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ROAD TO EMMAUS

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A NATIVITY ADDRESS BY EMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE I OF ETHIOPIA

For Christian people no day is as glorious and as joyous as the day on which we commemorate the Nativity of Our Saviour Jesus Christ. On this day each of us tries to forget his worries and anxieties, to alleviate the distress of loved ones and neighbors, and to forgive those who have wronged us, so that we may truly meditate on the life of Him who is Supreme Lord of All.

From early childhood we are struck by... this unfathomable mystery, simple yet sublime, that evokes in us reverence for the Birth of the Divine Child.

The farther we advance on the path of life, the more we realize the mission that each of us has to accomplish in this world, be it humble or noble, arduous or thankless, and the more the Mystery of Bethlehem reveals itself in our spirits.

An unheard of event, expected for more than forty centuries, has at last been accomplished: the Son of God is born. He has only a stable for His palace and a manger for a cradle. The hearts of the wise are thrilled by this majestic humility, and the kings of the Earth bend their knees before Him and worship Him.

“Peace on Earth, goodwill to men.” This was His first message. In the same manner He went to the summit of Calvary... with His last breath invoking forgiveness for His tormentors: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

In pondering over the life, goodness, humanity, and sacrifice of the Saviour of the world... we should be ashamed to call ourselves Christian people when we do not follow in His footsteps. Had we been Christians, had we been worthy of the name, the peoples of the world would no longer be divided into hostile camps. Peace would reign over the face of the earth, and we would have risen to the level of the immortal angels who ceaselessly glorify the Eternal God. In very truth, there are no interests or reasons, however legitimate they may be, that can justify war. ✚