Biography

Wallelign Mekonnen Kassa was born on March 22, 1946 in Debresina Woreda, Wollo, Ethiopia.

He was the 4th son of Mekonnen Kassa, a small business owner and Zenebech Gizaw. Wallelign had three brothers and four sisters. He was raised as Orthodox Christian in a liberal environment. Wallelign acquired the love for his country from an early age and he dedicated his life to Ethiopia until the moment he was assassinated, December 9, 1972.

In 1954, he began his schooling at the Neguse Michel Elementary School and attended the Woizer Sheen Comprehensive Secondary School, Dessie. In 1964, he moved to Addis Ababa and joined Prince Bede Mariam Demonstration School for one year. In 1965, he joined the Haile Selassie University and studied political science. He was one of the devoted university students who struggled to emancipate the Ethiopian workers and peasants from tyranny. Wallelign and his comrades were imprisoned by the Ethiopian government and released after five months. Wallelign suspended from university by the administration.

Although, he aspired to be a high school teacher, Wallelign worked at the Ethiopian Road Authority as a field administrator after he was halted from school.
As a young man, he was a performing artist and a debating club president at Woizer Sehen Comprehensive Secondary and Prince Bede Mariam Demonstration Schools respectively.

He also wrote the articles, “The Question of Nationalities in Ethiopia”, which states the national repression and the solution for this problem, “Le Awaju Awaj”, an article in response to the emperor’s address in the radio regarding the university students, “Ye Azinaw Eseregan” (Prisioner’s Azinara ) and “Message to Professor Afework Gebereyesus”.

Finally, Wallelign body rested at Medhane Alem Orthodox Church, Dessie Wollo, December 10, 1972.