

## **An Ethiopian hero.**

By Yilma Bekele

Despite all that has happened to our country and people we have always managed to produce heroes that have kept hope alive when most things all around us seem to fall apart. It is not an accident. It is not by chance. In my humble opinion it is the result of our proud culture and ancient history that compels us to keep our head high when faced with adversity. For fortyfive years we have been tested mightily.

The last few days that aspect of our blessing has been in full bloom. Ethiopia's children have been enjoying the latest crop of morale builders and national cheerleaders. Let me start with Almaz Ayana. She is like our country, deceitful at first glance. Almaz looks so small and fragile but don't let that fool you. She conquered the 10K Olympic track record in Rio and signed her name in bold and it says 'catch me if you can'. That is a personal achievement. It is also a national glory.

I have no words to describe the pride I felt when I saw Feyisa Lilesa raise his hands in Rio to reflect the pain in his heart. Our young hero in a moment of such personal glory decided to shine a bright light at the slaughter of his people by Woyane gangsters that are currently masquerading as a lawful regime. I was both in awe of his courage and proud of his achievement. How could one be so young and so unselfish to think of others less fortunate when the whole world was admiring his athletic ability? He turned things right side up. He said there are more important things we have to reflect upon together like the 'lack of Freedom' in Ethiopia.

That is what makes our people and country special. We produce selfless people and true leaders despite the beastly nature of the tyrants that have basically made us strangers in our own home. It is true we never give up. There has not been a single day Woyane has not been challenged in the country called Ethiopia. Woyane has spilled the blood of Ethiopians no matter what kilil one comes from.

Our young friend Feyisa is joining a noble company of warriors, freedom fighters and all around Ethiopians that have come before him. He is following their good steps. He is a disciple of Berhanu Nega, Birtukan Mideksa Reyot Alemu and others that have paid a heavy price for refusing to heel. Today Eskinder Nega, Wubshet Taye, Andualem Arage, Andargachew Tsige, Bekele Gerba, Abubeker Ahmed, Habtamu Ayalew, Temesgen Desalegn and many more are in Woyane dungen, not Ethiopian jail. The guards are Woyane, the language is Tigrean and life is harsh. The only crime they all committed is saying No to tyranny.

This unique Ethiopians have absorbed more of the ingredients that have produced such luminaries as Emperor Tewodros, Ras Alula, Itege Taitu, Dejazmach Balcha, Ras Desta, Ras Abebe, Mengistu and Germame, Tilahun Gizaw and many more beautiful Ethiopians. They all have one thing in common-unselfish behaviour in the service of people and country. Today Dr. Berhanu can sit back and enjoy the fruits of his hard work as a professor and watch his children grow, Judge Birtukan could have submitted to Meles and be left alone, Reyot has a chance to be an ordinary teacher and close her eyes to injustice, Eskinder could have kept quiet, Bekele Gerba was not tempted to lead

the easy life outside nor did anyone push Temesgen to defy Woyane. Our young hero Feyisa could have gone home receive the accolades and may be open a Hotel and lead the life of leisure. What is real is sSome people add value to our life.

They all have the fire of freedom burning inside of them that wouldn't allow them to take the easy way out. That is not the stuff heroes are made from. Our heros show us by example what it means to sacrifice for a cause and face even torture and death. They are showing us the way forward is to stand up straight.

It is heartwarming to see the result of Feyisa's 'teachable' moment that garnered solidarity with the people of Ethiopia thus exposing the true nature of the fascist regime. [The donations to help him settle in a new land are pouring in from all over the world.](#) He has made our cause front page news, we owe a debt to the young Ethiopian from Oromia. Your family loves you.

It is no use talking, admiring, taking credit for the selfless act of our heroes. They sacrificed a lot, stuck their neck out on our behalf. The way we pay them back and stand beside them is by emulating their selfless act. Those at home are doing all they could to confront an armed opponent that is being cornered on all sides due to its criminal acts. I am sure they will feel empowered by Feyisa and double their efforts to win their Freedom. That is how they show their admiration.

The people of Bahr Dar have continued on the footsteps of Gondar. Three days Bahr Dar was a closed town. The people of Bahr Dar like the citizens of Gondar expressed their discontent with Woyane rule in the strongest way possible. They shunned the ethnic based rule with its local puppets by turning their face around not to look at such shameful opponent.

We on the outside should do the same. We should boycott all aspects, forms and manners of Woyane. Plenty of non Ethiopians contributed money, moral support and identified with the cause and are helping Feyisa settle and bring his family to join him. We Ethiopians have a greater responsibility and a debt to pay.

As Almaz was breaking records, as Feyisa was making history Woyane was blanketing Addis Ababa with troops to stop a vigil at Meskel Square. They closed every street and alley and arrested all those they think would lead the protest. They mobilized the Army, alerted the Air Force and packed their bags for easy exit. They worked out a real sweat because they thought the people of Addis are going to pour out of their houses corner them in a dead end street and hang them just like what happened to Nicolae Ceausescu of Romania. Not a good vision but when it is adorned with a tiny tint of realism what can one do except nod in agreement.