

was with the others.

Emperors are prone to speak as though the years and centuries to come were spread before them like an open book. But Haile Selassie has much more reason than most to consider himself as an infallible sooth sayer.

*Legend says, and Ethiopians believe that the Imperial Family is descended from King Solomon and the Queen of the Sheba and that much of the wisdom of that mighty King has come down to those who sit on the Ethiopian throne.*

The first of Selassie's nine prophecies was told to me after I had successfully terminated my search in north western Ethiopia for the mines of that same King Solomon.

It was in 1933, The Lion of Judah sitting on the golden throne of the Gibbi, the imperial palace at Addis Ababa and fondling the ears of his Belgian griffon, said: "We shall be attacked by Mussolini in two years." Twenty-four months later, on October 3, 1935, the Fascist armies swarmed into Ethiopia, sweeping Emperor Selassie's 10,000,000 subjects before them.

Two days after the battle of Lake Ashangi, I was with the melancholy monarch as he looked into the skies and watched bombs dropping from a plane piloted by Mussolini's son Bruno. In the soft Amharic language of his fathers, Selassie predicted: "The day is not too long distant when that vulture will perish in his own cold, cruel blood. He who lives by the sword shall perish by the sword."

In 1941 Bruno was killed in a crash while testing a bomber that had been assigned to his squadron. Haile Selassie was a sickly child, but he always seemed to be enveloped in a dignity that lifted him above those near him. He drew it around him like a cloak when, in Geneva in 1936, he faced the assembly of the League of Nations and made his third and perhaps his most amazing prophecy: "I shall return to my capital on the anniversary of it's capture."

It is now history that the King of Kings reentered Addis Ababa on May 5, 1941 five years to the day after it has been taken. On that very evening of his speech, as he sat in His apartment in the Hotel de Bergues with a few faithful friends and league delegates, the exiled Emperor told them: "We, the weak, shall see the godless Mussolini perish, devoured by disease and his fam-

ily assassinated or in misery. And the curse of the bombed Ethiopian people will be on his soul for all eternity."

I next saw Haile Selassie in 1937 in Fairfield, Bath, England. He had retired there with his family. The little man in the black coat and trilby hat was as dignified as ever and as far seeing. He told me: "There will be a second world war as a result of what happened to Ethiopia. For that violation of an independent country will only encourage aggression. A terrible conflict lies ahead."

"As in the case of Ethiopia, the weaker nations will fall first. But the powers of evil will be overthrown, and the weakest of these Mussolini's Italy - will be the first to fall followed by Hitler."

He spoke almost as if he were in a trance and I am willing to believe now that there was something mystic about the entire evening, besides the next thing he said to me was: "It will take three years to defeat the rapacious Fascist and his crew."

Mussolini fell from power just three years after his "stab in the back" at prostrate France.

As we walked down the chilly corridor of the Bath villa on my departure that evening, the man who was known there as "Mr. Tafari" observed almost casually: "One year after the fall of Italy the Allies will be victorious in Europe. The victory will take place around Armistice Day, sometime next November 11, 1944."

It was then I remembered the ninth prophecy, another that he had made that night in the Hotel de Bergues in Geneva as we sat around him "There will only be a lasting peace if the United States of American takes a leading hand in the moral leadership of the world."