On April 4th, 2016, the Honorable Judge Paul Delucchi of the Alameda County Superior Court found Tewadros Gebreselassie guilty of three (3) counts of “Voluntary Manslaughter” after he admitted that he assisted his older brother, Asmerom Gebresselassie, murder three (3) members of the Mehari family on Thanksgiving day of 2006 (November 23rd, 2006).

Mr. Tewaderos Gebreselassie agreed to enter these pleas after his convictions were reversed by the Court of Appeals and he was returned to court for a new trial.  He waived any right to appeal these convictions in the future.

Mr. Tewedros served 10 years in prison on 3 counts of “Voluntary Manslaughter”. He served 6 years for the 1st count and 2 years (each) for the 2nd and 3rd counts.

Also the Mehari’s family presented three impact statement and one of the older brother Yosef Mehari read this to the court quote “I believe 2 things about people: There are those who live to help others. Helping others fills them with pride. And then there are those like your whole family. You all joined together hand to hand to do harm—to kill my family. But it did not work for your family.

The truth is the truth always. It may come late, but it will come out one day. And we cannot stop to bring the truth until the end of my life.

By you only getting 10 years will not change the truth. Even for the main evil idea, Tesfu and Senait are walking outside and you will soon be walking with them. But that does not change the truth of what you did. You helped them with this plan. You helped your family think you would get away with these killings. You know all of your family was involved in these crimes. That is why you all defend each other over these 9 years.

If things happened the way you claim, why did you not call 911 when you got back to your family’s dinner? Why did the police SWAT team have to get you and your family to come outside that night? There were 11 people there in that apartment. I know what they told the police that day. Why didn’t you tell any of your family about your claim my brothers pulled guns and tried to kill Asmerom? Why did those people not tell the police how Isaac really got to that apartment after his mother was shot?

Do you think you are more important to Isaac than his mom?

The appellate court having this decision is in no way valid. To say the same case is OK for Asmerom, but not you is not honest.

I do not agree with the DA’s decision to let you plead to these charges for only 10 years. But my family and I do not have a choice. This may be the end of the case in court, but not the end for us, the family.

There will be justice some day for my mom, Winta and Yonas because we know the truth. We know what happened. We know your family planned these killings. We know you opened the door to let your bother in to kill my family. You took this plea to be free, but you know you did this. You are not free. You will never be free. You will carry the deaths of my mom, Winta and Yonas with you forever.”

Also another the Mehari’s family member who witness the horrific crime read statement

“Good morning Honorable Judge Delucchi,

My name is Merhawi Tesfarmariam Mehari. I am here to read this message to the killer of my beautiful family. My mother meant the world to me. My beautiful sister Winta, who was a mentor for me, was one of the kindest sisters I could ask for, but the entire Gebreselassie family killed her. Because of them, she cannot raise her handsome son Isaac Winta Abraham, the son of your brother Tewodros. How evil you and your entire family are to show no remorse. I thank God every minute that Winta left me with one beautiful gift—her only son “Isaac Winta Abraham.” You killed my brother Yonas who was only 17 years old and a senior in high school. He was the light of our house. Did you know on Thanksgiving Day, Yonas was writing his personal statement so he could attend UC Berkeley? You and your family took that bright future away from him. The hardest part to me that I still cannot accept is the murder of my younger brother. He fell on me when your evil brother shot him.

I know it has been more than 9 years since you and your family murdered my family. Every second, every minute, every hour since that day I suffer the pain. I will have this pain for the rest of my life. Even though the appellate court decided to give you a new trial, it was wrong because I know you are the mastermind of this crime. You came all the way from Eritrea to commit this horrific crime.

There is a saying in Amharic and I will try my best to translate it into English: Since your mother’s womb is evil and I see all of the children she have from her womb are all evil.

I just want to ask you one question. When you came to our house on Thanksgiving Day to commit these horrific crimes with your family, how would you eat the food and drink the coffee my mother made? How did you feel when you swallowed the food and drink my mother gave you? I hope the food you ate and the coffee you drank will always choke you.

It is obvious that the Gebreselassie family has never had any family love and I am sure will never have a love toward their own family. If you loved your mother or your brother Abraham, you would not kill my mother, my sister and my brother. What reason did your family have to kill them and try to kill the rest of us? Don’t you know that Isaac is the son of your own brother Abraham? Did you think about Isaac at all before killing his mother? What will Isaac say when he grows up knowing the Gebreselassie family left him without his mother and his father? Since Winta was raising Isaac alone after Abraham died, she was both a mother and father to him.

I have one question to ask you and your remorseless family. What would you answer to Isaac if he asked you why you killed his mother, his grandmother and his uncle? I don’t expect a positive answer to this since you and your family has no remorse for what you have done. Yes, I will never, ever forgive you or your family for what you have done.

Tewodros, you know you are the main mastermind of this horrific crime. You are the one who opened the door and allowed your evil brother Asmerom into our home so he could kill everyone. He is where he deserves to be--locked up in jail forever.

Tewodros, do you know you took away my happiness and my world when you allowed Asmerom to come into our home to kill my mother—my world. Do you know how much I love my mother? Did you know how much I owe my mother to pay her back for all she did for me? After my college graduation, I was planning to buy her a house so she can rest since she suffered the loss of her husband, my father to illness. She was raising 8 children by herself. But you Tewodros, the mastermind of these murders, took all of my plans that I have for her. I always thank God for what he has done for me and my family. My mother had happiness until you committed these horrible crimes.

Do you know that you have killed my beautiful sister? Did you know she was my mentor for my education, my advisor during my up and down time? She was my everything. Did you know she was getting her BS degree when you allowed your brother to kill her? But God has a plan and her only son Isaac to receive her posthumously awarded BS degree from CSUEB.

I always thank God to have Isaac alive after you kidnapped him. You said you took him because Yehferom and I had guns and were going to kill Asmerom. I wish I had a gun that day, but I did not. You know Yehferom and I did not have guns that day. I wish I could have taken the gun Asmerom brought to kill my family.

I thank God because God’s punishment is not reversible like the appellate court. What they did was not right to me, my family and our entire community. How would the appellate court reverse your conviction, but not Asmerom’s based on the same case? I will never accept their decision. The jurors who sat and listened and watched the whole case for months saw the plan you and your family made. They have seen your act and attitude and your mastermind plan. The appellate court did not see you and who you really are—to see what an evil mastermind you really are.

I just want to thank the jurors and the DA, especially John Jay and Joni Leventis for their amazing job for the truth.

Yes, you Tewodros and your entire family are killers, but are still out on the streets and even in this courtroom. You will be out on the streets soon, but don’t ever feel like a free person because the almighty God punishes very well.

I want to give thanks to the entire Eritrean and Ethiopian community. I want to especially thank my family for the support we give each other every single day, even though it is very hard, but God is helping us to heal and to all my friends.

But to you and your entire family, I don’t have a heart to forgive you at any moment. And may God punish you day by day so you can feel the pain we feel since you and your family killed by mother, sister and brother.

The Mehari family was present in the court with members from the Eritrean community who remain steadfast in their support of the victims’ family members in the aftermath of these horrific killings.

It is to be recalled that Asmerom Gebresselassie, older brother of Tewedros Gebresselassie, is currently serving “life in prison” without any possibility of parole for murdering Regbe Bahrenegasi, Winta Mehari and Yonas Mehari.