

A Thought-Provoking Exploration of Sin: A Review of on *Sodomites and the Wage of Sin* (2007) by his Eminence Abune Samue'l

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1. Introduction

Having religious leaders who write books is very significant in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church as it not only provides spiritual guidance but also serves to encourage the laity to contribute through their own writings. When religious fathers take the initiative to pen their teachings and insights, it sets an example for the believers and other religious fathers, inspiring the faithful to explore societal, religious and cultural issues thereby sharing their perspectives, spiritual teachings and experiences. This act of encouragement fosters a culture of intellectual engagement, enabling the laity to amplify their voices, contribute to religious discourse, and enrich the spiritual traditions of the Church. In this regard, His Eminence Abuna` Samu'el has done a commendable thing and contributed his share.

1.1. About the author and his motivation for writing the book

To learn more about His Eminence Abune Samuel, the Archbishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and author of the book titled *Sodomites and Wage of Sin*, I had a brief interview with him. Aune Samuel introduced himself as the Archbishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and stated that he has authored books on various topics. When I inquired about his educational background,

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he dismissed its importance, stating that knowing his name suffices. In fact, humility has been a virtue among Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church fathers. However, I could infer from his eloquent language and insightful explanations that he is a well-educated scholar, proficient in both church scholarly education and modern academic knowledge.

According to the information I gathered from another church scholar who knows His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el, His Eminence got his first degree in Management and Computer Programming. He has also attended a number of theology seminars in the USA while he lived there for more than ten years. I asked His Eminence about the motivation behind exploring this particular topic. His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el shared that during his time in America, the issue of homosexuality was a growing phenomenon, with debates between Republicans and Democrats. Homosexual individuals were previously barred from participation in sports and military services, among other areas. However, under Bill Clinton's administration, these bans were lifted, leading to its infiltration into religious institutions. Protestant churches began blessing same-sex marriage and recognizing them as legitimate marriages. Europeans followed suit, proclaiming the rights of individuals to embrace their sexual orientations. His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el also mentioned accusations against Catholic churches for silently supporting the homosexual agenda. Eventually, homosexuality became legalized in many countries, with the justification that people have the right to pursue their desires.

Observing these developments, His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el became concerned that this trend would soon reach Ethiopia, potentially eroding culture, defiling religious values, and above all distancing people from God. To protect the younger generation, he decided to write a book on this subject. He emphasized that homosexuality is considered one of the foremost sins and blasphemies, as stated by the apostle Paul in Romans 1, where same-sex behavior is condemned as shameful and unnatural. As the leader of the church, His Eminence believed

it was his responsibility to raise awareness among the laity and reaffirm the Church's rejection of same-sex relationships.

I asked His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el why he prepared the book in English, and he explained that originally, the book was prepared in Amharic. However, during the World Church Council at Geneva, where he was a member of the Executive Committee, there was a debate on whether churches should accept homosexuality as a legal right. The issue was put to a vote using three cards: yellow, green, and red. The Protestant world supported the issue, while the Orthodox world rejected it. By then, Abuna`Samu'el realized that this was an international agenda and decided to write the book in a language that the world understands. After he wrote the book, copies of the book were requested by His Eminence Abuna`Bişoy from Egypt, and other Russia and Indian Orthodox Church fathers.

When asked about people's reaction to the book, His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el explained that initially, there were people who opposed it and claimed that he was writing against people's rights. However, he stood firm and argued that he had the right and obligation to protect his people from evil acts. Some people questioned why he wrote about something that they believed did not exist in Ethiopia, but he knew that there were indeed issues of homosexuality. He stated that he wrote the book in preparation for the worst-case scenario. Interestingly, the former President of Ethiopia, President Girma Woldegiorgis, initially criticized him for writing the book but later admitted that His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el was right and even asked for more copies of the book.

There were also individuals who were already aware of the evils of homosexuality and encouraged him. Abuna`Samu'el mentioned that during an African Religious Summit, where representatives from African churches were present, the book was read and received similar positive reactions from all attendees of the All African Churches Summit. After the meeting, leaders of the Mäkkänäyyäsus Church requested copies of the book as they shared the same stance on homosexuality. Before concluding our interview, His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el urged us and

everyone involved to take a serious stance against homosexuality and vigorously combat it by educating the younger generation about morals, culture, and faith. He emphasized that this teaching should commence from early childhood, even in kindergarten. According to His Eminence, merely writing an article and publishing it in a journal will not effectively address the issue. The key to safeguarding future generations from the destructive impact of homosexuality lies in focusing on educating and nurturing the younger generation.

1.2 The rationale for choosing the book for review

When it comes to the book review, one book that caught my attention and is worth reviewing is *Sodomites and Wage of Sin* written by His Eminence Abuna` Samu`el in 2007. There were a couple of reasons why I chose to review this book. Firstly, the author has a remarkable reputation as a prolific writer with numerous published books that have resonated with readers. By reviewing this book, I hope to encourage other readers to delve into his works and appreciate his contributions thereby empowering themselves with knowledge. Secondly, the book's subject matter has significant cultural, social, and religious implications. The timely exploration of this topic holds immense meaning for Ethiopian culture, religious values, and societal norms. It aims to address a pressing issue that could potentially challenge and reshape aspects of Ethiopian society.

This book review is aimed at analyzing the major themes of the book and evaluating its strengths and limitations, providing a comprehensive understanding of its overarching ideas and enabling a balanced judgment of its overall quality and impact.

1.3 Methodology

To thoroughly examine the thought-provoking exploration of homosexuality and sin presented in His Eminence Abuna` Samu`el's book, *Sodomites and the Wage of Sin*, I interviewed the author and through it, I was able to have a

deeper understanding of the specific motivations behind choosing the topic of homosexuality for his book. Understanding the context in which the author wrote the book provided a broader understanding of the issues at hand and the impact it could potentially have on society. His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el's concerns about the infiltration of homosexuality into religious institutions and its potential consequences on Ethiopian culture allowed for an in-depth exploration of his intentions and the relevance of the book's subject matter.

The second method involved was a close textual and discourse analysis employed to dissect the book's content, identify recurring themes, and critically evaluate the arguments and evidence presented by the author. The combination of these methods provided a multifaceted approach to understand and discuss the intricate relationship between Sodomites and Sin and its consequences.

2. Major themes of the book

Sodomites and the Wage of Sin comprises six chapters, excluding the introduction, bibliography, and a letter of approval from the Council of Scholars in the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The book spans 146 pages and was published in 2007 by Birhaninna Sälam Printing Press. On the front cover, there is an image depicting a man and a woman, both discreetly covering their genital areas. Positioned between them is another man kneeling on a platform adorned with six vibrant colors arranged vertically: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. Additionally, the man is depicted carrying a large round object, surpassing the size one would typically carry.

By incorporating these biblical references and visual symbols, the author prompts readers to reflect on the moral implications of transgressing God's commandments and the potential consequences of such actions. The front cover of the book evokes a multitude of symbolic and biblical references, inviting readers into a critical engagement with the text. The image portrays a man and a woman, symbolizing the archetypal representation of humanity. Both individuals

are discreetly concealing their genital areas, reflecting recognition of nudity and shame, perhaps suggestive of the scene described in Genesis 3:7 where Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together to cover their nakedness.

Significantly, between the man and the woman, another male figure is depicted. This figure is positioned on a platform adorned with six vibrant colors arranged vertically: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The colors could potentially represent the flags of the homosexuals on which the man is standing. Furthermore, the man is portrayed carrying an unusually large round object, suggesting a metaphorical burden that exceeds the typical weight an individual is capable of carrying. This imagery aligns with biblical texts which warns about the grave consequences of causing harm or leading astray the vulnerable, underscoring the heavy weight of sin (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Luke 17:2).

By image depiction, the author has from the outset shown how disobedience to God's rules leads to nakedness and unbearable burden. In the introduction to the book, the author raises important points regarding the destructive nature of injustice and adultery, comparing them to the devastating impact of a nuclear bomb. This analogy highlights the author's belief that actions contrary to God's rules have severe consequences. The author goes on to question whether such acts can be considered as a civilization or "evilization" strongly asserting that they fall under the category of evil and immorality. This argument is supported by the author's assertion that going against God's commandments leads one to go astray. To back up this claim, the author references the importance of true devotion rather than merely empty words (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Isaiah 29:13).

Furthermore, the author stresses the significance of combining words with actions, emphasizing that a mere declaration of faith in God is insufficient. In line with the book's title, the author argues that homosexuality is both unnatural and ungodly, drawing from what he observed in Western societies. He expresses

concern that the acceptance of homosexuality would compromise Ethiopian cultural identity and religious values. In a fatherly manner, the author concludes the introduction with a call for repentance, especially directed towards individuals who might be engaged in homosexuality. This religious appeal underscores the author's deep conviction that turning away from sinful behaviors and aligning with God's commandments is essential for leading a righteous life.

Using discourse analysis, it becomes evident that the author employs various strategies to strengthen his argument. By drawing on biblical references, making social observations, and appealing to religious values, the author elicits an emotional response from readers and attempts to persuade them of the importance of repentance and adherence to God's laws. Overall, the introduction of *Sodomites and the Wage of Sin* sets the stage for a moral and religious examination of the consequences of deviating from God's commandments, particularly in relation to homosexuality. The author's passionate appeal underscores the importance of righteousness and repentance for maintaining a strong cultural and religious identity.

Chapter one discusses the belief that homosexuality is a grievous sin. The author asserts that those who engage in homosexual acts defile their bodies, which are considered the temples of God. As Christians, the author argues, we are called to imitate God in His holiness and righteousness and are therefore required to sanctify ourselves. The author questions whether sexual orientation towards the same sex is the work of the Holy Spirit, stating that those who walk after the spirit know the answer, while those who walk after the flesh do not. The author strongly believes that homosexuality is a lustful desire that defiles the body and can never host the Holy Spirit unless one undergoes sincere repentance.

While acknowledging that some people believe homosexuality causes HIV/AIDS, the author argues that their condemnation of homosexuality is not based on biblical teachings. Citing the biblical text that states "You shall not lie with a man as with a woman, it is an abomination," (English Standard Version Bible,

2001, Leviticus, 18:22) the author emphasizes the importance of teaching the word of God without any alterations. The author argues that homosexuality goes against the natural law, using examples from nature to support this claim. His Eminence Abuna Samu'el questions whether lions eat grass or if an ox enjoys beef, highlighting that even animals have an inherent understanding of what is normal and what is abnormal. God has created sexuality, but it is meant to be within the boundaries of heterosexual relationships.

Drawing from biblical examples, such as Enoch, the author suggests that the understanding of marriage should be rooted in these teachings. He argues that homosexuals or sodomites corrupt natural human relationships and go against the sacraments of the Church, marital life, and Christianity itself. The author also mentions that some countries have included homosexuality in their constitutions, knowing this as a sin against God's will. The author also described homosexuality in different social groups, including pagan homosexuality, nominal Christian homosexuality (where individuals misinterpret biblical teachings), and heretic sodomites (those who act above the law). He argues that homosexuality has corrupted the modern world and disrupted natural human relationships, changing brotherhood into sexual partnerships.

The author counters the claim that sodomites argue for their natural inclination towards homosexuality, dismissing it as groundless without evidence. He further contends that sodomites cannot produce children and that the adoption of children by same-sex couples leads to a societal crisis as it is unclear who the father and mother figures are.

Challenging the claim those sodomites can also be Christians; the author discredits their quotes from the Bible, using Romans 13:5 to argue that sodomites who deny the natural gifts of God cannot be considered temples of God. The author compares human nature to computers, suggesting that just as computers operate according to programmed software, humans should live according to God's design. The chapter concludes by warning that the punishment inflicted

upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah still exists in the hands of God. The author presents scientific findings, such as sulfur balls found in the remains of Sodom and Gomorrah, as evidence of God's wrath against transgressors.

To protect oneself from the wages of sin, the author suggests various measures, including the proper ordination of priests, the execution of priestly responsibilities, maintaining a social life free from lustful sexual relations, and showing respect for family dignities and rules. The author also emphasizes the importance of prayer, fasting, and other good deeds. Lastly, the author presents an extensive discussion on the conceptual meaning of law, highlighting how laws can encourage positive behavior and prevent individuals from engaging in evil acts.

Chapter two of the book, titled ``*The Wage of Sin*`` explores the issue of HIV/AIDS as a major health challenge in Africa, primarily caused by prostitution and fornication. The author challenges the common belief that prostitution is solely a result of poverty, emphasizing that it is a complex issue that cannot be reduced to economic circumstances alone. As a concerned spiritual father, he questions how long such problems will persist and expresses sympathy for the prostitutes who often do not even benefit financially from their unethical work, as a significant portion of their earnings goes to hotel and pension owners and brokers. To tackle this issue, the author suggests that the government should take steps to educate the younger generation about abstaining from pre-marital sex and remaining faithful to their partners. He emphasizes that fighting HIV/AIDS requires a comprehensive understanding of the disease itself, asserting that it is not a creation of God but rather a consequence of human sinful actions in defiance of God's laws and natural order.

In order to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and other illicit sexual activities, the author encourages individuals to exercise self-discipline and control their emotions and desires. He firmly states that sexual relations before marriage and outside of marriage are both illegal and considered adultery. To illustrate

the consequences of failing to control one's emotions and fleshly desires, the author references the biblical story of Amnon and Tamar, highlighting the tragic outcome of unchecked lust.

The factors that lead individuals to engage in fornication are listed by the author, i.e. addiction and extreme adulterous behavior resulting in homosexuality. Drawing from biblical references, he reiterates the various consequences of sin. Additionally, the author discusses the role of extravagant dressing in promoting sexual activity and its connection to the spread of HIV/AIDS. He contrasts this with the Ethiopian tradition of elegant and lawful dressing, expressing concern that modern dressing practices have deviated from these cultural norms and have become uncanonical and shameful. The author also addresses the notion that even innocent individuals can be affected by HIV/AIDS, as unfaithful partners can transmit the disease knowingly or unknowingly. Children can also contract AIDS from their infected mothers. Healthcare providers and nurses may also be at risk of contracting the disease through their work. The author emphasizes the importance of repentance and Christian marriage (man and woman) as solutions.

Chapter three of the book describes the concept of death using biblical texts to support it. The author asserts that God did not create death and emphasizes the importance of fearing the death of the soul rather than the death of the physical body. His Eminence Abuna'Samu'el also explores the belief in life and resurrection after death, providing biblical texts as evidence for this claim. He highlights the idea that the righteous and pure will be powerful, suggesting that these qualities are the ultimate goal to strive for. In his concluding remarks, the author states that those who are sinful and go against nature will be judged. He emphasizes the importance of being pure and righteous, suggesting that this is the path to salvation. This ties in with the overall theme of the book, which focuses on the consequences of sin and the importance of following God's laws.

In the fourth chapter of the book, His Eminence *Abuna'Samu'el* investigates the concept of Ethiopian identity. He begins by explaining that Ethiopian identity is

an inherent characteristic that cannot be easily changed, using a biblical reference to emphasize this point. He then discusses the importance of preserving religious identity, stating that those who have lost their identity within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church cannot be considered true members unless they actively maintain and preserve that identity. His Eminence Abuna` Samu'el further explores Ethiopian identity from the perspective of tradition, defining tradition as something that has descended from past generations. He underscores the significance of tradition in the Christian faith, emphasizing the need to uphold and preserve it. Abuna` Samu'el strongly argues against changes to these traditions, stating that altering them undermines the rich cultural heritage. The author asserts that faith and work serve as the pathway towards God, and he highlights the various religious practices and rituals of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church that are carried out with faith. These practices include chanting, Hymns, Baptism, Eucharist, Ordination, and more. *Abuna` Samu'el* and he emphasizes that Jesus Christ serves as the foundation and Head of the Church, setting an example for believers to follow through the laws He enacted during His earthly life.

In the fifth chapter of the book, the author highlights the significance of moral education in society. According to the author, moral education is paramount and holds greater importance than any other form of teaching. Describing morality as the queen of knowledge, the author emphasizes that divine morals have the power to profoundly transform individuals. The author asserts that human beings cannot be properly understood or evaluated without the guidance of moral law, which stems from the law of the heart or conscience, termed as *higgā`libuna*. This law originates from our creation in the likeness of God. Additionally, the author mentions the existence of written laws that correspond to specific expectancies, which he classifies as duties of morality. These duties include faith, hope, living in God's likeness, doing good for others, and practicing justice. Love, according to the author, is the fruit of the Holy Spirit and serves as the pathway through which individuals should approach God.

One of the major points raised in this chapter is the correlation between the absence of morality and poverty as critical social issues in Ethiopia. Among all societal concerns, the author argues that the lack of morality demands significant attention and care. To adhere to moral principles means to obey God's commandments, and consequently, teaching children to obey God becomes crucial in attaining peace of mind. The author accentuates that the temptation and challenges faced due to the advancements of technology necessitate a focus on moral teaching. Furthermore, he emphasizes that the foundation of moral instruction rests upon the love of God and fellow human beings.

In this chapter, the author provides a thought-provoking analysis of the importance of moral education, viewing morality as the cornerstone of knowledge. Through the concept of moral law and the various duties associated with it, the author reinforces the necessity of adhering to divine morals. He also highlights the urgent need to address the lack of morality as a vital societal challenge and stresses the significance of teaching children to obey God's commandments. By incorporating the theme of love, the author emphasizes the fundamental role it plays in moral instruction. Overall, this chapter offers valuable insights into the role of morality in shaping individuals and society, underscoring its deep-rooted impact on human behavior, social cohesion, and ethical values.

Chapter six of the book addresses the damaging impact of corruption towards morality, justice, national development, and the right attitude towards work. The author proceeds to discuss Self-centeredness, a lack of a positive attitude and consciousness, dishonesty, poor administration, bribery, disregarding the well-being of others, and narrow thinking are all factors contributing to corruption. The core message of this chapter is derived from the biblical passage where God tells Adam, "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread," (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Genesis 3:19). This divine order emphasizes the importance of hard work and honest labor. The author argues that corrupt managers and leaders go against this commandment, and legalize sinful acts, like homosexuality,

as normal. In conclusion, the author calls upon individuals to join together in pursuing morality, truth, and justice and denouncing evil (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, Romans 12:9).

3. Evaluation of the work

A. Strengths

The book has several commendable aspects worth mentioning. Firstly, it is written in English, making it accessible to a wide range of readers both nationally and internationally. This is particularly important when discussing a topic as significant and pervasive as homosexuality, which transcends borders and affects people from various cultural backgrounds. His Eminence Abuna` Samu'el's decision to write in English sets a positive example for other religious figures to follow suit, as it allows for a more inclusive and comprehensive conversation on the subject.

Secondly, the book's focus on homosexuality is timely and relevant. This is an issue that concerns not only believers but also non-believers, making it a crucial topic of discussion for all individuals. By tackling the subject head-on, the author demonstrates a genuine concern for the well-being of humanity and aims to raise awareness and foster understanding among a diverse range of readers.

Thirdly, the book goes beyond merely highlighting the problems and challenges associated with homosexuality. It also offers practical solutions and insight into related issues such as HIV/AIDS. By offering tangible solutions, the author encourages readers to take meaningful action and make positive changes within their communities. This approach not only informs and educates but also empowers readers to actively engage with the issues at hand.

Fourthly, His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el's book stands out in several ways. Its accessibility, relevance, practicality, and persuasive approach make it a valuable resource for anyone interested in understanding and addressing the complex

issues surrounding homosexuality. By choosing to write in English, the author demonstrates a forward-thinking mindset that encourages others to engage in similar conversations on an international scale. Ultimately, this book serves as a powerful tool for promoting awareness, compassion, and action in the face of a pressing global concern.

Fifthly, the author effectively supports his arguments by referencing biblical texts and some scientific discoveries. This combination of religious and scientific evidence lends credibility to the book while appealing to readers of various backgrounds and beliefs. The inclusion of such references increases the persuasive power of the book by highlighting the grave consequences of homosexuality, thereby resonating with both believers and non-believers alike.

Finally, the other strength of the book that is worth mentioning is that it was approved by the Council of Scholars within the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. This endorsement adds significant credibility and importance to the content of the book. It sets a valuable example for other writers within the Church to follow suit. By having books evaluated and approved by scholars, the contents are guaranteed to be in accordance with the teachings, dogma, and canons of the Church. This ensures that readers can trust the accuracy and reliability of the information presented in the book. Such a rigorous evaluation process ultimately enhances the overall value and impact of the book within the religious community.

B. Limitations

Writing an error-free book, free of spelling, grammar, and numbering mistakes, is of utmost importance for books with a national and international audience. Such books are often read by individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and errors can hinder their understanding and overall reading experience. A book riddled with mistakes may diminish the author's credibility and status. Additionally, errors can interrupt the flow of the narrative or disrupt

the clarity of the information being conveyed. Ensuring that the book is error-free demonstrates the author's commitment to providing a high-quality reading experience for their audience, allowing them to fully immerse themselves in the content and engage with the material on a deeper level. For this reason, it is crucial to address any gaps or errors that may exist in the reviewed book, "Sodomites and the Wage of Sin," to uphold its societal, religious and cultural significance. As the book represents the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's stance on homosexuality and has garnered attention from global readers, it is essential to thoroughly review and rectify any errors in the next edition to preserve its quality.

I. Grammar and numbering issues:

There are some grammar issues in the book that need attention. For example, on page one, second line, the word "doing" should have been written as "is doing." Furthermore, the third paragraph on page 32 contains ill-formed sentences.

There are several numbering issues in the book that require clarification. On page 25, we encounter the number 2 as a subtopic without any indication of the preceding subtopic number 1. Moreover, on page 31, the author uses 'f' to denote a subtopic, but it is unclear where the other subtopics from a-e are. Furthermore, under subtopic (f), we find the number 1, and on the next page, there is another subtopic numbered 5, leaving the reader confused about the sequence of subtopics. There are numerous instances of numbering issues and inconsistencies in categorizing major themes according to subtopics. Examples include 1.9 on page 48, 1.2 on page 50, 3 on page 53, and 1.10 on page 58. Additionally, some subtopics have been assigned numbers while others have not, such as the subtopics on pages 61, 63-65, 70-72, etc.

II. Inclusion of unrelated Topics:- A Detour from the Main Narrative

While the book focuses on the topic of homosexuality, it unexpectedly includes discussions on unrelated issues such as corruption and poverty. This inclusion of

unrelated topics can be seen as a drawback because it diverts attention and dilutes the main theme of the book. While it is essential to address broader societal issues, the book's title suggests a specific focus that does not fully align with the content presented. As a result, readers seeking a comprehensive exploration of homosexuality may find themselves navigating through tangential subjects, hindering the book's overall effectiveness.

III. Support for argument:

While the author counter argued against the claim made by the Sodomites regarding their natural inclination towards homosexuality, the argument seems to have lacked depth and critical analysis. The author dismisses their claims as groundless, but to discredit the Sodomites' claim needs further argument supported by evidence from biblical texts or research works. On page 32, His Eminence Abuna Samu'el asserts that there are individuals who have practiced homosexuality but later repented and abandoned it. However, the claim seems to lack supporting empirical evidence. Providing at least one example or citing relevant studies would strengthen the argument and make it more convincing to readers.

IV. Preface and introduction:

A suggestion for improvement is to include a preface in the book, where the author can express his motivations, concerns, and fears regarding homosexuality. This would provide readers with a clear understanding of the author's intentions from the outset. Additionally, the introduction section could be used to introduce the major themes or contents of the book, allowing for a smoother transition into the main body of the text.

V. Bibliography organization

Another important aspect worth the writer's attention to address is the organization of the book's bibliography. Given the significant value of this book and the

pressing issue it addresses, it is crucial that the bibliography meets internationally recognized conventions. A well-structured and properly formatted bibliography not only enhances the book's professional appeal but also ensures that readers can easily locate and refer to the cited sources. However, I understand that achieving 100% perfection in writing a book, especially when the writer has additional major responsibilities like His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el, is not always possible. And these issues do not reduce from the overall quality of the book, but they are worth noting for potential readers to address some limitations in the reviewed book.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The book titled *Sodomites and the Wage of Sin* by His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el's a contemporary and highly informative read that delves into the important issue of homosexuality and its serious consequences. In addition to addressing this pressing concern, the book also explores other societal issues such as poverty, corruption, and maladministration, showcasing the author's comprehensive understanding of social evils and his commitment to societal well-being. Despite being published in 2007, when homosexuality was not widely recognized as a major problem, the book anticipates the potential gravity of this issue and serves as a precautionary measure. This exemplifies the far-sightedness of the religious leader His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el, who has demonstrated his fatherly concerns throughout the book. Although some present errors could be rectified in future reprints, the strengths of the book far outweigh these limitations.

His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el's contributions are indeed impressive, considering his demanding responsibilities as the Head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (EOTC-DICAC) currently and his involvement in numerous various church services. Having written over 30 books that delve into not just religious matters but also social, economic, and political issues, His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el's works offer a diverse and well-rounded perspective on crucial topics. Recognizing the value of

such esteemed religious figures and their intellectual output, it becomes essential to disseminate their writings to a wider audience. To accomplish this, it is highly recommended that church scholars take the initiative to review His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el's other books. By conducting rigorous and insightful reviews, scholars will not only contribute to the scholarly discourse but also bring attention to his works within academic circles. This, in turn, will generate interest among a broader community of readers, fostering intellectual engagement and a deeper understanding of the themes presented in his books. Moreover, the reviewing process can lend credibility and recognition to His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el's contributions and shed light on the wealth of knowledge he offers beyond his religious duties. Scholars who undertake this task serve not only as evaluators but also as advocates, promoting the dissemination of valuable ideas within the wider intellectual community. By reviewing His Eminence Abuna`Samu'el's books, scholars can uncover the depth of his writings and contribute to the cultural and intellectual enrichment of readers across various domains.

Praise be to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit One God! Amen!

Reference

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