lion of Judah" A Profile Study of His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie the First, Emperor of Ethiopia. In Canada 1967 aboard the Royal train. (The first personal radio interview that Haile Selassie ever granted)

Question by Bill Mc Neil: "there are millions of Christians throughout the world, your Imperial Majesty, who regard you as the reincarnation of Jesus Christ. Selassie’s answer: "I had heard of that idea. I also met certain Rastafarians. I told them clearly that 'I am a man,' that 'I am Mortal,' and that 'I would be replaced by the oncoming generation, and that they should never make a mistake in assuming or pretending that the human being is emanated from a deity.” Project 67 presents: "The Conquering Lion of Judah A Profile Study of His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie the First, Emperor of Ethiopia. In Canada 1967 aboard the Royal train. (The first personal radio interview that Haile Selassie ever granted)

One reason Jesus was crucified, was because he broke from the tradition of the (religious) establishment that was perpetuating ignorance and darkness. In response to the question of the Scribes as to why Jesus disciples transgressed the tradition of the elders, Jesus answered: (Matthew 15vs 3, 6 and 9)

…Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God with your tradition?

…Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

…But in vain they do worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

At this serious juncture of our history, the 82nd year after His Majesty’s Coronation we must seriously look into ourselves and ask this question. “Are we really following His Imperial Majesty, someone else, our own ideas, or a figure created by our imagination.

As Saint Paul had said to the early Church, be followers of…
me as I am a follower of Christ, so is it with His Majesty as he has proclaimed that he follows Jesus Christ himself because:

When Jesus Christ was born from Virgin Mary, from that time on He lived an exemplary life, a life which men everywhere must emulate. This life and the faith that He has taught us assures us of salvation, assures also of harmony and a good life upon earth. Because of the exemplary character of the life of Jesus Christ it is necessary that all men do their maximum, in their human efforts, to see to it, they approximate as much as they can the good example that has been set by Him.

It is quite true that there is no perfection in humanity. From time to time we make mistakes, we do commit sins, but even as we do that, deep in our hearts as Christians, we know we have a chance of forgiveness from the Almighty. He taught us that all men are equal regardless of sex, their national origin and tribe, and He also taught us all who seek Him shall find Him.

... To live in this healthy life, a Christian-life, is what makes me follow Jesus Christ.

The real historical His Imperial Majesty Emperor Haile SelassieIst was indeed every inch a Christian King, over a Christian nation, who laboured to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to His people in many ways, such as causing translations of the Holy Scripture to be made from Geez into Amharic. He says:

As you all know, it is centuries past since Our country, Ethiopia, accepted the gospel of Christ. We learn from the Holy Scriptures that the first Ethiopian who confessed faith in Jesus Christ was baptized only a few months after the death and resurrection of Our Lord. From then on Christianity spread steadily among the Ethiopian people and became the religion of the Ethiopians in the Fourth Century. It is a matter of pride for Us, a special cause for thankfulness to Almighty God, when We recall that the Christian faith was introduced to Our people by the Imperial Court and through the instrumentality of the then reigning Monarch.

Here His Majesty points out that Him and His People, accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ, including the death and resurrection of “our Lord.” Do we, like the person we claim to follow proclaim and confess to the world that we are disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do we take this obligation as His Majesty did, to proclaim the gospel and make disciples of other nations? Do we profess to be the Church of Christ, His body? Or is the task of others?

The love shown in Christ by our God to mankind should constrain all of us who are followers and disciples of Christ to do all in our power to see to it that the Message of Salvation is carried to those of our fellows for whom Christ Our Saviour was sacrificed but who have not had the benefit of hearing the good news.

Are we proclaiming this gospel of salvation to those of our fellows for whom Christ, our Saviour, was sacrificed. Are we sharing this Good News with each other and those of us who are blinded to these truths, expounded in Scripture and by His Majesty? Or are we not the Church of Christ?

It is Our conviction that all the activities of the children of men which are not guided by the Spirit and counsel of God will bear no lasting fruit. A rudderless ship is at the mercy of the waves and the wind, drifts wherever they take it and if there arises a whirlwind it is smashed against the rocks and becomes as if it has never existed. It is our firm belief that a soul without Christ is bound to meet with no better fate.

Israel wandered around in the wilderness for 40 years, although the Promised Land was less than one week’s journey away. A whole generation over 40 perished in it, except Joshua and Caleb. They could not enter because of their unbelief. It has been twice those years since the Coronation of His Imperial Majesty. Are our activities guided by the Spirit and Consul of God? Are many of us souls without Christ? His Majesty says:

Today man sees all his hopes and aspirations crumbling before him. He is perplexed and knows not whither he is drifting. But he must realize that the Bible is his refuge, and the rallying point for all humanity. In it man will find the solution of his present difficulties and guidance for his future action, and unless he accepts with clear conscience the Bible and its great Message, he cannot hope for salvation. For my part I glory in the Bible.

Have we accepted the Bible and its great message with a
clear conscience? Or are we proclaiming a different faith and doctrine contrary to the Bible and contrary to what His Majesty teaches? Is the Bible our source of doctrine or the wisdom and ideas and wishes of men? Is this why we are seeing many of our hopes and aspirations crumbling before us and there is so much perplexity and we seem to not know where we are drifting after 82 years?

As our beloved prophet Bro Gad has always quoted His Majesty’s words to us:

“I know I am saved, not by anything that is of character or work of the human heart, but by the blood of Jesus alone.” (see African Challenge Magazine, Nov 1960, 30th Coronation Anniversary of His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie1 of Ethiopia.)

Conclusion

So what then about His Majesty being crowned with these Messianic titles? This is the obvious question to this earthshaking confession. Firstly, these titles are associated with the throne and the Royal House of Judah with the blessing of Jacob thousands of years ago. From as far back in Genesis 49 Vs 8-10. The descendants of the House of Judah, who are Anointed or Christ-end King, are allowed to bear, represent, be custodian or standard bearer of the lion cub messianic title, as a shadow or reminder of He who is to come, and He who right it is Shiloh. Note the Ethiopian flag reveals the Conquering Lion of Judah, Shiloh the One who conquered death and sin is carrying the cross in his paws and on His Crown. These Kings (descendants preserved in Ethiopia) fulfill a vision of King Solomon the night he lay with the Queen of Sheba, (as recorded in the Ethiopian Geez history of “The Glory of the Kings or "Kebra Negast." ) which was interpreted by the High Priest Zadok. These descendants were to be the natural cohabited seed that departed to Ethiopia in the womb of Sheba. This however did not annul or neither did it replace the promise made in Genesis of the non-cohabited “seed of the woman” that would “bruise the head of the serpent” fulfilled by the planting into the womb of the Virgin Mary in Jerusalem, by the Most High God Himself. This is the Key of David to the unlocking of this 82 year old door to understanding. The Kings of Judah born of natural fathers and mothers hold the ruler’s staff and this Divine right to rule made by a “covenant of salt”. This right will not depart from them “Until” He comes, to whom it belongs; i.e. Shiloh or The Master Messiah, Jesus. This promise confirmed by the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that it is He, that head that was crowned with thorns, is the only one who overcame death and saved His people from their Sin, by His spotless life, faith, obedience and innocent blood; the one who would be Great, and be given the throne of His Father David on which he will sit and reign in a coming unspecified date, and establish it forever. This will not be a temporary transient occurrence or rule for 43 years. Hallelujah!

Another surprising and ironic answer to this question about the Coronation’s Biblical titles is that His Majesty, like Emperor Menelik and Empress Zawditu, was crowned with these titles, Lion of Judah, King of Kings, to bring us, a people who were in darkness and blinded by the veil of the prince of darkness of this world, Satan, into the light of life. Yes Satan, the deceiver, used Rome and Greek Hellenistic interpretations and corruption of Holy Scripture to make us shun our own salvation. Therefore through the Grace of God and love of Christ for us His Majesty was chosen by God, Elect of God, (not of himself) to bring us into the “Light of the World”. Jesus of Nazareth, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the World. Jesus, Yeshua, the man through whom God will Judge the World; the Son of man whom the Father has set down at His right hand UNTIL he has put all enemies under His feet.

Therefore ,O’ Christians ,let us arise ,and with the spiritual zeal and earnestness which characterized the Apostles and early Christians , let us labour to lead our brothers and sisters to Our saviour Jesus, Who only can give life in its fullest sense”. Words of H.I.M. 

I close with pertinent words from Scripture after these 82 years of wandering in the wilderness:

If My people who are called by My name shall humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. 11Chronicles Ch7 vs. 14. Amen. By the Grace of God in Christ Jesus.

Karl Phillpotts Naphtali 2012-10-30