



The Biography of **BENYAM A. WONDEMU**

At the age of 7, Benyam A. Wondemu first heard the theory of evolution, which had been taught at the school he attended. This greatly influenced his beliefs, and despite his nominal Coptic (Orthodox) upbringing in Ethiopia, he later decided to immerse himself in the sect of atheism. After living as an atheist for 2 years he was introduced to Jesus Christ by his older brother. His faith Christ grew quickly and at the age of 9 he made the decision to attend the Mennonite Church. Sadly, the Mennonite Church was banned by the communist government at the time, forcing them to close their doors to the public. As a result Benyam moved to the Lutheran church in his neighborhood. At the age of 15 he was baptized in water and by 16 he was baptized in the Holy Spirit. This step of faith inspired his involvement in a nearby Baptist church. During this time he was given the opportunity to teach adult Sunday school and he began travelling to rural areas teaching and preaching the salvation gospel to unbelievers. He also taught these truths to church leaders.

His involvement in the community extended to high school and university Christian fellowship, and during his student days and later as a leader. After he graduated in mechanical engineering from Addis Ababa University, he served as an associate staff member to EvaSUE (Evangelical Student Union of Ethiopia) and continued speaking to university and college Christian students and graduates.

God had given him revelation on the truth of reformation through an American apostle who had come to Ethiopia as part of the Christian Graduates Fellowship.

This revelation transformed his thinking from charismatic to apostolic and kingdom. He then began speaking to Christian students, graduates and different local churches, teaching on apostolic and prophetic reformation with his fellow brothers and sisters in the Christian Graduates Fellowship. This led to his subsequent involvement with the intercessory ministry group called the Elijah Prayer Group who gathered to pray for the transformation and revival of the body of Christ on the African continent.

During this time he and his fellow Christian Graduates fellowship brothers published *Tumbi*, a paper which in the local language means 'Plumb line'. The paper, whose name had been taken from Isaiah 34:11, became the only voice on reformation and kingdom truths in the region. Benyam was one of the contributors to the paper and wrote on the five-fold ministry, reformation and kingdom truths. He also travelled with a prophetic team formed by the Christian graduates' fellowship to declare the purposes of God in the lives of individuals and local churches.

During an international Apostolic and Prophetic meeting he received a call from the Lord to establish a local church. In obedience to the call, he and his wife began teaching a small group of believers in their home. In tandem to his life of ministry was his career as mechanical engineer, which allowed him to work for various oil companies at different levels of responsibility. He now holds the position of Lubricants Manager at Oil Lybia, Ethiopia.

The local ministry attracted believers who were hungry for God and had become weary with religion. The church became a place where believers who had been impacted by reformation and kingdom truths come to have fellowship. Benyam formed an eldership team who were responsible for overseeing ministerial work at the local church. Now with a team at his side he could continue to focus on the teaching of reformation and kingdom truths to his flock.

The spiritual truths of reformation gave him insight into the order of the house of God and the role of spiritual fathers in protecting and guiding their spiritual sons. He however found it challenging to find like-minded leaders in the few apostolic networks that were functioning in the country. In 2009 during a 21-day period of prayer and fasting, a local pastor approached him and his wife about hosting a South African apostle. After having prayed about this request he consulted with the local church elders they expressed their approval in hosting this South African apostle at their church.

During the three day Kingdom Encounter Conference the apostle challenged him to become a spiritual son to him. Benyam agreed to pursue the relationship by travelling to Cape Town, South Africa for a meeting organized by the apostolic network. During that meeting he received confirmation from the Lord of this new relationship. This sealed the covenant between the two men. Upon his return to Addis Ababa, he immediately began teaching his fellow elders and church members what he had learned in the hopes of transforming his congregation into an apostolic kingdom church. He also reached out to other leaders in the city by arranging meetings with apostle Valentyn to teach the five-fold ministers and kingdom business people. This partnership led to their union with Kingdom Lifestyle Ministries International (KLMI), an apostolic, kingdom family fathered by Apostle Vincent Valentyn. Benyam still serves as senior elder for Kingdom Community Church, based in Addis Ababa.

He and his wife, Seblewongel have been married for 14 years and have been blessed with three daughters ages 11, 7 and 1 years old. Seblewongel, who is a civil engineer is involved in building construction and also serves as an elder in their local ministry. She has a deep love for the Lord and serves His people with compassion and sincerity.

Benyam has surrendered his life in submission to the Lord Jesus Christ, the guidance of his spiritual father and the consultation of his fellow elders. He thus serves the congregation and leadership in the attitude of servant leadership.

He is also a spiritual father to those whom God has placed in his direct care. Furthermore, he also mentors elders and business people teaching and preaching on how to adopt a kingdom attitude to advance the kingdom of the God in the earth.