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Amos and the Rhetoric of Prophetic Utterance

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AMOS AND THE RHETORIC OF PROPHETIC UTTERANCE

BY

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

We are a part of the 20th century. It is an age of technological advancement, among them the various channels of communication available to the masses. Our mass media can reach millions of people at one time. Hence, the media become the instruments which carry a message across to a multiple of individuals. In addition, through the use of film and tape, an original event can be recorded and therefore replayed for later audiences. In other words, today we are not at a loss if we have not witnessed the actual event in person, or watched it while it was being televised. We can always see the video tape.

"Mass Communication" refers to the process of sending identical messages to large numbers of people who are in different walks of life and who are physically separated.¹

When the President of the United States gives his State of the Union Address to the public or a State Senator makes a speech in the legislature, they are surrounded by various recording instruments. For the purpose of public broadcasting, tapes and microphones are set up to help bring the speeches directly to the audience, affording many the opportunity to see, hear or read the message.

But the mass media are newly developed channels for communication. "The filmed and electronic forms are both products of this century, having reached the technical perfection needed for mass consumption in the 1920's and 1940's."²

The electronic revolution is a successor to the print revolution . . . four hundred years elapsed between the development of movable type and the print media's attainment of message saturation--the ability to distribute a single message to a total mass audience.³

In Palestine, during the 8th century B.C.E., these technical advancements of our contemporary age did not exist. When a prophet came to address a group of people, he spoke to them directly in person. Those who witnessed the speech had the advantage of being at the scene during the hour of presentation. The rest of the people later heard about it through a source other than the speaker himself. Oral tradition, or relating messages by word of mouth was a common procedure of transmitting a public event.

It may have been through song or legend that the prophet's speech was spread across the land. Through these methods, the story and its significance could be held intact--nevertheless, the message had become an interpretation. By the permanent rhythm and lyrics of a song, the story and its message are least likely to change as the song is passed from generation to generation. As well, legends are stories meant to be retold so that its wondrous element will not die. Only through exact repetition can the story and message retain their permanence.

Historical song and legend are to a large extent--and often too in the ancient East--the natural forms of the popular oral preservation of "historical" events, that is to say events of vital importance for the tribe. They all represent a vital kind of history memorizing as it happens . . . In the legend the practice of glorification, exaltation, and transformation grew of itself from narrator to narrator, from generation to generation of narrators, until "the fixed form" was crystallized.⁴

In the case of the first literary prophet, Amos of Tekoa, neither song nor legend has been attributed to the preservation of his orations. Gene M. Tucker explains why Amos 7:10-17 does not represent one of the

preserved legends of the Old Testament:

The Old Testament has preserved many legends, including the prophetic legends . . . but this is not one of them. Unlike Amos 7:10-17, a legend is a narrative about persons or places primarily interested in the wondrous--such as miracles which show the power of God active through a particular individual--and ordinarily aimed at edification.⁵

Martin Buber also rejects the categorization of Amos into the generalization of song or legend:

The speeches of this prophet are without any doubt real speeches in the literal sense; unlike the later apocalyptists every prophet speaks on the actuality of a definite situation.⁶

The rhetorical study of the Book of Amos is the purpose of this paper. As we, in this modern age of advanced technology have been introduced to the electronic methods for sending and receiving communications, so the people of the 8th century B.C.E. were introduced to a new method of communicating to the masses, a vital message--a prophet travelled a long distance on behalf of a divine mission to speak to the people; his discourse shows an emphasis on the strength of language rather than of miracles and ecstatic behavior. "He is not credited with the ability to work miracles" ⁷ To appreciate this act of devotion and all that has been said thus far, let us define communication.

The term "Communication" came from the Latin communis (common) or communicare (to establish a community or a commonness, or to share) The term implies a sharing, a meeting of minds, a bringing about of a common set of symbols in the minds of the participants--in short, an understanding.⁸

To begin to understand the change of communication methods in these ancient times, we must turn to the background of prophecy. The approach and use of the prophet's rhetorical role, prior to that of the 8th century, will be an important investigation enabling us to perceive the goal and mode of the presentation of Amos. We must fulfill the need to

understand what it meant to be a "nabi"--the word is a transliteration of the Hebrew (נָבִי) which means prophet.

Preceding the theme of The Prophetic Role, will be Chapter II: The Historical Background. Before delving into the function of the prophet, a clear understanding of the historical events which led to Amos' prophetic utterances is most imperative. By leafing back to the time when Palestine became an established division consisting of Judah and Israel, we can better recognize the significant pattern of events as well as the relationship between the Kingdoms Judah and Israel. As the background is unveiled, we are introduced to the prophets of each reigning dynasty. Our penetration into the history of the 10th, 9th and 8th centuries marks the overture to the setting and scene of Amos' act. Cathcart clarifies how the environmental background is a vital part of the setting of a speech:

It is axiomatic that speech occurs at a specific time and place in history. Further, every speech occurs as a product of the times or cultural milieu that produce the conditions that make the speech necessary.⁹

But to reach this awareness, one must realize what events or acts have occurred to necessitate this prophecy. This will fortify the reader with more knowledge of the historical events to grasp the meaning of Amos' analogies and references. Buber also finds that the historical background is a necessity for understanding the prophet:

We must head the way of the history of Israel's faith from the beginning, and investigate how in this way that essential core develops until it becomes a complete teaching. Here we shall find that at every landmark the persons connected with it are designated by the term nabi. It is true this term came to bear witness to their character as intermediaries, bearing the word of petition from earth to heaven.¹⁰

Our "beginning" is the partition of the United Kingdom (about 930

B.C.E.). As a United Kingdom the land was known as Palestine. The twelve tribes were then united under one rule. After the death of King Solomon the union no longer prevailed. The Kingdom split in two. Judah became the southern kingdom, where the Davidic dynasty continued to rule over two tribes--Judah and Benjamin. The remaining ten tribes occupied the northern kingdom known as Israel. The north deviated from the Davidic dynasty and was ruled by various kings who led the people to acquire new customs rather than follow their old traditions and beliefs.

The "essential core," concerning the 10th-8th centuries, develops as the reigns of the kingdoms change. The events become the substance of Amos' vivid descriptions. He is our intermediary; our nabi, who has come to inform, to heed, to teach, and prophesy. Therefore, we also must become his audience; must be aware of the acts and situations Amos cites. It is difficult to understand the orations without "becoming" a member of his listeners; joining into an empathic union with the efforts of the prophet and in turn that of his hearers. To empathize with his audience, we must imagine what it meant to be an 8th century Samarian hearing Amos' words; to empathize with the prophet, we must imagine ourselves in his position, foreseeing the downfall of the nation and relating the message.

As we delve into the background of this historic period and then proceed to discuss the prophetic role in Chapter III, it prepares us for the personal background of the speaker. To be able to have this empathic union, a conscientious effort must be made to understand the protagonist: the man himself has a history, a training period, a way of life, a motivating force, and a goal for the future. All these combined,

influenced Amos' prophetic role and how he used it.

What is important is not to view a speech apart from the speaker, for it is a personal expression, his vehicle to stir or move listeners . . . the speech is its creator speaking--his attempt to alter or control his environment, to lead his fellows toward what he desires or considers advantageous.¹¹

How much of the Book of Amos is directly from the prophet himself will be handled briefly in Chapter III. There are controversial expert opinions expressing their belief of the actual procedure of documentation. Fortunately, it is initially agreed by most, that much of what we have in print are "real speeches."¹² Through the research of Richard S. Cripps, we become exposed to the various approaches explaining the composition of the Book of Amos.

Chapter IV will cover The Rhetorical Analysis. To begin, we must discover the rhetorical problem Amos encountered. This may help clarify the manner in which he pursued his purpose, the function of arguments and modes of proof. The arrangement of the entire book is a prime controversy. Speeches appear to be out of order which is attributed to the editor or compiler of Amos' work. This additionally contributes to the problem of proving which were the authentic words of Amos and even perceiving the length of Amos' period of prophecy.

To complete the analysis, the style of his rhetoric must be analyzed. The dissertation of Ralph Loren Lewis will be most helpful, as he discusses Amos' persuasive style of appeal. Lewis is concerned with Amos' literary style, his use of words and their language categories. He calculates how often the prophet employs each strategy, demonstrating Amos' attempt to deal with the rhetorical problem. I prefer to continue exploring the rhetorical problem by examining the audience more

carefully, and see how Amos fits into the prophetic role. We can begin to understand the mental attitude of the people through their historical and cultural background, their relation to the prophets and how the people viewed themselves.

It was James Muilenburg's aim in his concern for the critical analysis of biblical writings to coordinate the study of form criticism--relating strictly to literary style--and rhetorical criticism.

What I am interested in, above all, is in understanding the nature of Hebrew literary composition, in exhibiting the structural patterns that are employed for the fashioning of a literary unit, . . . and in discerning the many and various devices by which the predications are formulated and ordered into a unified whole. Such enterprises I should describe as rhetoric and the methodology as rhetorical criticism.¹³

Muilenburg further advocates on what the rhetorical critic should concentrate:

formal rhetorical devices that are employed, but more important, the substance or content of these most strategic loci. . . . It seems to . . . be of considerable consequence, not only for an understanding of how this Gattung [genre] is being fashioned and designed, but also and more especially for a grasp of the writer's intent and meaning. The literary unit is in any event an indissoluble whole, an artistic and creative unity, a unique formulation.¹⁴

Muilenberg calls his essay "Form Criticism and Beyond." What is beyond the form is also my concern: "form and content are inextricably related. They form an integral whole. The two are one."¹⁵ The content of a discourse has a preparation, a prelude of time and events. Therefore, its words become endowed with intricate meaning relating to a past and pointing to a future.

For the method of the criticism, Cathcart states that there are four types of critical points of view: 1) the speaker, 2) the speech, 3) the history, and 4) the persuasion. Each represents the area on

which the critic would like most to focus the analysis. In the first instance, the critic would be most interested in the personal life of the speaker, but the critique is not a biography. It helps answer why the orator performs the way he does, what influenced him, and how he manifested these influences.

In the second form, the speech is the primary concern of the critic. This entails the style and grammar; the use of the words and symbols to appeal to the listeners.

When dealing with the third form, the historical view, the critic "concentrates on an analysis and interpretation of the speech as an historical event."¹⁶ The background information causing the event of the oratory is also the impetus to the type of communication used.

Lastly is the persuasive form which Cathcart favors "because it is concerned with speech-making per se, with its unique forms and its place in human affairs."¹⁷

This paper will deal with each form, mainly because the author feels they are inseparable. It is rather difficult to put emphasis on one area without attempting to blend in the other three and therefore going "beyond," as Muilenburg stresses. It requires a balance of understanding in each form which Cathcart does not overlook:

There is over-lapping in these approaches to criticism and often the critic can employ methods from each type in his assessment and evaluation of speeches. He needs to know the personality and background of the speaker; to place the speaker and the speech in their milieu; to study the ideas and arguments contained in the speech, and to study the effects of the speech on the audience and society. He ought to be able to analyze the speech and recreate the speaking situation, arriving at an empirically verifiable judgment. It is important that he not be satisfied with just one of these types of criticism, but that he seek that type of criticism or combination of types that will most satisfactorily reveal the speech and its impact.¹⁸

Together, these three chapters will provide the necessary information for Chapter V: Evaluation. Without consideration of the subsequent results of Amos' orations the criticism would be incomplete.

Without final evaluation, a rhetorical critique is incomplete Without judgments of the rhetorical qualities of a speech, the critic adds little to the knowledge of the art of discourse. The critic must be able to determine whether the speech has contributed to both the elevation of man and the furthering of effective communication.¹⁹

Here, Cathcart informs us that there are three types of judgment to consider: effects, quality and worth. An evaluation based on these three forms will help accomplish the purpose of this study. We will learn in the end, how effective Amos' work was; and therefore, was it a contributory factor to the society?

The outline of this study was designed to cover each possible influential aspect which caused Amos to prophesy in Samaria. Hopefully, it will help contribute understanding to the various questions we constantly have relating to the Book of Amos, and undoubtedly raise more inquiries.

In summation of the outline, the critique will include four chapters plus this introduction:

- I) Introduction
- II) Historical Background
- III) Prophecy
 - The prophetic role
 - Amos as prophet
- IV) Analysis
 - Amos' rhetorical problem
 - The purpose of Amos' speeches

Lines of argument

Modes of proof

Arrangement

Style

V) Evaluation

The effects of Amos' speaking

CHAPTER II: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Rivalry of Two Kingdoms

During the 10th century, in the reign of King Solomon, Israel's national unity began to shatter. Solomon introduced idolatrous shrines in honor of the religious beliefs of his foreign wives. His lavish encouragement of their religious worship nearly swept the nation into an economic collapse.²⁰ He built "high places"²¹ for their gods and joined in their worship.

His heart was turned away from
the Lord, the God of Israel, who
had appeared unto him twice,
and had commanded him
Concerning this thing, that he
should not go after other
gods, but he kept not that
which the Lord commanded.

(I Kings 11:9-10, Jewish Publication Society)

Thus, about 930 B.C.E., after King Solomon's death the kingdom divided into two parts: the north was known as Israel and the south, Judah. It was at this time in the history of the Hebrews, that there were a series of many reigns in both kingdoms.

Before acquainting ourselves with the history of the divided kingdom, let us consider an observation by H. L. Ellison. He shows us that the split was not a sudden display of rivalry in the national kingdom; the division seemingly existed even as early as 1020 B.C.E. in the first book of Samuel:

Suddenly without the slightest warning we find in 11:18 [I Samuel] the contrast, "children of Israel . . . men of Judah." The contrast only not so marked is repeated in 15:4 [I Samuel]. We finally meet its complete and unmistakable form in 18:16 [I Samuel], "But all Israel and Judah loved David" It is striking that Israel should be considered a legitimate contrast to it [Judah].

It can only mean that even before David became "king over the house of Judah" (II Samuel 2:4)--note how in II Samuel 2:9 the other tribes can be called "All Israel"--there was a very real division between Judah and the rest of the tribes²²

When the monarchy was initially adopted, about 1020 B.C.E., Saul was anointed the first king of Israel. Approximately 1005 B.C.E., the Davidic dynasty was established and Jerusalem, the kingdom's southern city, became the capital and home of the national shrine. Because of continual tribal struggle for power, the unequal division of the kingdom finally took place about 930 B.C.E. Jerusalem belonged to the southern tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and remained the Judean capital; while the remaining ten tribes occupied the northern region, Israel--the larger of the two--and selected Shechem as its capital.

By 922 B.C.E., Rehoboam, Solomon's son, became Judah's king--continuing the Davidic dynasty. Because Rehoboam vindictively rebuffed the northern tribes for requesting an alleviation from the forced labor imposed upon them and the heavy taxes levied by Solomon, they subsequently found a representative spokesman and leader, Jeroboam I (of the tribe of Ephraim and therefore the north was often referred to as Ephraim).

Jeroboam I did not receive his crown without a prophecy to guide him. In I Kings 11:28, we learn that he was employed as Solomon's labor foreman over the house of Joseph. He was met by the prophet of Ahijah, on the outskirts of Jerusalem. The prophet was adorned in a new garment;

by tearing it in twelve pieces--representing the twelve tribes--and telling Jeroboam to take ten of them, he symbolically demonstrated the future of Judea. Ahijah explained the coming of the division of the kingdom as atonement for Solomon's infidelity to the God of his father David, and that Jeroboam had been divinely chosen to lead ten of the tribes of Israel while the king's own son would be given only one.²³ Thus, the prophecy came true when the division of Judea occurred about 930 B.C.E.

Once the division of Judea was final, the national strength of the Hebrews decreased. The peace and harmony which existed throughout most of Solomon's reign between Israel and her neighboring countries ended. Both regions of Judea became tempting targets for the large nations who wanted to control the Near East.

Opposition existed between the north and south which lasted more than 200 years, from 930 B.C.E. to 720 B.C.E.

During the Omri dynasty which established itself about 885 B.C.E., Samaria was declared the capital city of Israel in place of Shechem. It then became the name of the entire northern kingdom (which I will use to refer to the northern kingdom in this paper). Samaria, being larger than Judah, began to develop into an important and vitally international kingdom. Geographically, it was located in a more strategic position being accessible to the Mediterranean Sea and the surrounding nations, i.e., Phoenicia, Aram (Syria), Ashur (Assyria), Philistia. Judah was near Edom and the Sea of Salt which separated her from the nation of Moab and the desert. The idolized and sacred city of Jerusalem was no longer the sanctuary for all Hebrews; the northerners employed two main

sanctions, established by the King Jeroboam I, Beth-el (with a large temple) and Dan (with a small temple).

Gradually Samaria expanded itself into an extremely active and important kingdom politically, culturally and economically. Although the north became successful, it had frequent wars with its neighbors, notably Aram. Therefore, Samaria had to develop a strong army with strong commanders. Too often the military commander manipulated his authority for the selfish advantage of seizing the government to become king. It was this method which brought Omri to his crown and thus created a dynasty in the north. In turn, the dynasty was eventually overthrown by another commander-in-chief, Jehu who destroyed the friendship between the two kingdoms.

The first king of Samaria endeavored . . . to establish peace and order in the kingdom after the years of turmoil. Omri did not go to war with the Judean kingdom as his predecessors had done. It was evidently during his reign that the two formerly hostile kingdoms made a political alliance so as to combine forces in warding off attacks by the enemies. This alliance between the two sections of the Israelite nation was strengthened during the reigns of Omri's immediate successors. From succeeding events it is clear that in international relations the southern kingdom played the role of vassal to the northern; and as the latter was more and more drawn into the sphere of world politics, it dragged isolated Judah with it.

During the reign of Omri, amicable relations were established between Israel and neighboring Phoenicia. Such amity was initiated during the reign of Solomon; but the alliance between the kingdoms became still more secure when Omri's son, Ahab, married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians and priest The Phoenicians began to settle freely in the land of Israel, where they developed industry. But they also brought along the cult of Baal and the loose customs of a seafaring people, both alien to the patriarchal ways of the Israelites.²⁴

As the hunger for power, prominence and wealth increased, the desire became nourished when Samaria emerged as a flourishing reality under Ahab and Jezebel. But their riches were attained through the most

corrupt methods. Jezebel was a forceful queen who stopped at nothing, not even murder, to enlarge her husband's estate.²⁵ Consequently, Samaria suffered great injustice under this reign.

At this time in history Elijah, the prophet, made himself heard. He was the leader of the nationalist prophets who opposed the introduction of alien practices into Hebrew culture:

Elijah regarded the new state of affairs as the beginning of the nation's downfall. He was perturbed by both the Phoenician culture, with its debased customs, and the religious dualism that permitted people to recognize Yahweh officially as the God of Israel and at the same time to build altars in honor of Baal.²⁶

Here was a prophet who intensely devoted himself to his position and ministry; stirring into vibrant and sensitively emotional outbursts against the disloyal acts of the royal house. Thus, we enter one of the tragic segments of biblical history. The Old Testament has many such recorded occurrences where the king was cautioned by a prophet against ill deeds. Ahijah, Elijah, Micaiah, Elisha, and Amos were examples of those who denounced the kings for their crimes but the prophetic messages often went unheeded merely to lead the royal house to its own disaster.

After Jezebel and Ahab's conspiracy and murder of Naboth--the owner of the vineyard adjoining the royal palace--for refusing to sell them his land, Elijah immediately reproached the King for his heinous crime, and uttered a prophecy:

'Thus saith the Lord: In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine . . . because thou hast given thyself over to do that which is evil in the sight of the Lord. Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will utterly sweep thee away, and will cut off from Ahab every man-child The dogs shall eat Jezebel in the moat of Jezreel.'²⁷

The diplomatic marriage of Ahab and Jezebel was successful for the alliance of Judah and Samaria. Unfortunately, it was not employed for the best purposes. Both Ahab and his contemporary, Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, joined forces in campaigns against their neighbors for the acquisition of land. In each instance, the kings consulted their court prophets for advice. Rather than take heed of the prophet Micaiah, who warned against their disastrous campaign,²⁸ they accepted the advice of false prophets--predicting only that which the king(s) wanted to hear. Disaster struck just as the unpopular but honest prophecy had been uttered: the death of Ahab in battle.

Joram, the son of Ahab and Jezebel, reigned in Samaria for ten years. Dubnov informs us that this reign "was extremely turbulent. The international situation had become even more complex."²⁹ There were severe battles with the neighboring Moabites and Arameans from which Samaria suffered greatly.

Clashes with Aram did not cease during the reign of Joram. Once the Arameans besieged Samaria, the supply of bread in the city gave out. A severe famine forced women to eat their own children

Joram's military reverses increased the discontent against the Omri dynasty, which since the beginning of the reign had become widespread among the people. The nationalist party attributed all the misfortunes of the people to the foreign religious cults that the royal house had tolerated. Queen Jezebel, even after Ahab's death, had not ceased to exert an influence upon the administration of the kingdom, an influence that was unfavorable for the national independence that was the ideal of the Yahweh prophets. The nationalist party became convinced that as long as authority remained in the hands of the "House of Omri," the country would not enjoy peace.³⁰

During this reign, Elisha, Elijah's disciple, became very popular and the party's most active prophet. He launched the opposition's coup d'etat against the Omri dynasty by selecting Jehu, the commander-in-chief

of Samaria's army, to overthrow King Joram. Elisha sent a messenger to inform his candidate:

"Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: I have anointed thee king . . . over Israel. And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab, thy master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets."³¹

Jehu's initial aim, besides overthrowing King Joram was to eradicate Jezebel, the opposing force of the kingdom's nationalism. He fulfilled this goal by having her killed--therefore Elijah's prophecy came true, as part of her mutilated body was eaten by dogs. Thus Jehu became King about 842 B.C.E.

The new king was also determined to restore the national religious unity. He accomplished this goal by combining "treachery with cruelty."³² Massacres and bloody slaughters was the style in which he accomplished his mission.

The restoration to the worship of Yahweh at the price of so many atrocities, evoked consternation in many circles, even among those nationally-minded.³³

Samaria experienced pandemonium under the 28 year rule of Jehu. Its international position was poor: they lost Phoenicia as an ally and continued to battle with Aram.

While these events were happening in the north, Jezebel's daughter, Queen Athaliah, reigned in Judah for six years "administering the country as befits a daughter of Jezebel and endeavoring to secure in Jerusalem the cult of Baal, which had been abolished in Samaria."³⁴ Athaliah's son, Joash, was the rightful heir to the crown and the only surviving son of his mother's massacre against the Judean princes of the house of David. Because of Athaliah's corrupt rule, a coup d'etat also occurred in the southern kingdom, led by the high

priest, Jehoiada--guardian of prince Joash.

Amaziah, Joash's son, was the next king of Judah. His goals were for military glory and therefore did not hesitate to scheme against Judah's neighbors. Encouraged by victory, he challenged Samaria. Thus another war erupted between the north and south. Judah was defeated and the death of Amaziah, in 782 B.C.E. brings us to the era when Amos travelled to the northern kingdom.

After the chaos and wars, Samaria settled into a period of peace. The long reign of Jeroboam II (781-740 B.C.E.) seemed to be "the most glorious era in the history of the kingdom of Israel."³⁵ He and the Judean king, Uzziah, reigned under a peaceful atmosphere. They both regarded the turmoil and destruction of their predecessors as utterly futile.

At this point I will examine the political, economic, social and spiritual condition during the time encompassing Amos' appearance. This will help provide a clearer understanding as to what provoked the prophet to publicly denounce "Israel".

Political

Samaria once again became a victorious kingdom. As in the reign of Solomon, it flourished in lavish prestige during the middle of the 8th century; "under Jeroboam II the small kingdom enjoyed its third and last period of prosperity."³⁶

Because of the recent wars, surrounding nations were weakened and therefore politically unthreatening: Judah was defeated by Samaria; in the north, Damascus was conquered by Assyria and Samaria; the eastern neighbor, Moab, yielded to the greater power, Samaria; and Aram's (Syria)

strength in the north was broken by the rising force of Assyria--at this stage Assyria was not advancing near enough to pose a threat to Samaria.

In his 40 year reign Jeroboam II ruled brilliantly, enabling the northern kingdom to reach the height of its material wealth and power. Both his long reign and the favorable political events reinforced the stability and uniformity of Samaria. The kingdom expanded to the north and south. Its good relations with affluent Phoenicia, as well as active trade with other countries, advanced their profitable business. The northern kingdom thus was able to obtain great wealth. But the quick progression of opulence led to oppressive treatment against the poor.

Assyria defeated Damascus which left both Samaria and Judah free to win back lost territory and expand northward. Jeroboam II secured his kingdom against Aram, its old adversary. The enemy was too weak to retaliate and therefore, returned all the conquered cities in Transjordan. Thus, Samaria took great pride and self satisfaction in her conquests.

As for territorial and economic expansion and military defense, Jeroboam II led his people well. Their pride and happiness was evidently promoted through tangible attainments. But Ralph L. Lewis exposes an underlying atmosphere of "an uneasy peace"³⁷ existing in the land. He attributes their anxiety to natural phenomena and greed: "the earthquake, the eclipse of 763 B.C., the pestilence of 765 B.C., and the threats of greedy neighbors"³⁸ He further emphasizes the unpleasant memories of war and famine: "an unhappy remembrance of the Syrians along with recent treatment by the Ammorites (1:3, 13; 4:6-11)."³⁹

Economic

During Jeroboam II's reign, luxury was more a part of upper class life than during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel: the king had a summer and winter palace; furthermore, palaces of the wealthy adorned the kingdom of Samaria. Rather than dwell in old houses built of clay or wood, rich homes were constructed of the finest materials to manifest their rise in status.

The old houses of clay and timber were replaced with others made of stone; conduits and water mains were installed in the larger cities; the market places featured exotic imported commodities; precious metals and ivory were increasingly used to ornament furnitures and household articles. Handicrafts were promoted, as well as the arts, especially architecture and music.⁴⁰

Through this material growth the northern cities expanded tremendously. Trade with its rich and influential neighbor Phoenicia and other countries advanced Samaria's economic status, building itself into the leading commercial trade center of the Middle East.

Palestine has notably been an agricultural country throughout the centuries, thus the main occupation of the people was farming. Although they excelled in trade and commerce during the 8th century, agriculture was still the basis of both Israel's and Judah's economy.

Due to Jeroboam II's commercial expansion, cities were growing at an enormous rate. Large landowners displaced smaller ones in their greed to build large estates for both the summer and the winter. Financial transactions became an active part of business affairs. Commercial banking negotiations including loans and mortgages were widespread. But for the borrower who could not or did not repay the debt, enslavement by the creditor was the consequence. This policy was a usual practice among all ancient peoples. The poorer class outnumbered the rich and

because the enslavement policy was stringently enforced, the gap between classes widened. The ruling class, like a hard outer crust possessing material advantages encompassed and crushed the kingdom's poorer class. Their memories of economic struggle, war and disease, when they worked together for survival, were conveniently put away and forgotten.

Amos describes the atmosphere and lifestyle of the Samaritans:

[They] lie upon beds of ivory;
 And stretch themselves upon their
 couches,
 And eat the lambs out of the flock,
 And the calves out of the midst of
 the stall; . . . (6:4)
 That drink wine in bowls,
 And anoint themselves with the
 chief ointments (6:6)

It seems that most everything was available to the well-to-do while only a modest life style existed for the poor.

Social

"Society was divided between the dissolute rich and the embittered poor."⁴¹ As the rate of rich inhabitants increased, so the poor swelled in number. Within the high social status an attitude of extreme inequity and immorality prevailed:

Many acquired fortunes through fraud and coercion, by oppressing the weak and robbing the poor. The rich lent money at interest to the poor, and when a debtor could not repay on time, his creditors often seized his remaining possession or turned him into a virtual serf. In times of crop failure the wealthy would sell grain from their supplies to the needy at exorbitant prices. Merchants defrauded buyers, resorting to fraudulent weights and measures. Judges and government officials sided with the well-to-do against the poor, accepting bribes from the offenders and ignoring the grievances of the victims. Social customs deteriorated and religious beliefs along with them.⁴²

Spiritual

The northern kingdom became extremely materialistic. Political

victories and economic strength created an excess of self-confidence pervading the social and religious atmosphere. The people interpreted their riches as God's manner of rewarding them for their victories. Even the famine and plagues did not effectively arouse them "from their moral self-complacency (iv. 4-11)."⁴³

Temple Beth-el was considered to be a royal site and its priests were revered as royal officials. The choice of Beth-el as a sacred place was not a random selection nor a convenience. It has been considered a hallowed spot since Abraham's visit (Genesis 12:8) and later as the place of Jacob's spiritual dream of the ladder that reached heaven. The city's original name was Luz and Jacob subsequently changed it to the "House of God," (Genesis 28:19)--which is the literal meaning of Beth-el.

In contrast to the north, the southern kingdom, "Judah, where theocracy was deeply rooted, the priests did not recognize the king's claim to the title of high priest"⁴⁴ In Beth-el the people celebrated sacrificial offerings and meal offerings from the finest meats.

To the chant of psalms, and the music of the harp, clouds of incense rose to heaven. But this was pure ritualism, simply an external cult in which man's inward nature was not involved. However, these ceremonies satisfied the general conscience: Yahweh would be content as long as the perfume of sweet-smelling incense ascended towards Him.⁴⁵

As indicated earlier, the prophets Elijah and Elisha tried to prevent the people from worshipping with corrupt rites. They succeeded to the extent that Phoenicia was no longer a strong cultural influence on the northern kingdom. But during the 8th century, residual influences of foreign cults once again manifested.

the old popular cult of a golden calf as the image of Yahweh still lingered. And remnants of the Canaanite-Phoenician cults of Baal and Ashtoreth, which at one time had been uprooted by King Jehu, were still present in the country. An array of temples with mixed cults still existed in Samaria, Dan, Gilga, Mizpah, and Gilead of Transjordan. ⁴⁶

The temples had apartments for prostitutes, both male and female, and there was frequent sacrifices of the first born to placate the god The shrine [Beth-el] was to Yahweh, but not the Yahweh Moses had preached, or . . . that David worshiped. This was a rich man's god, requiring elaborate and costly ritual, and sacrifices far beyond the pocket of the crowd This crowd came not on foot, but in chariots, litters, on horseback, or if from a distance, on camelback. They came accompanied by troops of servants and herds of sacrificial animals. Sometimes they brought a child to be sacrificed. ⁴⁷

The king also attended the festivals, and holidays at the shrine of Beth-el. He would bring his dignitaries and they all participated in the sacrificial ceremony. For this reason the temple was called "Royal holiness," (mikdash melech-- מִקְדָּשׁ מֶלֶךְ).

Both Judah and Samaria had other sacred sites equal to that of their centrally holy cities, Jerusalem and Beth-el. In Judah, many went to the numerous altars outside of Jerusalem. In these provincial cities the old ritual was practiced; while Jerusalem was influenced by rituals of other local cults.

In . . . Israel, . . . the decentralization of worship was more pronounced. In addition to the royal temple at Beth-el, there existed a temple of Yahweh in Dan for the remotely situated northern tribes, then in the capital of Samaria, in Gilgal, Mizpah, Shechem, [and Gilead of Transjordan], and several other cities. Public worship on the "high places" and in the groves was more widespread here than in Judah, and in form were more akin to the heathen cult. Village altars consisting of heaps of stones, were set up on hill tops and frequently in groves in the shadow of an oak, a palm or a tamarisk. Near the altars were such symbols of ancient Canaanite worship as a carved stone monument (mazerah) or a sacred tree (askerah) in the form of a wooden pillar, thickest at the top, resembling the image of the fertility goddess Ashtaroth Here the feasts and revels in which elaborately painted women participated, involved the bacchanalia associated with the Ashtaroth cult of sacred prostitution, which so aroused the wrath of the prophets Riotous feasting took place around the temples and altars

during . . . holidays. Every well-to-do family invited the poor, widows, orphans, and gerim [strangers] to its feast.⁴⁸

Judah

The situation in the land of Judah had much the same ascension to prosperity and political prestige as the northern kingdom. Because King Uzziah built up Judah's economic and military strength, his reign was rated with that of King Solomon. Josephus writes that Uzziah "was a good man, and by nature righteous and magnanimous, and very laborious in taking care of the affairs of his kingdom."⁴⁹ The king held a list of victorious conquests over the Philistines, Ammonites and those countries reaching the Egyptian border. To protect Judah against any future invasions from the south and west, he expanded the army and constructed fortresses on the frontiers.

Within his kingdom he repaired Jerusalem's damaged wall;⁵⁰ built many high towers; erected towns in the desert with garrisons; and dug channels for the passage of water. The economy was flourishing through its highly successful agricultural industry and its active trade with Phoenicia and Egypt.

The luxuries of these two civilized countries flowed into little Judah and accustomed its inhabitants to a life of ease and extravagance.⁵¹

In his historical outline, Josephus accuses Uzziah of becoming overly confident, conceited and lacking in humbleness.

He was corrupted in his mind by pride, and became insolent, and thus on account of that abundance which he had of things that will soon perish, and despised that power which is of eternal duration, (which consisted of piety toward God, and in the observation of his laws;)⁵²

This may be why Uzziah unabashedly abused his privilege as king and proceeded to break the law of the temple by performing in the sanctuary

a rite of sacrifice reserved only for the priest. He subsequently suffered from leprosy which the people considered his punishment. At the time of this sinful event, the earthquake mentioned in the opening of the Book of Amos struck the land of Judah.

Summary

Thus, we have traced the episodes of both kingdoms, beginning with the division itself. It appears that the schism was a rather old and deeply rooted one, existing among the people before the actual separation in approximately 930 B.C.E. Such an atmosphere of separatism must have seemed like an inherent condition in the lives of each generation, and finally the physical separation being a catharsis of this archaic prejudice. The alliances which take place between Judah and Samaria during the next three centuries are never permanent. Since this prejudicial atmosphere still hovered over the people, the initial differences obviously could not be erased nor solved. No doubt, it also influenced the atmosphere of Amos' speeches and the reactions of his audience.

Our awareness of Samaria's status within the Near East and how this status was achieved creates a great understanding of Amos' role and what his words meant. It seems that the northern kingdom had a thirst for an active and leading role in the Orient. Therefore, she widely opened the gates to every possible endeavor to attain economic, political, and social prominence. It was apparently an intoxicating desire drawing the people away from their traditional religious way of life and attracting them towards the superficiality of a life style exuding with material wealth. They abandoned the laws of the Ten Commandments by adopting religious ritual practices of other cults and abusing those who were

less fortunate. These goals led to a host of unrighteous acts against humanity; assimilation took place with other cults by worshipping their gods--Baal, Ashtoreth--and the adoption of bacchanlia and human sacrifice, forbidden by Hebraic law.

Even leaders like Jehu, appointed to the position of rescuing the people out of the hands of torturous rulers (Ahab and Jezebel) and guiding them back to Yahweh, did not contain his force of power but became carried away with the impact and authority of his sword. As a result, such leadership caused Samaria to further provoke the wrath of God. Therefore, the problem was not at all alleviated but rather more ingrained into the generations of the kingdom.

An interesting pattern of similarities emerges within these three centuries. In the reigns of Solomon, the Omri dynasty and Jeroboam II, Israel was noted for its wealth and amity with Phoenicia; peace existed between Judah and Israel, and both were actively involved in international affairs. But each of the three reigns also provoked its own moral decay through similar errors; each sang the common theme of corruption to which Amos listened and as a result uttered the alternative solution in the name of the Holy One:

Seek ye Me, and live; (5:4)

Seek good, and not evil,

that ye may live; (5:14)

And establish justice

in thy gate (5:15)

CHAPTER III: PROPHECY

The Prophetic Role

Significant characters called "men of God" often appeared during the historical period of the rivalry of Judah and Samaria. The purpose of these men was to communicate divine messages to the people who consulted them. In the 8th century Amos introduced a new mode of prophecy, namely the literary style.

The story of Samuel, the seer, was the prelude to the initiation of monarchy in Israel. In I Samuel 9:18-20 Saul encounters Samuel, who informs Saul that his lost asses were found. It is here we become acquainted with the "oldest grade of prophecy."⁵³ When Saul was met by a band of prophets (I Samuel 10:10), the Bible introduces us to the existence of groups of prophets found all around the country.

Herman Gunkel declares that, "The greatest figures . . . ancient Israel ever produced were prophets,"⁵⁴ referring to those of the later period. Gunkel does not include the old prophetic school in his praise because of the pronounced differences between the two. There are similarities in their psychical processes and their physical mannerisms. But it is with intellectual content in which the latter prophets present their messages. "It is the highest thoughts that fill the ecstasy of the later prophets."⁵⁵

In the 10th century, the trade of the man of God became well known for giving oracles.⁵⁶ He was often depended upon by the royal house as

well as the laymen: "When he [someone] was at a loss, he ran to his deity like a child to his parents, and the 'oracles' were to the people of antiquity and to the Hebrews an integral part of religion."⁵⁷

Hence, they became professional counselors of their people for great as well as small problems. Their abilities involved a wide range of skills, e.g., healing diseases, consultants to the state, solving difficulties of everyday life.

But out of the ranks of such "prophets" there arose men of a nobler stamp, men of a loftier flight of thought and greater breadth of view. These great ones speak of fates of peoples and kings, victories and defeats, the deliverance of a besieged capital, the downfall of a dynasty . . . And they dealt with them of their own accord. The ordinary sons of prophets waited till they were consulted; these men came forward without such waiting.⁵⁸

The prophets who came forward without invitation came not when the situation was praiseworthy but when it demanded admonishment.

Then appeared the man of God unbidden and unwelcome, and uttered the mind of God No great thing ever happened in Israel without the presence of a prophet to announce it (Amos iii.7). A prophet like this, especially when he prophesies evil, need not look for reward.⁵⁹

But even before the 8th century, hostility and resentment existed against the prophets. Ahab called Elijah a "troubler" (I Kings 18:17); and told Jehoshaphat (king of Judah) that he hated the prophet Micaiah because for him he always prophesied evil (II Chronicles 18:7)--and therefore imprisoned Micaiah (II Chronicles 18:25-26).

The men of God were personal counselors to their clients, with whom they often met in private consultations, to advise or forewarn. For the royal house they served a major role. As trained advisors, their ability to foresee enabled them to report on any subject of which the king may inquire--from personal health to military victory. If he was the

king's personal prophet, he also acted as his guardian informing him when necessary, of his immoral or lack of spiritual conduct and its ultimate repercussions (II Samuel 12).

And now in the reign of Jeroboam II, comes a man⁶⁰ to initiate classical prophecy; not to prophesy for the king as his predecessors did but to speak directly to the people. For the first time we encounter a prophet whose approach and purpose are aimed toward the masses.

Divinity

Divination was not only practiced among the Hebrews but by all the nations of the Near East.⁶¹ Therefore, it was not a unusual phenomenon but a normal trade utilized and encouraged across the land. But there existed various forms of the practice of divination and each nation did not pursue the same religious practices. Many cults relied on magic, incantations or the interpretation of visual signs, to communicate with their gods.⁶² The practice of prophets of the Old Testament did not equate with these forms of divination which were dependent upon external powers.

Prophetic incidents, revelatory moments, are believed to have happened to many people in many lands. But a line of prophets, stretching over many centuries, from Abraham to Moses, from Samuel to Nathan, from Elijah to Amos, from Hosea to Isaiah, from Jeremiah to Malachi, is a phenomenon for which there is no analogy.⁶³

Surrounding the Israelites were various religious cults whose rituals and beliefs did not usually meet the approval of the prophets, like Elijah, Elisha and Amos. Therefore, the prophets met an enormous challenge to try and protect the Israelites from being influenced by these cults and to discourage them from adopting paltry rituals.

The abilities of this profession were not easily attained among the

Israelites--one had to be a devoted student. For many years the neophyte was engaged in a studious lifestyle under strict supervision of his master⁶⁴ and the sanctuary in which he was taught. Those who attended the schools or guilds of prophets were called "sons of the prophets." For reasons of insuring and protecting the confidentialities of the trade, guilds were established throughout the ancient world. They were designed with disciplinary rules for both the masters and their apprentices.

Terminology

Harry Orlinsky relates that prior to the 8th century technical terms such as "'visionary' (hozeh), 'seer' (ro'eh),⁶⁵ 'man of God' (ish-Elohim), and 'prophet' (nabi)"⁶⁶ were used to refer to the diviner. The latter expression was applied to the classical prophets, such as Amos. But, even in the first book of Samuel, reference is made to the change in term usage: when Saul, as a young lad, was searching for the lost asses, his servant suggested one last resort before returning home:

'Behold now, there is in this city a man of God and he is a man that is held in honor; all that he saith cometh surely to pass; now let us go thither; peradventure he can tell us concerning our journey whereon we go' (I Samuel 9:6) Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he said: 'Come and let us go to the seer;' for he that is now called a prophet was beforetime called a seer. (I Samuel 9:9, italics mine).

The last three terms which Orlinsky cites are evident in this quote.

The servant refers to Samuel as a 'man of God,' while later in this story, when they inquire where to find him, they call Samuel the 'seer' (I Samuel 9:11); Samuel himself acknowledges this title by telling Saul 'I am the seer' (9:19).⁶⁷ The historian clarifies the use of the

ancient term seer by indicating the more contemporary title prophet. Obviously, there exists a difference in meaning important enough to promote the editorial note.

"The word 'prophet' used to translate the Hebrew nabi, is a Greek word, prophetes."⁶⁸ During the classical period it represented someone who interpreted to others the message of a God. Nabi was not originally Hebrew:

The verb seems to be connected with the Akkadian nabū, "to call." Nabi, . . . seems to denote a person who is the passive object of an action from without. Nabi, then, would mean, literally, one who is called (by God), one who has a vocation (from God), . . . and one who retains the condition imposed upon him by that call or influence denot[ing] a spokesman, a person charged with delivering a message and who speaks under the authority of someone else.⁶⁹

These derivations of nabi are not meant to imply that a prophet plays a passive role. He may indeed be the "voice" of the deity but he is not like a mechanical object merely spewing forth messages; he is not emotionally detached from the purpose of his mission. Since pathos is a major ingredient in his style, involvement is inseparable. Upon speaking to his listeners the main theme is not prediction, it is rather to urgently and earnestly advise. Note, the early usage of the word nabi:

prediction in itself does not necessarily belong to the character of the nabi Moses, on refusing to go before Pharaoh, is referred to his brother Aaron, who is to speak in his name. Hence Aaron is called Moses' nabi, prophet (Exodus 7:1).⁷⁰

As it is already apparent and will be further emphasized by Amos, the nabi emerges as one who has a knowledge of the occult and the ability to foresee the future.

While it is true that foretelling is an important ingredient and may serve as a sign of the prophet's authority (Deut. 18:22; Isa. 41:22; 43:9), his essential task is to declare the word of God to the here and now; to disclose the future in order to illumine what is involved in the present.⁷¹

Even in old Arabic, the verb means to speak out for another. "According to Moses Ibn Ezra, . . . nabi derived from the root nba, which means in Arabic 'to inform', because he informs in the name of God what is revealed to him secretly."⁷²

Not only does the verb denote what the person does but also how his message is conveyed. The man of God was not usually one filled with tranquility, as an impartial observer, objectively surveying the situation. He was rather emotionally and profoundly moved due to his awareness and foresight. "It was not ordinary men, but strong enthusiastic personalities who underwent these experiences."⁷³ Prophets affiliated with the guild or who acted independently did not happen upon their call accidentally:

It was . . . not an accident, that it was young men, with blood still warm, who were called to the prophetic office (Amos ii. 11; Jer. i. 6; Dan. i) . . . , it was men of religion, in whom faith burned, not with a cheerful homely glow, but with a mighty destroying flame⁷⁴

Those of the earlier school belonged to the "sons of the prophets"⁷⁵ and performed in what seemed an ecstatic manner. Actions varied among those seized by the "spirit of God;" Saul⁷⁶ rent his clothes and lay naked all day and night (I Samuel 19:24); Isaiah imitated Saul's wild act by "walking naked and barefoot" (Isaiah 20);⁷⁷ Ahijah who rent his new garment into twelve pieces (I Kings 11:30), performed a milder act; and when the hand of God came upon Elijah, he ran approximately 25 miles in the midst of a drenching storm, from the top of Mount Carmel to the city of Jezreel (I Kings 18:46).

Ecstasy

It is commonly viewed that to reach ecstasy, inspirational⁷⁸ devices

were often used: Elisha requested music, "And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him" (I Kings 3:15). But music⁷⁹ is not an unusual means of inducing spiritual expression. Through the centuries composers have written many scores for meditation and prayer. The presence of solitude is considered another preparatory stage which may be comparable to a meditative state of being "able to suspend all other impressions and to devote himself entirely to that for which he is looking."⁸⁰ Moses,⁸¹ Elijah and Elisha sought the mountain tops for the privacy of nature's silence. And another universal device used was fasting.

Many of these preparatory measures for revelation were also manifestations of bereavement, displeasure or repentance (II Samuel 12:16; 13:31). They were significant acts of release--either of an emotional upset or an expulsion of the tensions of the empirical world.

The word ecstasy is a derivative of the Greek "ekstasis," defined as "a state of trance,"⁸² where the soul has left the body; or a departed soul "entered into a relationship with invisible beings or . . . united with a deity"⁸³--a state of being possessed by the deity. Psychologists relate to ecstasy as a "withdrawal of consciousness from circumference to center."⁸⁴

Heschel expresses two basic kinds of ecstasy: "The wild and fervid type, which is a state of frenzy arising from overstimulation and emotional tension; and the sober or contemplative . . . type, which is a rapture of the soul in a state of complete calmness, enabling a person to rise beyond the confines of consciousness. The motivation for ecstasy lies in the desire for communion with a higher being which transcends

the grasp of man in his normal condition."⁸⁵

The prophets we speak of were never possessed by the deity; their souls did not depart; they were humanly moved to emotional reactions because of their knowledge. Therefore we cannot call them "mad" because they outwardly displayed their great levels of energy. Once this label is applied, prophets are too readily categorized as eccentric madmen, and from this a precedence is created. Thereafter the image is merely taken for granted with few prophets escaping the categorization.

Many of the pre-exilic prophets are not considered ecstatic according to Heschel. Taking the actions of prophets usually called ecstatic and wild, he reveals their human qualities; their emotional capacities; and interprets their behavior as meaningful and logical acts.

Indeed, if ecstasy were essential to prophetic experience, Moses, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah would have to be disqualified as prophets, since no trace of ecstasy is found in their experiences.

It is true that the prophet is overwhelmed by the divine word that comes to him; but it is the consciousness of being overwhelmed, the consciousness of receptivity, and the ability to respond to the word that are outstanding features of his experience The prophet, unlike the ecstatic, is both a recipient and a participant.⁸⁶

Before classifying any of the prophets as ecstatic let's consider Heschel's differentiation between the ecstatic and the prophet: the former willingly puts his energies into experiencing ecstasy, therefore it is not a spontaneous revelation but one provoked by various means of stimulation. The prophet does not seek illumination nor the call to prophecy, it calls him. "God comes upon the prophet before the prophet seeks the coming of God."⁸⁷ Amos justifies this theory when he tells Amaziah he was not a prophet nor a member of the guild. Like many of his brethren, his livelihood was in agriculture, being "a herdman and

dresser of sycamore trees." Amos declares that "the Lord took me from following the flock and . . . said unto me: Go, prophesy unto My people Israel," (7:15). The prophet's explanation of his calling supports Heschel's premise of spontaneity:

Moments of inspiration come to the prophet without effort, preparation or inducement. Suddenly and unexpectedly without initiative, without aspiration, the prophet is called to hear the Voice.⁸⁸

If we recall those prophets or seers cited thus far, not one of them depended upon moments of inspiration to convey God's message. Communication was instantaneous. Those examples which depict some preparation or stimulation are few. The men of God have been illustrated in the Bible again and again, to have spontaneous foresight and awareness. If Elisha called for a minstrel, it may be in that moment he found it necessary. It is apparent that he was reluctant to prophesy for his guests. It displeased him to see Joram, the son of the notorious Ahab and Jezebel, approach him for prophetic counseling. Joram pressed⁸⁹ the matter of their inquiry, therefore it was to Joram that Elisha retorted: "'What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother'" (II Kings 3:13). Possibly here, Elisha found the need for a minstrel to placate the atmosphere. Remember that the battle against the cult of Baalim is a very tender subject for these sensitive prophets.

As for the escape to the solitude of the mountain top, it seems probable that they actually went up to the community of the prophets. The Bible indicates a common ascension in I Samuel 9:11-14; 10:5--Saul ascended to the city where Samuel was to be found, and Saul was to hurry because Samuel was about to go up to the "high place" to make a

sacrifice; Samuel prophesied, telling Saul that he will "come to the hill of God . . ." and he will "meet a band of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a timbrel, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they will be prophesying." Here again we have an example of prophets with music. In this instance the instruments would be an important sign for Saul to be able to recognize the prophetic group. After all he is a newcomer to the scene of prophecy; and why else was Samuel so precise as to tell him exactly which musical instruments they will be carrying?

When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken (Deut. 18:22)

When Saul encountered the prophets, it is not certain that they actually used these instruments in order to prophesy. Even when Saul became a changed man because "the spirit of God came mightily upon him, and he prophesied among them" (I Samuel 10:10), there is no indication of ecstasy. If anything, the atmosphere was indeed tranquil.

It is strange that in all the discussion of prophetic ecstasy, scholars overlooked the significant fact that in the leading prophetic figures between the time of Moses and the time of Amos, no sign of ecstasy is reported.

Passionately and relentlessly, the prophets battled against the alcoholic and sexual orgiasm of the Baal cult Is it conceivable that the prophets should themselves succumb to a practice which they condemned?⁹⁰

Therefore the nature of the prophetic movement should not be misunderstood because of words such as "wild," "frenzy," and "mad." Heschel takes the actions attributed to specific prophets considered or assumed an act of wild frenzy, and logically breaks it down to its actual or probable state.⁹¹ He advises not to accept the unobjective opinions of people who were indoctrinated with an attitude of viewing

the prophets as madmen, who possessed abnormal tendencies.

People like to think of men of genius as madmen, and to see in every form of possession and rapturous emotion a mysterious disturbance of the mind.⁹²

The result of overpowering emotions can lead an observer to misinterpret the state in which he sees the affected person. A good example is the incident of Samuel's mother Hannah. As she was being observed by the priest Eli, during her moments of prayer, he watched her lips moving in silent prayer and assumed he saw an intoxicated woman.

The impression a person makes upon people is hardly to be taken as a completely reliable diagnosis . . . any person who refuses ever to compromise with mediocrity, commonplace, self-approval, is considered mentally awry, half-crazy, a crackpot or monomaniac.⁹³

But according to the neoplatonic philosopher, Plotinus, one can attain the height of ecstasy by relinquishing the circumscribed self to the point of endlessness:

You ask, how can we know the Infinite? I answer, not by reason. It is the office of reason to distinguish and define. The Infinite, therefore, cannot be ranked among its objects. You can only apprehend the Infinite by a faculty superior to reason, by entering into a state in which you are your finite self no longer--in which the divine essence is communicated to you. This is ecstasy. It is the liberation of your mind from its finite consciousness. Like only can apprehend like; when you thus cease to be finite, you become one with the Infinite. In the reduction of your soul to its simplest self, its divine essence, you realize this union--this identity⁹⁴

In acceptance of Plotinus' definition of ecstasy, it is understandable why Heschel did not find reports of ecstasy "between the time of Moses and the time of Amos." If an ecstatic state means a display of frenzy then I agree with Heschel. But according to Plotinus, it is quite the reverse:

All that tends to purify and elevate the mind will assist you in this attainment, and facilitate the approach and the recurrence

of these happy intervals. There are, then, different roads by which this end may be reached. The love of beauty which exalts the poet; that devotion to the One and that ascent of science which makes the ambition of the philosophic and that love and those prayers by which some devout and ardent soul tends in its moral purity towards perfection--these are the great highways conducting to that height above the actual and the particular, where we stand in the immediate presence of the Infinite, who shines out as from the deeps of the soul.⁹⁵

Thus we can discern that Amos, and the prophets preceding him knew such ecstatic moments, many times. The very fact that they sought "high places," and solitude complies with Plotinus' "Infinity." As we shall see, Amos, indeed describes the visions of his oneness with the Infinite --not especially moments of joyful messages.

The prophets were initially human beings and their exceptional abilities do not make them impervious to emotion. Since they were able to envision future events, it is understandable how one foreseeing a disastrous happening can become agonized and therefore seem to be in a disturbed state. For the viewer, it may be difficult to empathize with the prophet because the former sees only one side of the matter while the man of God sees both (before and after). The prophet's predicament is like that of a parent who sees the child's activities leading to a destructive outcome. The bond of kinship alone makes it difficult to merely sit back and let it happen; no interference and not preventing to alleviate the inevitable hurt is a difficult position. It is rather agonizing to see and know clearly what is to come; but more crucial is how to communicate this knowledge.

Elisha displayed deep emotional sadness upon being approached by Hazael for prophetic counseling on behalf of the king of Aram, who was concerned about his ill-health. The prophet had unfavorable news of the

king's fatality; but subsequently he wept in great sorrow because as he stared at his visitor, he saw the terrible evil Hazael will do to Israel (II Kings 8:12). The oracle was spontaneous, not at all "wild" and the prophet revealed a human expression of tears because he could see the oncoming disaster.

Advice not accepted, causes the pain to be even more abundant; all the effort, the care and worry incorporated into conveying this vital message or warning, passes into oblivion--thus, the messenger cares more than those to be affected by the ill deeds.

Summary

Because we now have a better understanding of the meaning of prophecy and its evolving stages, it is possible to ascertain a clearer comprehension of the prophetic role of Amos. Prophecy was always employed. We can look back to Joseph who was able to prophesy through the interpretation of dreams--it is merely one of the many ways to receive the "Word;" others may hear voices, see visions, or signs and so on. Many may have found various labels for this ability and for those who manifested it, but whatever title adheres, the essence of prophecy remains the same: a message of advice and guidance. Therefore, the one who carries the message and utters it, is the advisor or prophet. This messenger offers words endowed with meaning, a meaning more valuable than any material element. Obviously, there was a vital need for prophetic counseling or it would not have come into existence. To have the ability was not an asset to show superiority, its attainment and employment served a specific purpose: to help mankind see their mistakes and injustices through the eyes of an objective viewer; and hence correct

their ways. The prophet is the people's caretaker, like the shepherd who watches his flock to see they do not stray and are in a state of good health. The shepherd knows the path in which his herd should follow; he knows their capabilities and their function; therefore he is also like a parent concerned for the welfare and future of his children. This is far from a simple task for a prophet because unlike the shepherd, he directs his communication to those of his own species, who can answer him in his own language, reject him, expel him and/or kill him.

Thus, to be a true prophet, possessing its knowledgeable attributes, was a gift one cultivated through study and devotion to God. As in many professional pursuits, it is one involving years of learning and a lifetime of dedication. Apparently a wide range of subjects were mastered during the training period--for the prophet has more than a superficial knowledge of the sciences, politics, history, economics, theology, and theosophy, language and literature.

Indications reveal the unlikelihood to have simply chosen the prophetic livelihood above other professions. The decision appears to be within the realm of the divine; prepared and waiting for the birth of each "qualified" candidate to be carefully trained and readied for his mission. The time of initiation varied in the life of each candidate. Elisha was a grown lad when Elijah chose him; whereas Samuel was an infant when his mother promised him to this apprenticeship. And when the chosen one pursued his mission, the responsibilities proved to be filled with hazardous burdens to both his physical and emotional welfare, but never more than the prophet could actually bear. Therefore, it was also to his advantage to have been taught the most efficient methods for

self-preservation and restoring one's energies. Elijah manifests this knowledge in his flight to the Judean wilderness (I Kings 19:48).

Since we have established that prophets were not randomly chosen, Amos' explanation of his call to the prophetic office must not be misunderstood. The fact that he did not belong to the "sons of the prophets" does not reduce his abilities nor his education. Like Elisha, who was also a shepherd, Amos entered the prophetic mission during his adult life.

Amos as Prophet

His Background

With the accumulative background material thus far, we can create a clearer image of Amos' role as a prophet. We meet him in the land of the ten northern tribes, though he is a southerner, a Judean.

Amos scarcely informs us about his private life, not even his lineage, nor the name of his father--but this may be a deliberate omission if Amos considered such information of no value to others, and surely not pertinent to his mission. What knowledge we do gain of his origin is obtained through the superscription in the beginning of the Book of Amos, which tells us his home is in the district⁹⁶ of Tekoa--the easternmost area of Judah--about 25 miles south of Beth-el where he preached. Tekoa was not far from Jerusalem--the holy city of Judah--about half the distance to Beth-el. It lay on the border of the wilderness of the desert, towering 2800 feet above sea level. From this height most likely the Jerusalem temple was visible; about 12 miles east, one could see the Dead Sea lying almost 4000 feet beneath; and still further in the distance, the silhouette of Moab's red mountains.

It was this wilderness where the herdman roamed; not an area conducive for agriculture--except possibly in the spring when the grass was green--because of its arid and rocky conditions; inhabited by wild beasts rather than human population.

It was a rough, wild region on the roof of the world. The horizons were so wide that one seemed to look down even on the mountains of Moab across the Jordan Valley to the east. Dawn and sunset were so sudden as to seem daily miracles. At night one sat with one's head among the stars, everything still except the call of the night bird or the cry of the jackal or lion making his kill.⁹⁷

Although Amos rarely mentions personal data, he did without hesitation, defend his personage upon declaring himself a shepherd and dresser of sycamore trees (7:14). The prophet was revealing himself professionally as an unpretentious man of the soil rather than to the ranks of a "prophet's son."⁹⁸ Within his field of work Amos was not alone but in the company of Saul, David, and Elisha. They too were tending their flock at the time of their calling.⁹⁹

Sycamore trees did not grow in areas of high altitude, like Tekoa, they flourished in a warm climate such as the Jordan Valley or closer to the Dead Sea. Because of the many unfavorable agricultural conditions, it is most probable that Amos travelled a great deal to support his livelihood. As a dresser of sycamore trees, he would need to seek seasonal employment in various places outside Tekoa, and as a shepherd he would need to move about for the benefit of grazing his flock and selling his product. Otto Eissfeldt proposes "that Amos may have owned land either in the hill country which runs down the Mediterranean, or in the valley of the Dead Sea, which may both well have stood in close economic relationship to Tekoa,"100

As a result of his dual occupational expertise and extensive

travelling, it is reasonable therefore to conjecture that Amos met many people from various lands and cultures. He would then have had the opportunity to acquaint himself with the northern kingdom including their economic, political, social, and spiritual conditions. This would account for his vivid illustrations of how the citizens of Samaria conducted their lives.

He shows an almost uncanny knowledge of the profiligacy of life in Israel, and of how the upper classes spent their time. There are constant references that sound as though they came from personal knowledge¹⁰¹

The sights he depicts may have been obtained through first hand observation; or he could have heard similar descriptions from acquaintances made along the way.

Preparation and Training

Because of the scarcity of information about Amos, it is difficult to be certain about his training and preparation. It is only possible to combine the theories and suggestions of scholars and attempt to find new perceptions.

When Amos journeyed east and south of Tekoa, "he came into contact with Edomites and other 'people of the East,' with whom he could exchange experiences and knowledge, pieces of news and old proverbial material."¹⁰² Therefore, pursuing his livelihood enriched his scope of knowledge and broadened his awareness of others as well as himself, utilizing that which was most familiar to him. Through his descriptive scenes of nature, he displayed the lifestyle and experiences of the shepherd.

Amos, inspired by the God of Elijah and Elisha, was not like these older prophets who performed miracles and wondrous acts. As a literary prophet, he displayed a new approach to accomplish his prophetic role.

Amos came to the north prepared with words vividly describing the corrupt conduct which he saw in Samaria; words to relate the visions he perceived in his moments of ecstasy or as Plotinus said "one[ness] with the Infinite" (see p. 37); and thus to interpret the meaning of each "sight." The careful and precise use of words, was his device to reach the minds and hearts of his listeners so as to promote a change for a more righteous way of life.

A prophet was a man of the dabar, of the word, a spokesman of God, therefore, who was directly inspired by God to give a particular message in definite circumstances; he was an instrument through whom God actually revealed himself.¹⁰³

His presence was that of a brave and daring man; it was not unusual to travel to and from either kingdom for commercial or leisurely reasons, but this was not Amos' main purpose. The prophet came with the intention of disclaiming their conduct and to describe how they are creating their own destruction. This was a bold plan, risking his welfare. The crowds could have physically rebelled against him or as in the past, the prophet's life could have been threatened by the royal house. Instead, the priest Amaziah dealt with him verbally ordering him out of the kingdom.¹⁰⁴

It was quite probable that his calling to the prophetic office occurred in Tekoa. Amos says that the Lord told him to come away from behind his flock. Therefore, we can assume that he left the herd at home. It is unlikely that he would receive his calling while "on the road," since it would mean abandoning his flock to devote time to preaching--unless of course he had servants or sons who could take over.

Then at home once more, he pondered what he had seen and heard until the day when he could no longer keep still . . . ,¹⁰⁵

In the silence of the desert he may have meditated on the future of the northern kingdom¹⁰⁶

Driven by a sense of duty he left his hills and his herds and his sycamore trees, and trudged the rough twenty-five miles or so to Beth-el¹⁰⁷

When Amos claims to have been taken from behind or from following the flock, the expression accentuates his humbleness and self-perception. Being behind the flock indicates one who follows rather than leads; now the time has come to reverse the role and become a leader. In his new role, as conductor of a new flock, his words may be direct and austere, but if we begin to visualize his descriptive images, we too can comprehend his concern. If the people could observe themselves in their present state, they would see the very sights Amos depicts; and if they could comprehend the consequences of their evils, they would see beyond the present, realizing there will be a dark future.

Because they have ripped up the
women with child of Gilead,
That they might enlarge their
border.
So will I kindle a fire in the
wall of Rabbah,
And it shall devour the palaces
thereof,
With shouting in the day of
battle,
With a tempest in the day of
the whirlwind;
And their king shall go into
captivity,
He and his princes together,
Saith the Lord.

(Amos 1:13-15)

Our concern here is attempting to verify Amos' training as a true prophet. Beginning with Jerome, scholarly opinions of Amos' ability ranged from an unlettered rustic to the purest literary style in the Old

Testament.¹⁰⁸ As we know, the prophet came from a land of the wilderness. His life in the wilderness has an inherent quality of spiritual preparation found in the teachings and practices of his predecessors. We find Elijah utilizing the wilderness as a spiritual atmosphere in I Kings 19:4, when he fled for safety from the wrathful Jezebel. Of all the places, he sought sanction in the Judean wilderness and remained there 40 days and 40 nights under the auspices of an angel.

Later did not also Jeremiah of Anathoth [6:1] and John the Baptist [Matthew 3:1-3] draw inspiration from the same wilderness of Judah?¹⁰⁹

The actual district of Tekoa has been mentioned in the Old Testament infrequently but quite significantly: first, in II Samuel 14, a wise woman from Tekoa was sought to deliver a message to King David. Wolff suggests that in choosing her it was no mere accident.

She understood how to introduce a legal case (v.v.6f.); how, by use of an analogy from nature to elevate it to the level of a principle, especially with regard to the rights of an outcast (v.14); and how at the end to come to the choice between "good and evil" (v.17)¹¹⁰

Secondly, I Chronicles 2:24 relates the name of the "Father of Tekoa"--most likely the leading figure or founder of the district--a descendant of Jacob's son Judah; and the grandson of the "father of Gilead." Gilead, remember, is the homeland of Elijah. Have these two been mentioned together in Chronicles to show its spiritual kinship too? After all, from these districts descended two significant entities possessing divine messages. And thirdly, we learn in II Chronicles 11:6, that Tekoa was fortified shortly after the division of the kingdom, by Solomon's son Rehoboam.

The references we encounter are either specifically the area called

Tekoa or the wilderness of Judah. The former being a part of the latter, supports the impression of a spiritually endowed area, not of a low caliber, for as the wise woman of Tekoa recognized law, so Amos' "sermons are the proclamation of divine law, not the oracles of a soothsayer."¹¹¹

It is quite paradoxical to find Tekoa significantly mentioned in the Old Testament four times, yet never indicating the appearance of the prophet Amos.

Education

To assume the prophet Amos was not formally educated would be an error in judgment. Education was important in the lives of the Hebrews and the parents' foremost concern. To learn and practice a moral and religious way of life has been one of the main objectives among the Hebrews since the beginning of their history.

All festivals and ceremonies have for their object the inculcation of religious and moral lessons in the children (Ex. xii. 26 et seq.; xiii. 8, 14; Deut. iv. et seq.; vi. 20 et seq.; xxxii. 7, 46). Especially are the fundamentals of the faith coupled with the admonition to teach the children and bring its truths by word and signs constantly and impressively to their consciousness (Deut. vi. 7, ix. 19).

The whole Law was at an early stage utilized for public instruction. The Deuteronomic law, whatever its contents were, was to be written "very clearly" on large stones on the highways, that all the people might read (Deut. xxvii. 1-8)¹¹² (Biblical and Pre-Talmudical Data)

Instructing the children was considered an important emphasis.

They were initially taught the Laws and historical traditions by their parents. It was also customary for the congregation to assemble with their families every seven years, after the end of the Sukkot festival. This was done in order to hear and learn the Laws. "The chief admonition is to train the child at the right age (Prov. xxii. 6), and the

child's life itself is to be a continual training (Prov. i. 2, 7, 8)."¹¹³ Then, from parental guidance they were taught by private tutors, especially those who dwelled in the royal house.

For each profession i.e., kings, scribes, priests, prophets and military officers, a specific curriculum was followed in their education. Even those who hold more domestic occupations such as farming, had their training periods--learning most of their trade from their elders. Just as we learned that there were guilds in the field of prophecy, there also existed professional societies or labor unions for the artisans. It is more than likely that these unions conducted professional instruction.

The importance of alphabetic writing for the history of education must not be overlooked. It ushered in a break with the traditional scribal cultures of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and second-millennium Canaan. To be literate was no longer the identifying and exclusive characteristic of a class of professional scribes and priests, versed in the obtruse cuniform and hieroglyphic scripts Simple arithmetic was probably learned in all formal systems of education (Isa. 10:19).¹¹⁴

To provide a clearer picture of Amos' probable education, it is only possible to explore the school of the pre-exilic period. We can get a clearer scope of what the instructional lessons constituted by viewing those professions of which biblical history provides much information--the prince, scribe, priest, and prophet. From their educational curricula, we can see the high degree of learning that permeated the land. It will thus influence our understanding of Amos' educational needs.

Just as we provide basic liberal arts courses in our modern educational system, so did the ancients. The professional encountered in the Bible was required to have a thorough education in domestic as well as

international affairs; additional language(s); good literary skills; and the study of more advanced subjects were necessary to qualify the student for his profession: the scribe mastered higher mathematics and astronomy; the priest, anatomy and human diseases; while the prince had to be versed in all political, economical, military, judicial and religious practices.¹¹⁵

Similarly, the prophet's training consisted of a formal education to acquaint him with the history of his nation as well as international developments. Prophetic education was obtained either through serving as an apprentice under one master or as in the later period through the prophetic guild. A formal and literary education did exist.¹¹⁶ It is possible that some prophets were trained in court schools or through priestly studies. "Both schools provided a thorough knowledge of the national-religious literature and more."¹¹⁷

Because of the constant reference and affiliation with music, training in the area must have been included. Lessons also in prophetic oration were no doubt a vital course of study for theory, style, and method of persuasion. "The prophetic order no doubt preserved and studied the words and deeds of their illustrious predecessors (Elijah and Elisha . . .)."¹¹⁸ Amos probably developed his literary style by following earlier patterns considering the earlier prophets his mentors. His references to the prophets of Israel (2:11, 12) possess a high degree of reverence. In 3:7, he even inserts a personal note of association with the prophets and their role.

In addition to the schooling one received, the people of the Orient mingled freely with each other, disregarding rank or class status. Thus,

a great deal of knowledge was acquired through contact with others:

"Shrewd observations, a memory retentive of traditional lore, and the faculty of original reflection took the place of laborious study as the ground of acknowledged intellectual preeminence."¹¹⁹

Thus, the simple life as a shepherd was an essential contribution to Amos' preparation. Travelling exposed him to various cultural activities and beliefs; it afforded him the opportunity to confer with these peoples. Furthermore, the mere contrast of living without unnecessary luxuries but with only the fundamental needs "made him realize more clearly the various vices of the city" ¹²⁰

We know that the "sons of the prophets" visited high places or mountain tops, seeking solitude and meditation or both. Amos also sought high places (4:13), no doubt to create an environment for tranquility and reception; to simply meditate under the stars. The passages relating to nature are expressions of an educated man who utilized his solitude in nocturnal meditation. Through his discourses, Amos manifests an all-around knowledge and practical wisdom of his people's history and of their tradition. He is also knowledgeable of the geographical surrounding areas, such as Egypt, Ethiopia, Philistia, to which he makes specific references. "The prophetic formulas which, as employed by Amos, show long and technical usage, either written or handed down from mouth to mouth."¹²¹

It is impossible to say that the speeches are the exact words Amos spoke at the time of his ministry. There is no concrete proof that he wrote any of them whether for reasons of preservation or preparation; nor is there any certainty who edited the book. But this does not

exclude the possibility that Amos attracted disciples whom, after listening and watching the prophet in action, would have written down that which they recalled; exact saying may have been vividly remembered due to Amos' repetitive style and by associating the audiences' reactions as in the case of Amaziah's scene of opposition.

Upon reading the superscription in the opening of the Book of Amos, it is evident that an editorial note about the prophet was inserted. In these few sentences we learn more about the biography of Amos than he himself reveals. For such reasons as well as the narrative in 7:10-17, (see pp. 2-3) the story has been suspected of being a legend.

Since we have already established that Amos' approach did not include the manifestation of miraculous powers, the idea of categorizing the story as a legend is inappropriate. To further underscore the implausibility of this view, William Harper writes, "It is unfair to Amos . . . to accept the suggestion that the story of his ministry, like the story of Jonah (in the Book of Jonah), is a later invention or fiction."¹²²

Harper says confidently that prophets such as Amos put their words into writing. In depicting Amos' role, he displays the necessity of the written word during his missionary period:

A most significant factor in the ministry of Amos is the writing down of his sermons. In this service he is, perhaps, the leader. The adoption of the new method, viz. that of writing, was the outcome of certain factors in the situation, and itself the occasion of certain others There was not only an incentive to writing, but the opportunity for it, as provided in the long peace of Jeroboam's reign. Torah-literature had already taken form (Ho. 8¹²) in the laws that had been codified. Prophetic literature also had come into existence in the form of the great epics of old Israel, which J and E had taken pains to put together. Amos, after all, is not showing much originality in taking up the pen, for he is only following those who have already shown him the way The prophetic utterance was no longer a temporary matter, uttered for a special time or a set of circumstances; it had become something of eternal value, having to do with truth concerning vital

subjects. Moreover, the prophet himself has taken on new functions and new responsibilities. He sees more clearly his position as it bears upon human affairs in general, and not merely the affairs of a single nation, nor of a certain time the prophet is expected to give a message with which the people will be displeased. He will no longer be the leader of the masses. His work will be outwardly a failure. His very ill success in reaching the hearts of the people actually forces him to put his words in writing.¹²³

In underestimating Amos' skill and/or the possibility of writing portions of his speeches we may be depriving him of his assiduous efforts. Dubnov emphasizes that writing was an early development among the ancient Hebrews.¹²⁴ The alphabetical characters developed around the 11th Century, "are preserved in the Hebrew inscriptions on the Palestinian monuments of the 9th and 8th Century B.C. . . ."¹²⁵ Not only did the professional scribes write but there were private secretaries and "members of the ruling class could write, judging by the stories of Jez[e]bel (I K 21:8) and of Isaiah (Is. 8:1)"¹²⁶ The materials used for writing were clay tablets or papyrus for scrolls, books or letters. "The written language began to be utilized by priests, official guardians of the legends, royal scribes or chroniclers, and later by the prophets when oral expression of their message proved inadequate."¹²⁷

Because of the inconsistencies of vocabulary and thought patterns in the Book of Amos, it is commonly viewed that parts were rearranged and additions inserted at a later date. But portions which flow more smoothly may be "notes" of a listener or a disciple, if not Amos' own writing.

We are inclined to say that the book exhibits such internal coherence as rather to suggest, if it did not come from the preacher's own hand, he wrote it by means of a disciple amanuensis The 'I sections' of Amos i.e. vii. 1-9, viii. 1-3, ix. 1-4, appearing without any introductory setting, seem to be evidently autobiographic rather than the work of a listener.¹²⁸

It is necessary to study Amos' words again and again. This would enable a fuller and more useful comprehension of his form of prophecy, not only by his contemporary civilization but for each generation hence. To accomplish this goal the prophet does not need to record his words verbatim; and/or he may also make recordings after his presentation.

He may give only the text of his address, or, possibly, a synopsis of it. The written form may omit much that had only local application. Nor did the writer himself always put his prophetic speeches into written form. This may have been left for a band of disciples such as history tells us Isaiah had (Is. 8:16), men who desired to see the words of the master justified as only time could justify them (cf. Deut. 18:20-22; Je. 28:8-9).

Amos was first among the prophets to appreciate all this He may also have had in mind the possibility of transmitting it [his message] thus through disciples.¹²⁹

The accepted probability that Amos had disciples helps explain the role of the narrator of the story. He most likely was an avid admirer of the prophet, which further invalidates the possibility of the legendary theory.

Since the story is composed in the third person and inserted into a previously established literary unit, it must have been formulated in the circle or circles which collected and preserved the words of Amos. One need not assume a formal body of disciples but only persons who heard and accepted as valid the words of Amos. Because of the freshness and detail of the narrative it appears likely that it reached its fixed form very soon after Amos was expelled from Israel the book . . . , certainly was first preserved in Judah; the story probably was written there when the speeches of Amos were being collected.¹³⁰

Dubnov informs us that it is certain Israel's whole monarchic period constituted writing and literature:

The old national and religious legends were assiduously studied and annotated in prophetic circles. In his discourses, Amos reminded the people of the exodus from Egypt, of the forty years wandering in the desert of Sinai, and of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in the time of Abraham It is evident that in the 8th century B.C. there were already in existence a kernel or nucleus of Holy Writ, with the accounts of the patriarchs and of the time of Moses. The authors belonging to the school of

the prophets refined the folk legends and were transformed into didactic narratives of profound ethical significance.¹³¹

The story serves a specific purpose, authenticating Amos' words as a legitimate prophet. In addition, according to Deut. 18:15-22, it functions as a confirmation of his office, and how the people should regard him.

Amos has been treated with great neglect in historical documents; his name appears infrequently or not at all. Josephus never mentioned nor implied the presence of Amos; neither did the author(s) of II Kings 15 and II Chronicles 25:26. These omissions do not help support authenticity but invite opportunity for skepticism.¹³² But considering the review of his life, the establishment of his genuineness as a prophet, and negating the idea the story is mere legend, proves that Amos did exist. Furthermore, it is Amos who is credited with the unique attributes of launching the "new order of prophecy"¹³³ and founding "the purest type of a new phase of prophecy."¹³⁴ It is understood that Amos, Hosea, and Micah "are representatives of the Golden Age of Hebrew rhetoric, each standing out as a classic example among the Old Testament prophetic works , the Book of Amos is probably the oldest original source extant for the studying of prophetic preaching."¹³⁵

The same historical documents which neglected Amos, discussed Isaiah and Jeremiah within the context of their historical period. But the prophet who prepared the path for these later men of God, received no mention. Could it be that in the middle of the 8th century, this novel and unexpected prophetic style was so unaccepted that the northern scribes saw fit not to record Amos' presence among the people, especially because he was a Judean? Similarly, Hosea, virtually, Amos' contemporary

--who preached in Israel prior to the death of King Jeroboam II (744 B.C.E.)--was also not included in the historical records of the pentateuch. Is it possible that Hosea was being ignored in the same manner as his colleague? Amos is almost completely ignored in the New Testament and in all but two Books of the Apocrypha:

Ecclus. 49¹⁰ [Apocryphal book], "the twelve prophets" are mentioned, showing that at the time there was a book of Amos; in Tobit 2⁶ [Apocryphal book], where the book of Amos is first mentioned by name and a citation is made from 8¹⁰, in Acts 7^{4f}, where Am. 5^{25f} is quoted and assigned to "The book of the prophets" and in Acts 15^{16f}; a quotation of 9¹¹ in connection with other "words of the prophets".¹³⁶

Summary

Thus we can conclude that approximately in the middle of the 8th century B.C.E., a well versed and highly education farmer from Tekoa came north to Samaria to prophesy and preach the word of God. His name was Amos.

As other children of Israel, he must have had vigorous lessons in the Laws handed down from Moses; tutored in basic educational skills and thoroughly learned in biblical history, literature, and religion. Undoubtedly, he used his educational training in history by following earlier patterns considering earlier prophets his mentors. His references to the prophets of Israel (2:11, 12) possess a high degree of reverence. In 3:7 he even inserts a personal note of association with the prophets and their role.

Amos' mission was least of all an accident. As Samuel was physically given to the temple priest for his apprenticeship, so Amos was a promised member of the prophetic mission from the moment he possessed the name of "burden bearer." It was also no mere act of luck that he

pursued an agricultural livelihood, because, as Harper suggests, this lifestyle introduced him to the essential stages of prophetic preparation. For Amos, it seems as though it was a self-inflicted or self-motivated "course of study," but in essence it was no accident and a natural way of life. The burden then was his, his to recognize and pursue different levels of awareness. Unlike those before him, he depended upon no one; unaccompanied, unushered and unpursued by man for his prophetic skills. Only the divine self acted as his guiding force.

The likelihood of having written portions of his own speeches or to have outlined them or acquired disciples is highly probable. Therefore, it is valid to advocate Amos' authenticity as a prophet and his ministry as an actual event in biblical history.

The question of having the authentic words that Amos spoke is one that can be dealt with intelligently. There is no assurance that every word is what he uttered. History informs us that speeches were recorded in his time either by the speaker or his disciples. Since the narrator is the first to relate the presence of Amos, blending the speech into a viable story, it is more than likely that the book is a retelling of Amos' entire missionary period. This does not, however, negate the strong possibility that the editor had access to sources such as the original written material of his speeches and a synopsis or witnessed reports from which he could write this book. In the case of the original written material, I feel Amos would probably have made recordings of the eventful discourses after they occurred, as one would keep a journal. Harper's strong belief that the 8th century provided the opportunity and incentive to write doesn't necessarily mean that Amos first wrote his

speeches and then uttered them. He says "His very ill success forces him to put his words in writing" (see footnote 122) which strongly implies that the incentive to write came after the event--not necessarily the entire missionary event but the event of an appearance in a city. After all, it must also be realized that Amos may have added or deleted material which he planned to utter due to the occurrence of an unanticipated moment to change the course of his oratory. Therefore, it would be more beneficial to record after the occasion.

Amos surely recorded his work for the learning value it possessed and its content of worthy insight. Only then would his work be truly completed so that he could once more return to his secular life.

CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS

Amos' Rhetorical Problem

Amos approached the kingdom of Samaria with the fervent desire for the people to believe his messages. In order to accomplish his goal he had to first consider the rhetorical problem to be encountered in the north.

The prophet must anticipate the impact of his sudden arrival during the revelry of the autumn festival when he faces the great momentum of the crowd's enthusiastic state. He, a southerner, a stranger from the land of Judah, unlike the northerners, clothed "in skins of animals, with the free walk and gestures of the hills,"¹³⁷ has come to announce Samaria's downfall. Beth-el, being a wealthy city endowed with great architectural elegance, paints a background of sophisticated urban life. He may "be a strange figure to the easygoing citydwellers of the north, who had grown used to the pomp and circumstance of the priests of Baal."¹³⁸ Thus, before pursuing his mission he must be prepared to be considered a foreigner, an unwelcomed stranger, daring to appear in their midst; a divinely inspired shepherd, not a nobleman nor a priest, venturing to evaluate and fiercely attack this modern Hebrew society:

his hearers, . . . felt that they were living pretty much like the rest of the world, as no doubt they were. Why they [would] wonder should they be singled out for vituperation just because some out-of-date fanatic from the backwoods ha[s] a quaint outmoded conception of God which he wishe[s] to substitute for their own.¹³⁹

It is a natural tendency to expect a rebuttal after putting the

public in a defensive position. The poor would most likely acknowledge his words and find signs of empathy in his descriptions, since they were the victims of the moral crimes. Although they outnumbered the rich, their fear would stop them from courageously supporting this herald:

They were too used to conditions to complain. Everywhere in the world the poor were downtrodden. They were lucky to remain unnoticed. Conscription for the army or forced labor was generally the fate of anyone who dared to express dissatisfaction. Better to suffer in silence and anonymity.¹⁴⁰

But here Amos stands before them as a man who can empathically communicate with the unfortunate and oppressed victims of the rich. How can they be sure he is an authentic prophet and that his presence can promote valuable changes in their meager existence? Being so unlike the prophets of the past who performed miracles and did not come before the congregation--but were always available for consultation--can one confide and trust this stranger who seems to fight for their rights?

The above accentuates Amos' primary task to gain credibility; to prove to Samaria that he was indeed the messenger of the Lord. A great reputation did not precede Amos' entrance to the northern kingdom, as the prophetic office was a new endeavor for the Judean shepherd. Besides his rhetorical purpose to inform the people of their impending doom, he needed to create a trusting atmosphere; that he possessed the authentic Word. His audience must have confidence in him and respect his attempt to move them to re-assess their moral conduct and return to God.

Because of the existing dissension between Judah and Samaria the building of his ethos would help alleviate antagonism as to attract faith. The opening discourse could be the functioning impetus to create

such credibility, carrying his name across the land and preceding him wherever he may choose to speak. But Amos' prophetic style was a new and unexperienced one for the Hebrews, because he strictly relied upon rhetorical appeals rather than captivating them with the display of superhuman powers. According to Lloyd Bitzer, "An exigence is rhetorical when it is capable of positive modification and when positive modification requires discourse or can be assisted by discourse;"¹⁴¹ therefore, Amos, being convinced of Samaria's impending doom, used oratory to persuade the people that he speaks the true word of God. He supported his orations with historical facts, i.e., Sodom and Gomorrah and the exodus from Egypt, rather than using supernatural powers. Amos depended solely on the impact of his verbal messages; filled with courage to speak in the north because he believed there was a chance for change and improvement. By making the public aware of their faults, the prophet could save at least some if not a majority of the kingdom.

But Amos also faced the problem of addressing a people who lived under an extremely successful regime. The northern kingdom was internationally recognized for its military strength and commercial success. Jeroboam II's administration provided a wealthy society with the rich becoming richer and more powerful while the poor became poorer and increasingly exploited. Therefore, the rich members of Amos' audience considering themselves economically rewarded for their religious practices and moral conduct, would feel they did not deserve Amos' vituperation--they had found favor in God's eyes. Hence, it was imperative that Amos justify his criticisms; to show them that their way of life was unrighteous and not what Yahweh desired; to recapture the historical

evidence of God's angry response to corrupt conduct, as in the case of the Egyptians and the Amorites (Amos 2:9-10).

To compound the problem further, any accusation against the conduct of the people and the king was an accusation against the leadership and guidance of the priest. Amaziah would not be inclined to value highly the prophet's appearance before his congregation, provoking him to react out of fear of threat and exposure of his competence as priest of Beth-el.¹⁴² Exerting authenticity in the prophetic role would establish Amos' divine authority to which the Hebrews were accustomed.

Lastly, Amos intended to convey the pessimistic message of inevitable destruction unless positive modification immediately ensued. This was not about to be a message which the people would be eager to hear, especially from a Judean. To avoid their antagonism, the prophet had to further emphasize the exigency of his purpose by using pathos and appealing to their emotions. By descriptively creating vivid scenes of past and future disasters, he could instill a fear and a genuine concern for the welfare of their kingdom and its inhabitants.

These problems were not ones Amos could overlook; he had to be ready to meet each challenge with a "fitting response." "Although rhetorical situation invites response, it obviously does not invite just any response. Thus [one of the] characteristic[s] of [a] rhetorical situation is that it invites a fitting response, a response that fits the situation."¹⁴³

Having the advantage of often visiting Samaria in support of his livelihood, no doubt aided the prophet in preparing his presentations. He was able to observe the people's attitude and practices, thus

acquiring a perception of the Samaritans that would enable him to contemplate the most "fitting response" to each situation; devise rhetorical strategies to encompass each anticipated problem before they occurred. The reaction of the audience will also depend on the speaker's emotional response to the situation and how he addresses them as human souls.

As a prophet, Amos did not attempt to overindulge himself in his divine mission by claiming a higher self-concept in relation to his audience or Amaziah. He rather equated himself with the people by emphasizing his work as a farmer: "Amos says that true prophecy is not a human calling, but a mission of God, Who takes a man from his work, 'from following the sheep,' and sends him to the people with His message."¹⁴⁴ Buber clarifies Amos' humbleness by drawing upon the role of the people and inferring that Amos was merely the catalyst, not the controller of God's world.

Rhetoric is a mode of altering reality, not by the direct application of energy to objects, but by the creation of discourse which changes reality through the mediation of thought and action. The rhetor alters reality by bringing into existence a discourse of such a character that the audience, in thought and action, is so engaged that it becomes mediator of change.¹⁴⁵

But criticism is not usually appreciated by the one at fault because facing one's own errors is a burdening proposition requiring change. If man's will is stronger than his logic it can overpower his reality and aid him to avoid admitting the actuality of his deeds: "Man's will, which tries to hinder the word, is destined to meet God's punishment."¹⁴⁶

Manifestation of this humble self-image seems to have been aided by his sense of rhetorical "timing." Amos did not approach the northerners at a random moment but waited for the annual harvest feast,¹⁴⁷ when the

Samarians would make their pilgrimage to Beth-el and joyously thank God "for the abundance stored in barn and bin and offer prayers to Him that He send new rains for the coming year"¹⁴⁸ --Sukkot represented the beginning of the year as in the Canaanite custom.¹⁴⁹

Along the trails of Palestine resounded the songs of the festive pilgrims who, together with all their household, entire caravans of Jewish peasants, wended their way to a sanctuary to observe the great festival and to rejoice before God. One led an ox, a second a sheep, and a third a goat to offer to God at the sanctuary, where they would recite prayers and sing hymns and dance in religious processions about the altar. If the peasants were poor, and could afford neither an ox nor a sheep, he presented a jar of flour as a meal-offering, or a bottle of wine for a libation on the altar It seems that . . . those participating in the celebration often went beyond the limits of revelry and drink, and the festival often became tumultuous, wild bacchanalia The prophet Amos, visited the temple . . . during the . . . festival, and . . . condemned the sanctuary and the entire ritual of the festival. Hosea, who appeared . . . [shortly] after . . . also protested The festivities doubtless took place in the kingdom of Judah, for Isaiah, who was a prophet in Jerusalem, tells us that all, even priests and prophets, were drunk in the sanctuary (Amos 5:21-27; Hosea 9:1; Isaiah 28:7-8).¹⁵⁰

In addition, that year included Samaria's latest military victory: "The successful reconquest of transjordan, long controlled by the Syrians, and the re-establishment of the ancient boundaries of the Davidic kingdom."¹⁵¹ Thus, Amos had a massive crowd whom he knew would congregate at the king's sanctuary for a number of days. It was therefore a time when the people considered their achievements or failures during the past year and how they were reached; a time for self-awareness and introspection, for sacrifice and prayer to attract Yahweh's good graces. What better opportunity could have been chosen by a messenger of God to tell the people they were proceeding incorrectly; to display their errors before them and envision the consequences: "When the proper time has arrived, to Israel Amos (2⁶⁻¹⁶) itself is announced the

dreadful future with the reasons therefor [sic]."¹⁵² In essence he was "answering their prayers" as the voice of God, justifying the reasons, for the oncoming tragedy. But Amos, remember, had the hope of positive influential change, therefore he willingly criticized and offered concrete solutions that would reverse the crises.

In conclusion, this section should show that Amos needed to develop a positive extrinsic ethos. Once established, he would be able to pursue his mission, travelling to many cities with the purpose of warning the Samaritans of their doom. Like Saul, who was the first anointed king of Israel, preceded by none, Amos was the first literary prophet, preceded by none. Therefore, he would create the image of the literary prophets, possessing the burden of setting the pace. If he fails or establishes a poor reputation, those who succeed him will suffer from the consequences. It would then be of utmost importance for Amos to establish a "good name" and hence a good rapport. History compels him to attempt nothing without this initial step. As we have already learned, the life of the prophet has often been endangered, threatened or he was killed by the royal house. Because of Amos' excellent knowledge of history he was undoubtedly aware of this danger, thus guiding him in his efforts. Furthermore, Amos has the opportunity to make his listeners understand that astounding miracles are not necessary to establish good rapport between people and prophet; that he is not looking down upon them but equating himself with his fellow men, showing that they are the masters of their destiny, controllers of their kingdom's future. It is all in the hands of man, his listeners.

The Purpose of Amos' Speeches

Amos' primary mission is not to predict, but to exhort¹⁵³ and to persuade (cf. 5:4, 6, 14). Israel has failed to seek Him, so He will go out to meet Israel.¹⁵⁴

Through Yahweh's prophetic messenger, Israel was told to "prepare to meet th[eir] God [4:12] Castigation failed; an encounter will save."¹⁵⁵ Amos saw and understood the people's blindness to their unethical habits and their failure to evaluate their own conduct. Therefore, he organized vivid and direct messages, descriptive of every influence which brought the Hebrews to their present state. Because he based his speeches on the historical facts of the people and their moral principles, he was not only able to comparatively depict their old and new customs and practices, but he had an accurate perception of their effects on the nation's future.

Amos' main objective was to tell Israel the divine message which he received: that their injustice to humanity and their disloyalty to Yahweh brought them to the threshold of self-destruction. The prophet carried the burden of attempting to convince the nation of this truth by repeating in his lines of argument, "the end has come for my people Israel" (8:2). He came with the premise that God, not being secretive, "communicates His thoughts to man" ¹⁵⁶

For, lo, He that formeth the mountains,
and createth the wind,
And declareth unto man what is his
thought, . . .
The Lord, the God of hosts, is His
name. (4:13)

Each discourse thus constitutes a message of warning filled with earnest advice.

That Amos seems to reserve direct exhortation only for Chapters 4

and 5 may be due to the influence of the compiler of his speeches. The exhortation certainly reflects a change in style, which Amos may have used as a new strategy. We must remember that he was not ignorant of his audiences; the knowledge and awareness he displayed was not instantaneous nor divinely imbued but accrued through long and arduous trips to the north. Therefore, as he travelled from city to city during his mission, disclosing "new" messages,¹⁵⁷ he employed his verbal ability in accordance with his interactions with God, thus intending to captivate each crowd.¹⁵⁸ As the Lord's speaker, "he regards himself as one who walks together with God. God and he have agreed;"¹⁵⁹ Amos was quite secure about himself, his role, and his messages. He too, being a son of "the house of Jacob," was as deeply and emotionally concerned about the dire situation and its outcome as he tried to persuade his listeners to be.

As we speak of the "people" or "Israel" and because Amos uses the term "Israel" so freely, inevitable questions arise: Is Amos directing his warnings only to the northern kingdom; does Israel mean the ten tribes? Since the prophetic role has already been established as one with an objective view, Amos is no exception. Judah was condemned in 2:4-5 as were the other kingdoms, including Samaria. Therefore, he did not exclude the southern kingdom from his message.

Indeed, there are a great number of discourses which, wherever they were uttered, appear to be intended to apply to both kingdoms. It may be said that as a rule Amos has in mind the whole nation.¹⁶⁰

Cripps agrees with Battenweiser, who felt that the oracles were "worded as to render it probable that they were meant to apply, at least in the main, to both kingdoms."¹⁶¹ Cripps further emphasizes his point when he

considers the logical aspects:

Nor is it all certain that in Am. vii. 7-17 the term Israel is used in the sense of the 'Northern Kingdom.' At least it would seem that Amos must have desired that the roll of his sayings--if compiled within his life-time--should serve as some warning also to his own people of Judah. Certainly the volume as it now stands confirms this view, cf. iii. 1 . . . 'against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family . . . ,' and vi. 1, where 'Zion' is expressly addressed. The frequent reference to 'Jacob' (in vi. 8, vii. 2, 5, viii. 7), and in particular that to 'the house of Jacob' in iii. 13, ix. 8, cannot well have applied to every tribe except Judah. There are reasons, however, for supposing that at this time North Israel stood in need of the message rather more than did the Southern Kingdom.¹⁶²

Actually it would seem improper to dwell on Judah while touring the north. To what advantage would it serve Samaria to hear discourses of the misfortunes about to descend upon the south? Reference was made enough times to clarify that he, Amos, was not favoring his native kingdom, but emphasizing the extent of his visions.

Judah, is of slight interest to the prophet during this period, since he is preoccupied with the destiny of Israel. He is, however, too fair and too observant to overlook the sins of Judah and he denounces its religious and social transgressions in no uncertain terms.¹⁶³

As long as he was in the north, his purpose lay in addressing Samaria's immediate need to be aware of her downfall and therefore, directed his message accordingly. Mentioning Judah and other surrounding kingdoms was useful to manifest his geographical and theological knowledge¹⁶⁴ as well as his fairness. It also compliments his explanation of Yahweh's relationship to the world; as God's family encompasses all nations so shall Amos' visions travel far distances.

Amos therefore demonstrates Bitzer's theory that "rhetoric is situational":

rhetorical discourse comes into existence as a response to situation, in the same sense that an answer comes into existence in

response to a question, or a solution in response to a problem; . . . the situation controls the rhetorical response in the same sense that the question controls the answer and the problem controls the solution. Not the rhetor and not persuasive intent, but the situation is the source and ground of rhetorical activity¹⁶⁵

With this in mind, the prophet devoted himself to the perfect procedure in order to carry out his purpose. He was responding to the situation; his method of response was discourse, a novel mode of persuasion to the Hebrews, but "capable of participating with situation and thereby altering its reality."¹⁶⁶ Amos lacked inhibition which was to the public's advantage because there was no time for hedging during time of exigency; being as direct and as blunt as possible was the only viable solution to make them cognizant of their situation, and henceforth promote action. We must recall that Amos' mission was a short¹⁶⁷ one necessitating conciseness. He was also humble, calling little attention to himself; it was the situation that was most important to him and therefore "the source and ground of rhetorical activity." His purpose then becomes activated by each line of argument as we shall see in the next section.

Lines of Argument

From the view of Amos' rhetorical problems the development of his logical proof was a task he demonstrated through great organization to persuasively utter his thoughts. He was aware that simple statements with unverified calculations would be an unsuccessful method in which to attract listeners and convey his urgent message. Therefore, he divided his discourses into a series of main themes: (1) the condemnation of Samaria and her surrounding adversaries, (2) the identification and relationship of Yahweh to Israel and the world, (3) Samaria's social and spiritual corruption, (4) visions of the people reaping a polluted

harvest from seeds unrighteously sown, (5) the glimpse of salvation through the restoration of David's throne in Judah.

Such careful preparation does not necessarily mean Amos only restricted his orations to speeches organized prior to his trip to Samaria: "No doubt fresh oracles kept coming to him and inspiring him, but the contribution made by his own alert mind must not be underrated."¹⁶⁸ Surely Amos' ability to increase his awareness was in constant motion helping to provoke new utterances; applying fitting lines of argument to each new encounter.

The eight oracles of condemnation constituted Amos' introductory discourse in the land of Samaria. His initial purpose was to warn the northern kingdom that she, just as her neighbors, was leading herself to total disaster. First, condemning seven surrounding kingdoms was a means of teaching the children of Yahweh that He is the Father of all peoples. Therefore, it is blasphemous for any nation to commit unrighteous acts; Samaria, above all being no exception.

Amos captivated the northern kingdom through judgment upon her neighboring adversaries. The intention was to prepare them for the climactic moment of condemning the very kingdom on whose land he stood; "the Prophet would ensure a hearing from the Israelites (always slow to recognize their guilt) by first stating the crimes of, and Divine sentences on, their neighbors."¹⁶⁹ At the same time he could not avoid enhancing his credibility, for he appeared as a man of knowledge and awareness. "The prophet himself, of course, wants to be known, in the final analysis, as one who was laid hold of by Yahweh."¹⁷⁰

Thereafter, his subsequent themes may have been elaborations of

previously prepared outlines. But once again, we would have to attribute these discourses to a new set of inspirations encouraging Amos to reveal divine messages. Each theme seems to build more intensely toward the effort of convincing the public that his words were indeed inspired by Yahweh.

Amos' message of warning to the people was not merely what to expect in the near future, but precisely why these disastrous events will occur. Buber makes it apparent that he was not only addressing Samaria but also those nations represented by their respective citizens among the crowds.¹⁷¹ He was trying to reach the conscience of the Hebrews and employed the additional advantage of proving that their cruel acts of inhumanity were parallel to those of their neighboring guests; that economic growth and prosperity were not the prerequisites toward oneness with God. But moreover, he proposed to show how they have manipulated the meaning of Yahweh's love and compassion to fit their materialistic and competitive greed; their envy of others led them to the loss of their self-identity and the honor of being "chosen."¹⁷²

The very subject of Israel's relationship to Yahweh, in the second theme, is a personal binding force uniting all twelve tribes into one nation. That he boldly attempts to review before them their intimacy with God shows that the prophet was using a strategy to involve the ethics of the people. This line of argument led to the consideration of Yahweh's relation to the world, not merely the Hebrews--a topic touched upon in his introduction. By including the entire cosmos under the wings of Yahweh, he supports his argument that Israel is one among "the families of the earth" (3:2). Amos reminded the people of their

historical achievements, their growth of knowledge and their unique unity with God. His aim was to display the contrast of a spiritual growth they once attained--through the help and forgiveness of the Lord--with their present decadence.

He [God] had a deep affection for His people, and had known them more intimately than any of the other nations (3:2). Israel proved faithless, but again and again God had overlooked and forgiven, hoping that Israel might see the error of her way and repent.¹⁷³

Their deviation was persistently reiterated to remind his listeners that their downfall was of their own accord: their privilege of free will enabled them to choose the direction of either progressive evolvment or spiritual retardation, and they chose the latter. His message of hope revolved around this choice, and his advice was to pursue the life of justice and righteousness, a recurring message among his speeches. Therefore, his argument held that none of these disasters need occur, now or ever, because the people could select to make a positive and permanent change.

In the third theme, Samaria's social and spiritual corruption, Amos probed into the people's active way of life; their manner of fulfilling the sacred bond drawn by Yahweh, on Mount Sinai, and communicated through His proteges, to create the unification for His Divine Marriage and Partnership with Israel.¹⁷⁴

We can see that one set of arguments laid precedence for another. Again, as in his first theme, he prepared the people for another verbal attack: the revelation of their adulterations. Amos still probed deeper, now his lines of argument seem to reach a more desperate point. His audience obviously was not thoroughly convinced, therefore, he exposed the consequences of their lack of concern and consideration for

such disloyalty to God.

The drastic measure of describing his visions in the fourth theme was another method of opening their eyes. Amos came to persuade the people to return to Yahweh by abandoning their worship of a purely physical existence. He was inspired through each vision to convince them that whatever luxuries they now possessed were only temporary and soon to be forfeited. His message was meant to frighten the guilty, jolting them into self-evaluation and reflective thinking, which would begin the prelude to their metamorphosis--also a function of the Sukkot Festival. Therefore, available to them were his solutions or how to repent (Amos 5). He made clear that as the final transition it held no choices: there was only one path leading to salvation, the road of justice and righteousness. The people could either change their present direction or continue as they were until total destruction ensued.

Finally Amos shared his foresight of the rebirth of the Davidic kingdom and the death of Jeroboam II. Judah, he made evident, was the one place of salvation left to the people. But for the north it was not a very favorable prediction. Amos was cautious from the beginning to establish that he came with an unbiased attitude--he spoke for Yahweh; he even condemned Judah (2:4-5). Amos knew, being a Judean would increase the difficulty of persuasion in the north and may even invite antagonism, which Amaziah manifested by expelling the prophet.

Although in his last argument he declares the reign of the Davidic throne in Judah, Amos lacks hope for Samaria because God said in his third vision, "I will not again pardon them anymore;" (7:8) and continues to emphasize this doom with "The end is come upon My people Israel;

I will not again pardon them anymore" (8:1).

If Church assumes correctly, that Amos began his mission at Beth-el and ended it there as well, then Amaziah's message to the king that Amos conspired against Jeroboam II, "The land is not able to bear all his words," (7:10); and his subsequent retort to Amos (7:12-13) implies a familiarity with the prophet's activities; that Amos had been carefully watched and reported on to the priest or city officials, from his first presentation at the holy sanction, through his travels in other cities, and once again at Beth-el. Hence, the priest was not pleased to see Amos return. He therefore waited with anticipation for the prophet to utter allegations against the king. When Amos announced the downfall of King Jeroboam II, it was considered an act of treason which was reason enough to legally drive him out of the land.

We cannot fail to appreciate: (1) The element of tragedy which it includes, for the throne of a king is at stake, the life of the priest is forfeited, and the fate of the nation is sealed. (2) The naturalness of it all, for is not Amos seeking to do just what his predecessors back to Samuel had done before him, viz. to unseat the king? How could his words be otherwise interpreted? How could king or priest fail to take cognizance of them?¹⁷⁵

Amos, being aware of his obstacle (Amaziah), avoided the fatal prediction of the royal house until the latter part of his speech, which was possibly followed by 9:11-15¹⁷⁶ --the proclamation of the rise of the Davidic throne. Again, as before, Amos reserved the most trenchant message for a later point. Thus, he knew his words would create great tensions and that a defensive rebuke would inevitably occur. But, as Harper points out, the Beth-el speech carries Amos to his turning point, resulting in the beginning of the end of his mission. Therefore, Chapter 7 would appear as the natural closing discourse which Church and

Dheilly advocate;¹⁷⁷ and Gordis adds that "it would be entirely natural for Amos to denounce his adversaries and pronounce doom upon the people, as is indeed the case with 7:14-17. He was hardly likely under those circumstances to voice the theme of reconstruction and hope (9:11-15)."¹⁷⁸ What Amos said may have the manifestations of such a theme, but it can be discerned that his expulsion provoked an immediate retaliation.

What we have shows signs of haste, sometimes because his thoughts ran ahead of his words, sometimes in all probability because a shower of stones and filth cut short the discourse. Some of the urgency and haste which are implicit in his sermons may have been due to the fact that he knew he would not long be permitted to preach such subversive doctrine. There was so much to say and so little time.¹⁷⁹

Amaziah had no intention of allowing Amos to continue his didactic oratory--a treatment similar to Amos' predecessor Micaiah, (see p. 28). Thus, the prophet's emotional outburst against Amaziah marks the end of his mission. He realized that he finally faced an implacable obstacle, namely the priest of Beth-el.

We may perhaps discern his very human resentment against this refusal to hear God's word in 8:11-12, where he announces the day when men will be needing divine guidance and not finding it.¹⁸⁰

Thus, Amos' concluding message was poignant. Undoubtedly, he met opposition besides Amaziah which made his mission increasingly more difficult but boldness and lack of fear assisted him in pursuing his work until the end. Obviously, before he was ready to return home, he was suddenly expelled--but I assume not unexpectedly. Yet, he still had his final but unuttered message: the salvation of Judah, which represented a quick retaliation to Amaziah and the land of Samaria; whatever the risk, the people had to be told the message he "heard".

Modes of Proof

Amos, being acutely aware of his purpose in the kingdom of Samaria, employed a methodical set of proofs to accomplish his mission. His five themes in his lines of argument were expounded through the use of the trinity of artistic modes of proofs, elucidated four centuries later by Aristotle: ethos, logos and pathos. Aristotle defined rhetoric as "the faculty of discovering in the particular case all the available means of persuasion."¹⁸¹ Amos approached the Samaritans by presenting a series of arguments which the people were able to associate with themselves. Each theme was a vital "means of persuasion" carried out through the appeals of ethos, logos and pathos.

Depending on the purpose of the speaker, the type of subject, and the nature of the audience, one of these modes of proof may dominate, but invariably all three will be at work simultaneously throughout the speech.¹⁸²

Amos never assumed that his challenge of ethical appeal was permanently solved through the initial oracles against the nations and Samaria. Therefore, ethos was a vital factor in every speech. As was determined in his rhetorical problem, the prophet was probably faced with or anticipated a hostile audience because of his being a southerner. "In such a case, ethical proof can be of equal importance with logical proof in winning a favorable response from the audience . . . ,"¹⁸³ Thus, he had to convince his listeners that he was Yahweh's unbiased spokesman. He attempted to accomplish this by manifesting his vast knowledge of the history, and social and religious practices of the kingdoms of the Middle East; his intimate dialogues with God and his understanding of God's expectations and demands upon His children.

In Amos' discourse against the nations, the arraignment of Samaria's

most fierce and hostile neighbor, Syria,¹⁸⁴ was a powerful beginning to help captivate Samaria's attention. The northern kingdom would naturally be pleased to hear of the doom Yahweh had declared for each of her enemies. Amos subsequently accused four more kingdoms of inhuman crimes against Israel to warrant destructive punishment. Samaria was able to relate to each accusation in memory of these bitter historical "records." Suddenly the prophet named a nation who was indeed Samaria's foe but the accusations were directed towards injustices done to Edom, another Samarian foe. "'Nothing could better show the ethical and theological impartiality of the prophetic work in Amos' (Horton)."¹⁸⁵

He does not judge them for their iniquity against Him, but for their iniquity against each other.¹⁸⁶

The seventh condemnation was against the prophet's native Judah, which acted as an assurance of his loyalty to Yahweh's ethical standards. Some scholars believe this oracle was added much later when the book was being compiled. It is not unlikely that they are correct but this will be dealt with more closely in the section of Arrangement.

Amos first made the people aware that God was on the side of justice and righteousness. Therefore, the prophet and his people were prepared for the climax: the condemnation of Samaria herself, which conveyed that no nation was beyond the Lord's judgment.

I have already depicted Amos as a humble soul; without dwelling upon himself, he indirectly informed Samaria that his concern was for them and their dire situation. During the confrontation with Amaziah, he blatantly clarified this modest self-image by denying the title of prophet: "'I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son'" (7:14). To assure the priest, he emphatically declared himself "'a herdman and

dresser of sycomore [sic] trees'" (7:14). Amos was not about to become a martyr.

His audience can logically infer that God could entrust such a message only with a moral man; so Amos must have character in order to bring the message he speaks.¹⁸⁷

By distinctly informing the crowd that he was aware of their beliefs and knew of their interpretation of Yahweh's association with Israel's twelve tribes, it became apparent that just as nothing could be hidden from the eyes of God (9:2-4), nothing was concealed from Amos, His messenger. In 3:1 the entire nation of Israel was addressed, acknowledging her as she regards herself: exclusively chosen by Yahweh, among "all the families of earth" (3:2) "to carry out His mission."¹⁸⁸ Amos manifested his personal regard for the people as he uttered words to build his own ethos:

The lion hath roared
Who will not fear?
The Lord God hath spoken
Who can but prophesy? (3:8)

Augmenting his equality with the people, the analogy conveyed a respect for their own abilities to "hear." Just as it had become an involuntary reaction to fear the vibrating roar of the lion, he was similarly confident that they too would be affected by the voice of God and irresistably prophesy or interpret His message; having no alternative when "The Lord roareth from Zion and uttereth His Voice from Jerusalem" (1:12), they too would respond as he had.

is there any one so obtuse as not to interpret the message? 'It needs no special inspiration to foretell so plain an issue; the meanest may see and read the signs. On one and all is laid the burden of prophesying that Israel may turn to penitence' (Edghill).¹⁸⁹

The prophet credits the people with "hearing" God's personal message by

logically reminding them of the "vibrantly loud" warnings received through pestilence, famine, draught and earthquake (4:6-13). Surely the people were not "deaf."

Amos thus verified his role and his presence before them: when the Lord God has spoken you cannot but respond to His call. As His interpreter, delivering His crucial message, Amos has come to recapitulate Yahweh's message; at the same time, enforcing the proper understanding to prevent the people from evading God's strength of moral value.

While Amos was using ethos as one "available means of persuasion," he also incorporated logical proof. As a worthy messenger of God, he showed the people of Samaria the logic which drew him to his conclusions.

Amos emphasizes cause and effect to clarify his argument with Israel. He uses evidence which is direct, indirect, and negative to state the case against them. He shows how his conclusions are drawn by deduction, how the consequences he predicts are inferred by induction. He cites experience; he arranges facts to make clear the wisdom of following his advice.¹⁹⁰

His judgments against the nations was based on deductive reasoning, prefacing each oracle with the general conclusion that the kingdom transgressed and then explaining why: what sins were committed. It was all substantiated with brief historical facts. But for Samaria, Amos was not as brief since their sins were a culmination of the preceding nations; and it was Samaria to whom he was specifically addressing. Comparatively, the people could see that they were equally as sinful as each of the other nations.

Memories of catastrophic times was the emphasis Amos placed on the content of 1;2;4:6-11. But it was not merely a rehashing of past events for the sake of crediting himself with historical knowledge or to simply criticize, blame and predict. Indirectly, Samaria was shown that just

as she was tormented and abused by her enemies' corrupt methods', so was she now guilty of treating her own citizens as paltry objects.

As for the theme of the relationship of Yahweh to Israel and the world, Amos used logos to reach the minds of his listeners. Speaking in the people's terms, according to their presumption that God plays favorites, Amos presented the reasons for the northern kingdom's suffering through the evidence of cause and effect (Amos 3). Bewer expresses a poignant interpretation of Amos' opening statement about "Israel's exclusive relationship with Yahweh."

But assuming for a moment that "you only have I known of all the families of the earth," he drew his startling consequence, "therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities" (3:1). If Israel claims the prerogative of special intimacy, it must bear special responsibility. The relation between Yahweh and Israel is entirely moral and will be dissolved, if the moral conditions are not fulfilled.¹⁹¹

Verses 3:3-8 are explanations of 3:2, Israel's responsibility of being chosen. Amos' first analogy refers to the unity of men which is caused by a common purpose: "Will two walk together except they have agreed?" (3:3). To show a clear and simple picture of the laws of cause and effect, he presents illustrations of nature. The verses were in the form of questions to which the audience could agree with the logic:

Will a lion roar in the forest,
When he hath no prey?
Will a young lion give forth his
voice out of his den,
If he have taken nothing?

Will a bird fall in a snare upon the
earth,
Where there is no lure for it?
Will a snare spring up from the
ground,
And have taken nothing at all? (3:4-5)

These series of enthymemes display that every action has a cause; thus,

for every action there is a reaction. By first agreeing with the logic of his parallel examples of nature, the people would then be prepared to see the logic of his example of God's relation to man: "Shall evil befall a city, And the Lord hath not done it?" (3:6). The prophet employed all of these examples as a preparation for his final statement when he brought nature, God and man into his last illustration:

The lion hath roared
Who will not fear?
The Lord God hath spoken
Who will but prophesy? (3:8)

As a result of his questions or illustrations, the prophet emphasized that there is logical reasoning behind God's messages (signs); the laws of cause and effect also applied when Yahweh reacted in anger toward Israel or when Israel suffered from disasters. But the reaction is apropos or congruent to the cause.

As Plotinus said, "like apprehends like."¹⁹² Therefore, "Will two walk together, except they have agreed?"--would there be any reason for such disasters if the people were morally faithful? Thus, it is the people who have attracted the negativity through their own negative actions. He repeated this logical sequence in 4:1-3, proving cause and effect. Then we find an elaborate set of logical proofs in 4:6-11 to show Samaria how long Yahweh has waited for them to return. Reminding the people of the natural disasters experienced in their past represented the advanced indications of their negative or immoral actions. Therefore, Amos informed his public that they "heard God's Voice" pleading for their return, but rather than take heed and respond to the obvious messages, they evaded His call. These historic episodes reinstated the prophet's thesis that every experience within their lifetime

had and will still have a valid reason for occurring; their choice of seeds and how they are planted will determine the harvest.

To infer the consequences, Amos used inductive reasoning. Descriptively he recalled their history of natural disasters, indicating Yahweh's anger; and in God's name he concluded with "Therefore, thus will I do unto thee, O Israel . . . prepare to meet thy God" (4:12).

To answer their illusion of Yahweh's role, the prophet described Him as the God of nature, God of the cosmos (4:13; 5:8, 9). Through his modes of proof, Amos was constantly reinforcing that the Lord is keeper of the earth and its inhabitants--Yahweh being the nucleus from which nature radiates.

This introduces Amos' argument of God's fundamental importance based on the principle of righteousness.

The priests and the people believed that Yahweh's requirement was the cult and that He would be pleased with them, if they fulfilled this. Amos insisted that God's sole requirement was social justice. God had never required any sacrificial cult from His people at all --only righteousness, nothing else!¹⁹³

Delving into their history once more, Amos proved that even from the beginning of their union with Yahweh there were no demands of ritual sacrifice.

Did ye bring unto Me sacrifice and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? So shall ye take up . . . your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves. Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, saith He, whose name is the Lord God of hosts. (5:25-27)

Samaria was shown how the laws of righteousness have not altered throughout the centuries; Yahweh did not change, therefore it was not logical to assume any changes in worshipping Him. Cause and effect again

explains why they will go into captivity.

Yahweh cannot be found in mere external worship with all its magical devices . . . only . . . in the steady pursuit of the moral ideal Not gifts to God, but justice to men!¹⁹⁴

It was incongruous to Amos for a people to be so zealous in ritual sacrifice and external pleasures, but fail to religiously pursue common moral principles between man and man. These moral requirements were not only directed toward Samaria but to the entire world (9:7). Logic again interceded, implying that He would be an unrighteous God who favors only one nation--as Samaria was not inclined to believe. A father loves all his children if he is to be the image of goodness and harmony. Therefore, when He says: "Seek ye Me and live; Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live;" (5:4, 14), Amos presented the image of their Heavenly Father, urging them to follow His example rather than copy the practices of neighbors which only lead them away from godliness. The Lord will not deceive¹⁹⁵ them, for when they were in agreement they walked together; "And so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you, as ye say" (5:14).

In this exhortation, Amos appealed to his listeners to take a positive course of action because it would serve as the most potent solution. There appears to be a defined contrast between positive and negative or good and evil. The meaning of the words "Seek . . . Me" represent "good" while anything else sought is "evil." The comparison is simple for anyone to comprehend; the relationship to God is once more emphasized: seeking Him is seeking good which consequently apprehends good. "It may be that the Lord, the God of hosts, will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph" (5:15).

With the above enthymeme, Amos struck every possible note of contrasting devices to reiterate the logic of good and evil: the people "desire the day of the Lord! Wherefore would ye have the day of the Lord? It is darkness, and not light" (5:18, italics mine). The difference between dark and light is the same degree of difference between evil and good. Wishing for the day of judgment was obviously not good, another unethical error for Samaria to correct. The very fact that she was glad for her enemies' misfortune--as in the oracles--was an immoral act or thought. Therefore the message revealed their sins to be more than physical action, but included thoughts as well.

Amos demonstrated in 5:19 how no man was able to hide or escape immoral acts because the laws of the cosmos eventually catch up to him: if the first animal doesn't get him then another one will. The day of the Lord is a day of judgment; because of the long list of Samaria's iniquities, they were in actuality blindly hoping for the day of their own chastisement.

Pathos . . . reveals the extreme pertinence of man to God, His world-directness, attentiveness, and concern. God "looks at" the world and is affected by what happens in it; man is the object of His care and judgment.

The basic feature of pathos and the primary content of the prophet's consciousness is a divine attentiveness and concern. Whatever message he appropriates, it reflects that awareness. It is a divine attentiveness to humanity, an involvement in history, a divine vision of the world in which the prophet shares and which he tries to convey. And it is God's concern for man that is at the root of the prophet's work to save the people.¹⁹⁶

Amos' "use of logical materials, the impact of his own ethos as a speaker, and the authoritative brandishing of his status as a spokesman for Jehovah all exert an emotional force upon the audience."¹⁹⁷ The elements of fear, passion, guilt and compassion were his strategies to

create an emotional response from his audience.

Fear may be defined as a pain or disturbance arising from a mental image of impending evil of a destructive or painful sort men do not fear all evils . . . but only such as mean great pain or ruin, and these only when they appear to be, not remote, but close at hand, imminent People do not expect suffering when they are, or think they are, in states of great prosperity--conditions that make them insolent. . . , contemptuous . . . , and bold When it is desirable that the audience should fear, the speaker must bring them into the right frame of mind so that they shall take themselves to be the kind of people who are likely to suffer¹⁹⁸

If Aristotle had not been born in the fourth century B.C.E., one would assume Amos studied the philosopher's treatise on rhetoric. The prophet's employment of historical fact "follows" Aristotle's teachings intending to saturate the people with fear. In the oracles against the nations, Amos brought out torturous events of their past; he depended upon Samaria's feelings toward her foes to create the emotional impact, so that when he reached the climax, the power of its force and sincerity would shock the people into the actuality of their desperate situation. The fact that he was able to penetrate their daily practices and describe their living conditions invoked a fear of being "known," which invites guilt.

We have already noted that God's declaration of only knowing the family which He brought out of Egypt (3:2), had an appeal to ethos. But additionally it is an appeal to pathos. There exists a connotation of heavy payment in return for the honorable and responsible position as the Lord's chosen: "Therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities." Every reminder of their historical disasters helped establish the nation's total disgression. Thus, history served as an essential tool to imbue the masses with shame; their lack of gratitude for the

innumerable times Israel needed Yahweh's help and received it. God's loyalty to justice was inexorable; every historical recollection was a manifestation of God's concern: "Yet have ye not returned unto Me" (Amos 4).

It was indeed a poignant reminder when Amos probed into the kingdom's relationship to Yahweh: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth" (3:2). The people fulfilled their role with transgressions; such was their form of gratitude which therefore incurred equivalent punishment. "The prophets face a God of compassion, a God of concern and involvement, and it is in such concern that the divine and the human meet."¹⁹⁹

After the reminiscences of their biblical disasters came a thunderous announcement: "prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (4:12). But in order to "meet God" one must do it on His terms, through the laws of justice. Therefore, Amos warned them to either "arm yourselves with good deeds and penitence (Kimchi),"²⁰⁰ or be ready to suffer the consequences of sinfulness. Hence, the description of God as the powerful creating force of nature (4:13; 5:8, 9) demonstrated His sweeping strength which history proved cannot be overpowered. Amos was spreading the fear of the all powerful God Who made certain that sinners did not escape unnoticed and unpunished (5:19). The very opulent members of the society were particularly addressed:

Woe to them that are at ease
in Zion,
And to them that are secure
in the mountain of Samaria,
the notable men of the first
of the nations,
To whom the house of Israel come! (6:1)

Fear was combined with compassion in the first of the five visions as Amos described the plague of locusts and destruction by fire. The picture conveyed fearful suffering. But Amos' compassion came forth in the dialectic when he manifested two sides of the argument--defender and accuser. He pleaded with God on behalf of the people (7:2-4), fearful for the kingdom's subsequent instability.

O Lord God, forgive,
I beseech Thee;
How shall Jacob stand?
for he is small.

God's answer entailed a sense of influential compassion from His servant Amos: "The Lord repented concerning this; 'It shall not be'" Twice the Lord repented but in the third dialogue came Amos' climax: the Lord refused any more pardons; Amos stopped pleading--"seeing that God is just when He condemns and that His penalty upon Israel is deserved."²⁰¹ Therefore, he instilled a concrete reason to fear. This was the beginning of the hopelessness which he continued to reiterate throughout the three remaining visions.

"Pathos includes love, but goes beyond it,"²⁰² encompassing anger. Therefore the significance of God's anger, according to Amos, was precipitated by His passion for man.

The word "anger" is charged with connotations of spite, recklessness, and iniquity. The biblical term, however, denotes what we call righteous indignation, aroused by that which is considered mean, shameful or sinful; it is impatience with evil, "a motion of the soul rousing itself to curb sins God's concern is the prerequisite and source of His anger. It is because He cares for man that His anger may be kindled against man."²⁰³

Anger existed in every condemnation and every descriptive disaster. It conveyed God's reaction to the ostentatious atmosphere of rich Samaritans trampling on the needy. Direct words of wrath were not to be

avoided, therefore, against Samaria's specific activities Amos voiced the rage of Yahweh:

I hate, I despise your feasts,
 And I will take no delight in your
 solemn assemblies.
 Yea, though ye offer me burnt-
 offerings, and your meal-offerings,
 I will not accept them;
 Neither will I regard the peace-
 offerings of your fat beasts.
 Take thou away from Me the noise
 of thy songs;
 And let Me not hear the melody
 of thy psalteries. (5:21-23)

It was an attempt to relate God's disappointment in the people. "Indeed, what He demands of man is expressed not only in terms of actions, but also in terms of passion:"²⁰⁴

I abhor the pride of Jacob,
 And hate his palaces, (6:8)

With the same intensity, Amos cried out the preferences of the Lord:

Seek the Lord, and live-- (5:6)
 Hate the evil and love the good, (5:15)

This exhibition of compassion conveyed the love and concern entailing God's intimacy with Israel. Each time Amos described the abusive treatment of the poor, the verses were filled with compassionate accusations. The prophet clearly let his listeners know that he, as well as the Lord, was on the side of justice. Amos further emitted emotions of anguish in his description of hopelessness and doom. He had seen sad and torturous visions representing God's "rewards" to the sinful. His emotions were not hidden nor ever meant to be.

The prophet's appeal through pathos aided him to encourage the masses to relive or empathize with the horrors of the past. It was a chance to move the hearts and minds of the people to feel immersed in

each of the dreadful scenes. If they could rise to that point, to actually enter a state of compassion with Yahweh, then they would be on the verge of hope for a change: a return to God.

As mentioned previously, the trinity of appeals do not segregate themselves. Therefore through Amos' display of pathos, and as Yahweh's representative, every word he uttered was evidence of God's ethos which in turn stimulated his own ethos. "Pathos, then, is not an attitude taken arbitrarily. Its inner law is the moral law; ethos is inherent in pathos."²⁰⁵

Inundated with much inner passion made it difficult for Amos to contain his emotion. In conjunction with his logical reasoning, the prophet felt the compulsion to exhibit the power of God's love; that He "is never neutral, never beyond good and evil. He is always partial to justice."²⁰⁶

The divine pathos is the unity of the external and the temporal, of meaning and mystery, of the metaphysical and the historical. It is the real basis of the relation between God and man, of the correlation of Creator and creation, of the dialogue between the Holy One of Israel and His people. The characteristic of the prophets is not foreknowledge of the future, but insight into the present pathos of God.²⁰⁷

Arrangement

To discuss the arrangement of the Book of Amos is not a simple task. Many obstacles exist. Firstly, it is highly unlikely that we are dealing with one speech presented at Beth-el.²⁰⁸ Secondly, there is no certainty of the order of the discourses. And thirdly, too much controversy exists over what is believed to be Amos' original verses and that of his disciples. Indications of an editor are evident and has been mentioned earlier; whether this editor was of a later period or a disciple of the

8th century has not been resolved. What we can conclude is that the order of the book is not in its original state.

The book as a whole, in which, as we have seen there are several component parts, including a third-person narrative, certainly does not go back to Amos himself. Moreover, the collection of sayings which it contains in i-vi has also probably been gathered by another hand, since the grouping together of several individual sayings into larger speeches beginning with Hear and Woe . . . has obscured the demarcation of the originally quite independent sayings, and this can hardly be attributed to the prophet himself.²⁰⁹

[T]he book that bears his [Amos] name shows evidence of clear-cut, careful organization: (A) The great Judgment Speech against the nations (chapters 1 and 2); (B) Three addresses beginning with the phrase 'Hear ye this word' (3:1-15; 4:1-1-13; 5:1-6); (C) Three charges beginning with 'Woe' (5:7-17; 5:18-27; 6:1-14); (D) Five visions, four beginning with 'Thus the Lord showed me' (7:1, 4, 7; 8:1), one with 'I saw' (9:1); and (E) An ending of consolation and hope (9:11-15). On the other hand, the reader is impressed by several exceptions to the order.²¹⁰

As the book stands now, the order which the editor has presented, influences the reader's impressions of the messages and the impact of Amos' discourses. But I would not go as far as to say that the present order distorts Amos' original plan. "The book in its present form gives on the one hand the impression of good and deliberate arrangement, but on the other hand there is no lack of indications of a still better arrangement of the material, now disturbed."²¹¹ One such disturbance and indeed most awkward, was dealt with earlier, that of the position of the encounter of Amaziah and Amos' speech of salvation.

Therefore, let us return to his major themes. I have advocated that Amos arranged his message into five separate themes: the condemnation of Samaria and her surrounding adversaries; the identification and relationship of Yahweh to Israel and the world; Samaria's social and spiritual corruption; visions of the people reaping a polluted harvest from seeds unrighteously sown; and, the glimpse of salvation through the

restoration of David's throne in Judah.

Amos was a builder. He arranged his themes in such a manner that one became an appropriate prelude to the next and finally, the last one would create the greatest impact. We find, not only did he employ this method in the total compilation of his discourses, but it also seems to be incorporated within the individual utterances. It appears that he placed his messages of doom prior to the exhortation speech (5:4-6; 5:14-15) and then again prior to the salvation speech (9:11-15). Each was reserved for the specific needs of his audience. It was his strategic method to create a motivational need for Israel and to hear words of prevention and/or salvation. When that time arrived, the atmosphere was ripe; the people were ready to listen. I think, if he had not planned with such an effective arrangement, we would not have the Book of Amos to appreciate through the centuries. The crowds would have silenced and expelled him much sooner than Amaziah had done.

Since the condemnation of the eight nations is widely accepted as his initial speech it presents no problem in placement. I have also found this oration to be representative of Amos' building pattern; each nation was consciously accused by the prophet. We encounter Amos' first pattern for arranging the sequential order of parallel messages. He wanted to convey a crucial message, but to do it successfully, he arranged his accusations so that the last one created the total impact. Israel was his concern and to spell out the consequences of her ill deeds, he had to prepare a proper path.

The understanding he offered was the force of a universal God, punishing any nation which did not meet the righteous code. Israel was

no exception. She had to accept this fact, hence accept her role in God's world. Amos planned the effect by taking seven steps to reach his final and eighth goal, Israel. The northern kingdom could not feel unjustly "rewarded;" the strategy of first condemning seven other sinful nations was indeed a protective measure for the ethos of the prophet as well as Yahweh's. Who could contest such a rational set of arguments?

Amos condemned eight specific nations, from Syria, in the north, down to Israel, in the south. His announcements form a geographical arrangement of north-south. There is no variation until the last two condemnations of Judah and then Israel. Here we find the reverse, namely, south-north: Amos continued the biblical formula of implicating ascension (see pp. 35-36)--its connotation being a positive change, a place to aid the people to rise above their material transgressions. Wolff notes the unsuccessful efforts to explain the geographical sequence.²¹² It has resulted in an unsolved mystery; but the ascension explanation appears viable: a subtle and symbolic display of the rise of Judah.

Therefore, Amos entered his mission with the preconception of salvation through the southern kingdom and in effect intended to finalize his messages with this proclamation. Just as this main message is his last utterance of the initiating discourse, so it becomes the last in his thematic organization, withheld until the close of his mission. It, therefore, appears as if Amos began by displaying the partition of his themes. But knowing the final outcome does not necessarily make it an inevitable occurrence. We have been taught by the sophistic school that there are no absolutes, which qualifies Amos' attempt to circumvent the

sinner's dependence on Judean salvation and rely on their own abilities to save themselves. It was necessary that Israel acknowledged her transgressions by changing her ways. To create the need in the people's minds was Amos' initial challenge and essential goal.

Beginning with a psychological approach, Amos recreated the entire situation through the order of his themes. Since criticism is not easy for man to bear, Amos shows his keen sensitivity to such human reactions, by taking careful steps to reach the climactic condemnation of Israel--henceforth, he presented a strong set of proofs to substantiate his initial message. "[I]t can be said that since the shortcomings of others are more readily seen, the message of Amos should have greater clarity for the Israelites after he begins with the indictment of their neighbors"213

Summary

We can only agree that the arrangement of the Book of Amos reveals too many missing portions of the speeches to cause a constant flow of discourses. But when seemingly complete or whole sections are read individually, there is a deliberate and more cohesive organization apparent. But within his discourses there is a conscious arrangement of proofs and examples, an orderliness of thought patterns which lead the listeners to his anticipated goal. Even when he cites historical events there is a sequential order of chronology.

Admittedly, it is difficult to read the Book of Amos and appreciate the editor's re-arrangement, for it breaks the pattern of Amos' sequence of thought, and the proper motivating force of each utterance. Therefore, there is a greater possibility of losing the fullest understanding

of Amos in his mission.

Style

Amos of Tekoa, according to St. Augustine, was a prophetic speaker possessing wisdom and eloquence. The Medieval teacher of rhetoric sought to exemplify Amos' ability to choose most effective words and then join them in diversified ways. In other words, Amos employed a deliberate and diverse set of metaphors and similes to convey his messages. St. Augustine found him to be a versatile speaker who is not boring but "with remarkable appropriateness of speech he relaxes the impetus of his invective and now speaking about them instead of to them so that we may be moved to distinguish between music among the wise and music among the lecherous"²¹⁴ (6:5). What is fascinating to Augustine is Amos' implicit manner of expression in contrast to the simplicity of direct words. Without being blunt the prophet was able to point to the people's ignorance and therefore cause them the responsibility of self-evaluation. Augustine in reference to a specific trope (6:6) in which Amos used "Joseph" to represent to victims of the vicious, praises "how beautiful it is, and how it effects those readers who understand it, it is useless to tell anyone who does not feel it himself,"²¹⁵

We have previously established Amos' ethos from his knowledge and intricate awareness of the people's activities and their political situation. Therefore, it was through the use of language and the structure of verses, that he manifested an ability to attract an audience with appropriate and descriptive words. Augustine chose to emphasize how Amos' style of listing was devoid of the dullness of repetition. But in contrast, Amos does employ a repetitive style to emphasize a point and

build tension.

In reference to his directness in addressing the people, we see that Amos employed this approach when exigency was at a peak. He manifested his flexibility to address Israel directly in second person and then indirectly in third person, which eased the intensification, and allowed for the building of a new momentum. God was represented in first, second and third person. Throughout the first speech the nations are in third person. But when Amos reminisces the historical events of Israel, those "moments" of God's faithfulness and devotion and Israel's "gratuitous" response, he draws the people closer by addressing them in second person, (2:8-12). In addition, Amos spoke in the style of first person as God's representative, and therefore created greater contrast of characterization and power. In the beginning, he led them step by step through the inescapable law of the cosmos: unrighteous acts toward fellow humans are unforgivable. Now that he made his point and established Israel's position among her neighbors, he had the right to be more direct, to say "you;" besides, it is no longer "they" who are being judged, it is "you." Amos moved toward the exigence of the present moment, implying that there is no time for weakness, but only direct response--immediate repentance.

The divine demand for human decision is shown . . . at the height of its seriousness. The power and ability are given to every man at any definite moment really to take his choice, and by this he shares in deciding about the fate of the moment of this, and this sharing of his occurs in a sphere of possibility which cannot be figured either in manner or scale. It is to this personal decision of man with its part in the power of fate-deciding that the prophetic announcement of his disaster calls. The alternative standing behind it is not taken up into it; only so can the prophet's speech touch the innermost soul, and also be able to evoke the extreme act: the turning to God.²¹⁶

The entire fourth chapter is a direct address manifesting the extent of God's strength and anger which heightens the impact of the exhortation speech to follow--also in second person. First he demands their ears: "Hear this word;" but in actuality Amos demands more. When he depicts their actions against the poor--"crush the needy"--and their punishment, thereof--"Ye shall be taken away by hooks, And your residue with fish-hooks"--he implores their visual and tactile senses, to see and feel the compensation of piercing pain. Until Amos' first vision, he inserts the third person for a brief interval after long stretches of direct confrontation. By doing this, it subtly implies that "they" or "his" are pronouns signifying remoteness, while "you" brings the hearer to the present moment. Therefore, implicitly, Amos conveyed that the urgency for Israel existed in their present actions--upon which they will be judged. The contract with Yahweh must be renewed by constant self-evaluation and devotion to the original covenant. By saying "you," the present appears and the accused cannot hide. This manifests when Amos retaliates Amaziah's resentful response. The prophet addresses the priest directly, just as he does Israel; he proves the forcefulness of the immediate answer, pointing directly to the priest; he makes it apparent that there is no mistake, his words are the words of truth.

From the visions until the last speech, third person dominates. It is now in reverse. But as Amos related his dialogue with Yahweh in his first two visions, the message again became a part of the present; such first-hand recapitulation of his five encounters with God strengthens the ethos of the prophet; it restores and retains the personal relationship between Israel and God. Thus, Amos carried out his aim to create

direct images and direct reactions by varying his forms of personalized messages--the refutation with Amaziah would verify the successful attempt to stimulate immediate reaction.

Not only does Amos vary his motifs, but in his love for repetition, he employs diverse sets of verse openings and endings. Repetition demands not only the ear of the listener but his conscience as well. The very fact that the prophet used the strategy of drilling through repetition, signifies the imperative quality of the message. He thus created memorable and impressionable word choices so that the hearer becomes the repeater. The form is "perfectly suited to convince the listener that Yahweh is in the right and to provide demonstration of Israel's guilt the announcement of punishment is irrevocable."²¹⁷

In conjunction with the intensification of repetition are his parallel formations. Again, Amos builds, he aims for the intelligence and the pathos through logical images of nature. In 3:3-8, for instance, he works his literary style into a crescendo by creating vivid descriptions under one motif, that everything occurs for a specific reason; for every action there is a reaction; therefore, every effect has a cause. He begins calmly with "will two walk together, except they have agreed?" Here is the transition from the opening of this speech, where he established the historical and cognizant relationship between God and Israel. Therefore, it is Israel's responsibility to recall her sacred union with Yahweh. Amos fills their ears with further implicit parallels, each one building into a greater and more blaring sound, until he reaches the highest, God: "The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" He predominantly appeals to the sense of sound²¹⁸ as the lion roars and the

horn blows. But even with the images of the bird and the snare, one descending, the other springing up, each are thrusting movements, lacking tranquility and peace; instead, there is a momentum of energy still in flight as the prophet receives the words of God. Amos further underscores his message by stylistically employing the repetition of "will a" at the start of each parallel. Unfortunately, in translation, the full impact and intensification of his word sounds (para-language) are lost, because for each comparison Amos utters, he inserts various alliterations that alert the ears.

Thereafter, the prophet proclaims the downfall of Samaria. As his habit, he prepared his listeners for this moment, to be understood and believed. Again, his ethos has been secured while his audience has been captivated.

Amos' wide use of nature is evident throughout the book. He chose strong and vibrant phenomena, that of darkness and light, the four elements of fire, air, water and earth, as well as wild and domestic animals. It was mentioned earlier that Amos proved not to be "an unlettered rustic," as Jerome preferred to label him. "Tradition has probably been wrong in emphasizing too strongly the prevailing shepherd-characteristics . . . which mark the figures employed by Amos. But no one will deny that he is especially fond of drawing his language from nature; and what after all, is this but the field of rural life?"²¹⁹ Harper views Amos' structure as simple and regular, incorporated into oracles, sermons and visions:

It is unfortunate that some recent critics seem as blind to the simplicity of Amos' style of expression as were the older critics to its refined nature This regularity, or orderliness, exhibits itself in detail in the repetition of the same formulas

for three transgressions, yea for four, etc., in the opening chapters . . . in the use of the refrain, but ye did not return, etc., in the poem describing Israel's past chastisements (4:4-13).²²⁰

At this point we can take the liberty to assume that Amos' rhetorical strategies did not occur by chance, but were planned with careful calculation. This also includes the numerical sequence of his opening speech. His use of three-four is attributed to the intensification of repetition. This rhetorical form is not new but "found only in the rhetorical forms of wisdom."²²¹ It is quite prevalent in the Ancient Near Eastern literature. The Old Testament also has been filled with graduated numerical sayings, usually depicting unrighteous behavior. Therefore, Amos has again shown his learned ability to use an ancient literary device. One difference is that the prophet describes one transgression for each nation, while he indicates three and then four exist.

It is thus quite evident that Amos fashioned the introductory formal element of our oracles out of generally familiar traditional material which was particularly well suited for oral transmission, since the numerical scheme facilitated memorization [M]ost likely . . . Amos here adopted for his own purposes an element traditionally associated with popular wisdom instruction.

The play on the graduated numerical saying is subordinated to the proclamation that the punishment, later to be announced in detail, is irrevocable. "I will not take it back" (יְנַחֵם/כִּכֵּר) strikes a sombre introductory note.²²²

Wolff's explanation which is generally attributed to the numerical sequence of three-four, doesn't really answer Amos' need nor does it meet his tendency to create deliberate rhetorical devices in driving his point.²²³ Weiss was bold enough to see another significant purpose, which concurs with my perception of Amos' style and purpose. He explains that it was a typical compositional rule in biblical poetry to "habitually break up compound linguistic stereotypes into their two components, placing one in the first half of the verse and the other in

the second."²²⁴ Therefore, the above device stemmed from parallelismus membrorum--the natural means of expressions²²⁵--which finally resulted in Amos' use of the pattern "three . . . and . . . four." Since this was the style that set precedence, Amos had to comply with the conventional system to meet his own need to express seven transgressions.

In the last judgment, the condemnation of Israel, Amos actually names seven transgressions (2:6-8), unlike the preceding accusations--except Edom, for which he names four and Judah, for which he names three (notice that even here number seven is not betrayed). Furthermore, Weiss shows three other patterns of seven: in 2:14-16 are seven states of panic which will result from God's punishment of 2:13; "God has inflicted seven disasters on the people, so that they would return to him (4:6-12); [and] the destruction from which there is no escape will be achieved, according to the fifth vision, through seven acts (9:1-4)."²²⁶ In addition to these discoveries, I must add the significant number seven in the condemnation of eight nations which he did not acknowledge. Judah, later named as the place of salvation, is the seventh nation to be condemned. It is also at this point which the descending pattern of north-south reverses to the ascension of south-north; as I have already indicated, Amos used a traditional pattern of ascension which he may have altered to accommodate his own message, that Judah represents the point of completion.

As is commonly known, the number seven, also in the Bible, denotes a clear typological number which symbolizes completeness and perhaps even represents it. Seven transgressions thus signifies the whole, the full sin. Judgment is pronounced on each nation because of its complete sin In the body of Amos' address, however, in his prophecy on Israel, the reason for the irrevocable judgment, Israel's completeness is demonstrated not only by the number seven, i.e., by laying before his audience the well-known and established

symbol (or its representation) for completeness by means of three and four, and not only by recalling one of their sins, which is considered the complete and greatest one, but also, . . . by enumerating seven of their sins The nature of the Semitic mentality in general, and of the Biblical in particular, is reflected in this stylistic phenomenon, which presents a single idea not once but twice in different ways and from different aspects A thing is perceived, not in the abstract, but in its tangible wholeness, by giving concrete form to the individual details of the thing. Cannot then a rhetorical device whereby the number seven is demonstrated by the numbers three and four be seen too as a natural and obvious expression of this way of thinking?²²⁷

Summary

Thus, Amos managed to stimulate the senses of his listeners as well as his readers. His livelihood surely assisted him in recreating startling and unusual images for the five senses. The dynamic word choices to stimulate the northern kingdom must have been very realistic to the people. His metaphors and similes lacked nothing in his attempt to instruct and reprimand. He was direct in his intentions to convey the urgent situation to Israel; but his style and its variations show his use of psychological understanding, when to become more forceful and when to "ease the pain."

Repetition, parallelism, questions, antithesis, personification, comparisons, rhythm and alliteration are among the many devices Amos used to convey eloquence and wisdom. Indeed, it is evident none of his rhetorical strategies occurred by accident or without conscious preparation. For what can be directly attributed to the prophet's own words, reveals a man of learning and oratorical training. The evidence is vivid, as are his words and images. Amos displayed a most skillful versatility within his style. It was as if he tried everything, every device of language to penetrate the listeners' minds, hearts and souls.

CHAPTER V: EVALUATION

The Effects of Amos' Speaking

Amos made his entrance during the 8th century, approximately 65 years after Elisha, the last of the nationalist prophets. Obviously this was a significant time for change. We saw the transitions from the leadership and spiritual guidance of Samuel the seer, to leadership under a king, then the division of the kingdom, and finally the end of the nationalist prophets. The time was ripe for a new form of guidance; the duties of the spiritual and political leadership were no longer in the realm of one entity; the responsibilities dispersed when the people asked for a monarchy. Therefore, as Jeroboam II may have been a successful king, he and his people were not supported with proper spiritual guidance from the priest Amaziah.

A new approach to communicate the exigency of the situation was in the hands of Amos of Tekoa. The priest was not the type of character Samuel portrayed nor did he manifest the strength of Elijah. From his appearance, in the Book of Amos, we see a resentful man whose status was being threatened by Amos' vituperation. The subject of righteousness and devotion to Yahweh was never an issue with Amaziah. It seems Israel was in need of redirection; after all, the majority were not living in luxury and Amos' description of the conditions and treatment of one human toward another was evidence of corruption--a sin in the eyes of Yahweh.

With Amos comes a new and individual style to convey the message of repentance. With this burden, he carried the poetic traditions of the Ancient Near East. Israel was an independent nation under independent leadership, thus, she was to be treated in an independent manner. This was the manner of Amos. But he was original in molding these systems into his own rhetorical needs. As revealed, he was an unknown from the land of the Judean wilderness. He came to do a job and go home; prophecy was his avocation. It was also a way of teaching and sharing knowledge: a cognizance of the deity--long since personalized by the Israelites--and teaching the people about themselves, their way of life and their attitude towards humanity.

Amos did not introduce a new element into Israel's relation to the deity, a relation founded and constituted in another age, but he did set up the exclusiveness of a people in its relation to its God, as to the liberator, leader and judge of the peoples, Lord of righteousness and justice, he set it up under the divine demand and chastisement in a manner such as nobody before in man's history, so far as we know, had achieved.²²⁸

Did Amos have an influence on the future or upon other prophets?

To prove this through research is a difficult task because there are very few early references made to the prophet from Tekoa. The earliest mention of his mission or his name are in the works cited previously, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, and Acts. Since we are limited in reference material close to his contemporary period we must go further than the rudimentary investigation for documented signs of influence. It must be recalled that Amos did not call attention to his personal self, his heritage or lineage; and I indicated at the start that this may have been a deliberate omission from the prophet himself. He did not consider it important to focus on himself, for he came not to promote the

man, the shepherd from Tekoa, but to teach the people how to reconstruct a righteous path. He did this not by acts of phenomena to beguile the public, not by religious ritual, but through knowledge. We established in investigating his background and preparation for prophesying, that the requisite for this rhetorical mission is a vast amount of knowledge on all subjects--the understanding of science, the social sciences, the arts, and theology; in other words a liberal education, all in addition to an intricate familiarity with the environment. And this was indeed what Amos displayed. Therefore, let us for a moment imagine Amos devoid of these refinements: what sort of speaker would the people have heard; how might he have been able to captivate their attention; furthermore, how would he have fulfilled the canon of invention (yet to be labelled by the Greeks three centuries hence); what type of proof could he have offered and with what sort of reasoning could he have manifested such a bold and dynamic style of poetry? Lacking the knowledge and understanding that Amos had, surely would have hampered his image as a prophet and authentic messenger of Yahweh. The people knew what to expect of the prophetic circle, they were quite familiar with traditional prophecy. But Amos was not quite the traditional prophet under usual anticipation. He performed no miracles, no enticing features of divine powers; they knew him not, this stranger from the south. And yet he dared to come north and vituperate. In addition, the people gathered to hear him--not necessarily listen to him. When a man comes to instruct and correct through discourse, he needs to carry with him all the prerequisites to make his words worth hearing. Therefore, Amos came especially equipped with knowing all about the people to whom he addressed his words. Their

every move, both public and private were uttered from his lips. References and correlations to history came easily to Amos. There was nothing that the prophet was not fully aware of and therefore was able to present in a most individualistic style: he was an orator; he employed vividly emotional images into which he incorporated the knowledge of, and personal relationship with Yahweh. Amos fulfilled the rhetorical requirements three centuries prior to the birth of rhetoric. The Greek campaign for the rhetor to strive for eloquence and to be a man filled with the knowledge of all disciplines was evident in Amos. The concept we call traditional rhetoric was already being developed. After Amos came other prophets who were undoubtedly influenced by the same initiating force. We can conjecture that his successors must have studied his work, if not for poetic formulas, then for the sake of knowledge and the examination of the historical event. It was appropriate for prophetic speakers to study the accuracy and logic of Amos' predictions, since the events were not nearly as distant in time as they are now. In other words, as the 20th century is investigating rhetorical development, its patterns and widening scope, it is equally possible to imagine that the philosophers, teachers and religious leaders of the centuries following Amos' appearance, would have felt a similar need for discovery and rediscovery.

With the existence of controversy over Amos' direct influence on other prophets, the problem will never be solved.

Direct evidence of an external acquaintance with it [the Book of Amos] by other prophets is perhaps slight. The similarity of expression found in certain passages in Hosea, as compared with Amos, proves nothing; the two were dealing with the same historical traditions and were working in the same environment. The same thing may be said of the two or three passages in which Isaiah and Amos use similar expressions.²²⁹

For Jeremiah and Ezekiel Harper claims there might actually be an influential factor. The situation is not identical but does possess some similarities. Each have passages against foreign nations; "The phrase 'virgin Israel' is found only in Amos and Jeremiah; 'days are coming' occurs in no other prophetic books."²³⁰ On the other hand, Cripps feels that Hosea, being younger than Amos, but still his contemporary, must have had contact with him.²³¹ This might be plausible for both Hosea and Isaiah since they were interested in the same cause, during the same century. Cripps is quite certain about the influence on Isaiah, Jeremiah and Zephaniah; he agrees with Harper in the case of Ezekiel, but adds that Zechariah's visions resemble Amos'. He suspects Joel 4:16 is a direct quote from Amos, and that the ethical lessons of Proverbs was surely influenced, also mentioned by Harper.

Harper makes an additional summary of influential factors which we cannot overlook and supports my thesis. He warns us not to look for specific external manifestations. It is undeniably apparent that Amos' work was known to them because of certain attributes they displayed:

in standing aloof from the great body of so-called prophets in their respective periods; in adopting the method of writing down their utterances; in the continued development of the sermonic discourse introduced by him; in following the fashion of directing a certain portion of their attention to the foreign nations; in basing their work on the fundamental doctrine of national judgment as presented by Amos; in holding up and completing the new ideas propounded by Amos concerning God and his ethical demands upon humanity.²³²

Summary

Amos was a vibrantly influential prophet and orator. By influence we must not consider merely a short term effect but the long term effect. As stated above, he was the prelude to the official birth of rhetoric,

in the fifth century B.C.E., when Tisias and Corax brought to Greece the attempt to analyze communication between human entities and devise a theory or formula to be used, enhanced and revised. The historical events of discourse had long been an active profession. Amos prepared the world of man for the discoveries and pursuits of communicating knowledge and ideas. The formalization of rhetoric needed an incubation period for three centuries.

Through the study of Amos' speeches we meet a man who knew the rhetoric of philosophy; and his concepts are not far removed from the very thoughts uttered and disputed by the precocious minds of each intellectual period after him. His goal was to bring a people back to the essence of existence: righteousness between man and man, a oneness with life, once achieved, becomes the unity with God. Most importantly, Amos of Tekoa was explicit in his message on communication, that it is the vehicle to all deeds. We are the decision makers, we make the choice to say I, Thou.

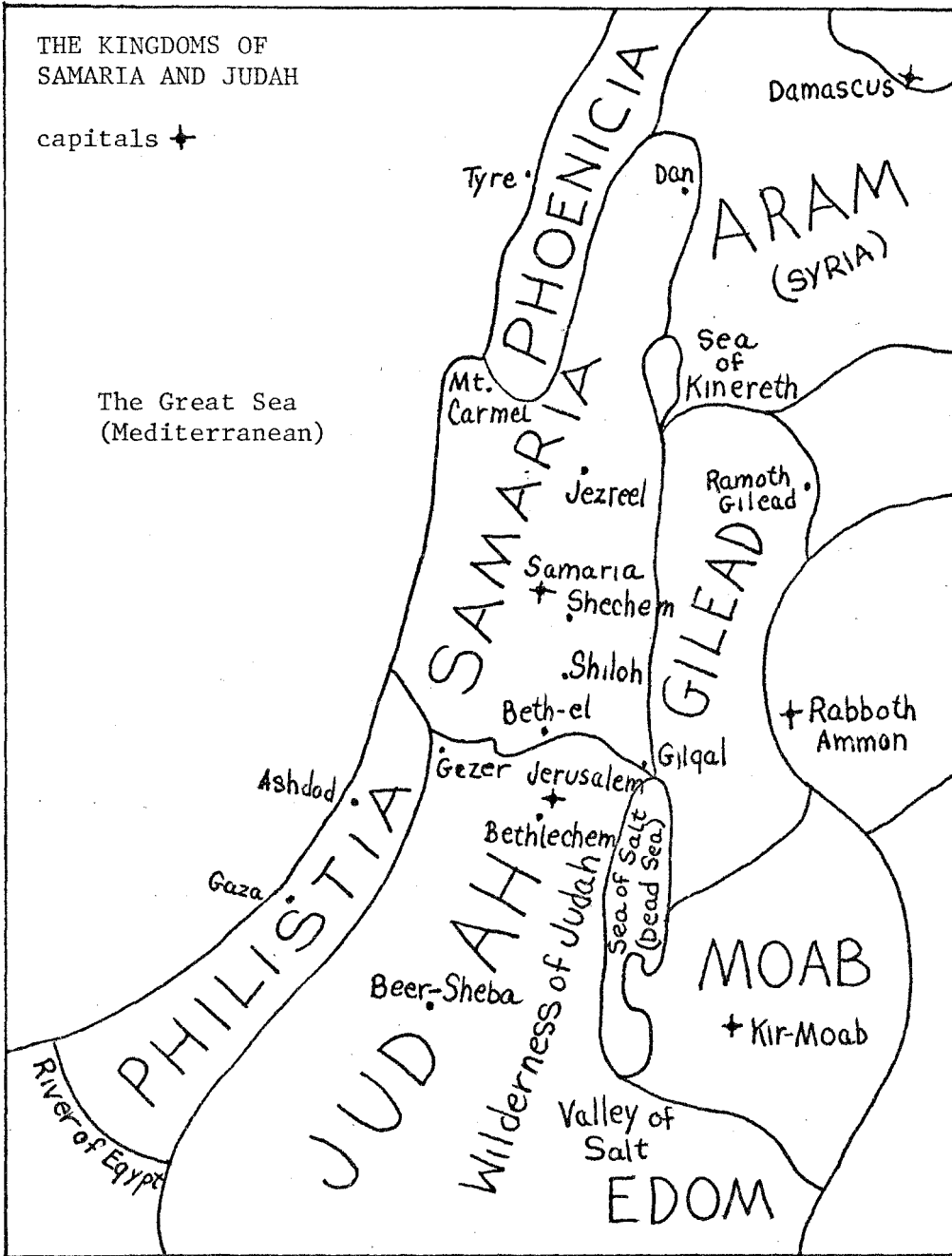
APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGICAL TIME LINE OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL AFTER THE DIVISION--INDICATING ONLY THOSE NECESSARY FOR THIS PAPER.

<u>Approx. Date B.C.E.</u>	<u>Judean King</u>	<u>Active Prophet</u>	<u>Israel King</u>	<u>Approx. Date B.C.E.</u>
930	Rehoboam	<u>Ahijah</u>	Jeroboam I	930
			Omri	885
		<u>Elijah</u>	Ahab/Jezebel	875
872	Jehoshaphat	<u>Micaiah</u>		
			Ahaziah (son of Ahab)	853
			Joram (son of Ahab)	852
850	Jehoram (Joram) (son of Jehoshaphat)			
843	Ahaziah (son of Jehoram)			
842	Athaliah	<u>Elisha</u>	Jehu	842
836	Joash (son of Jehoram)			
			Jehoahaz	814
796	Amaziah			
			Jehoash	791
782	Uzziah			
		<u>Amos</u>	Jeroboam II	781

Source: Synthesized from Dubnov and Harper.

APPENDIX B



Source: Pfeiffer, p. 304, only the necessary cities for this paper are included.

FOOTNOTES

¹ John C. Merrill and Ralph L. Lowenstein, Media, Messages, and Men. (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1971), p. 6.

² Robert C. O'Hara, Media for the Millions (New York: Random House, 1961), p. 5.

³ Merrill, et al., p. 63.

⁴ Martin Buber, The Prophetic Faith, trans. Carlyle Witton (New York: Macmillan Co., 1949; reprinted ed., Harper torchbook, 1960), p. 5.

⁵ Gene M. Tucker, "Prophetic Authenticity A Form-Critical Study of Amos 7:10-17." Interpretation 27 (Oct. 1973), 429.

⁶ Buber, p. 96.

⁷ William R. Harper, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Amos and Hosea: The International Critical Commentary, ed. S. R. Driver et al. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. cvi.

⁸ Merrill, et al., pp. 5-6.

⁹ Robert Cathcart, Post Communication Criticism and Evaluation. (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966, 3rd printing), p. 69.

¹⁰ Buber, p. 2.

¹¹ Lester Thonssen, A. Craig Baird, and Waldo W. Braden, Speech Criticism, 2nd ed. (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1970), p. 366.

¹² Buber, p. 96.

¹³ James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," Journal of Biblical Literature 88 (Mar. 1969), 8.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁶ Cathcart, p. 15.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 89.

²⁰ Charles F. Pfeiffer, Old Testament History. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House Co., 1973; 3rd printing, 1975), p. 305.

²¹ "Shrines (or 'high places') The apparatus of a high place consisted of an altar . . . , a sacred tree or an asherah (or tree pole), and, in particular, a messehah (translated 'obelisk' in e.g. 2 Ki. XVII. 10, R. V. marg.)." See Richard S. Cripps, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos, 2nd ed. (London: S.P.C.K., 1929; reprint ed., 1969), p. 9.

²² Henry L. Ellison, Prophets of Israel (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1929), p. 11.

²³ The Holy Scriptures, I Kings 11:35-36 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1955).

²⁴ Simon M. Dubnov, History of the Jews, 5 vols., translated from the Russian, 4th definitive, rev. ed. (South Brunswick, New Jersey: Thomas Yosoloff, 1967), Vol. 1: From the Beginning to Early Christianity, by Moshe Spiegel, pp. 171-172.

²⁵ I Kings, 21:1-16.

²⁶ Dubnov, pp. 175-176.

²⁷ I Kings 21:19-23.

²⁸ II Chronicles 18:13-16.

²⁹ Dubnov, p. 184.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 186-187.

³¹ Ibid., p. 188.

³² Ibid., p. 189.

³³ Ibid., p. 190.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 191.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 200.

³⁶ H. E. W. Fosbroke, "The Book of Amos: Introduction," The Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 6 (New York: Abington Press, 1956), p. 764.

³⁷ Ralph L. Lewis, The Persuasive Style and Appeals of the Minor Prophets Amos, Hosea, and Micah (Dissertation, University of Michigan, 59-3935, 1959), p. 26.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Dubnov, p. 218.

⁴¹Pfeiffer, p. 328.

⁴²Dubnov, pp. 200-201.

⁴³Cripps. p. 8.

⁴⁴Dubnov, p. 224.

⁴⁵Joseph Dheilly, The Prophets, trans. Rachel Attwater (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1960), p. 88.

⁴⁶Dubnov, p. 201.

⁴⁷Brooke Peters Church, The Private Lives of the Prophets and The Times In Which They Lived (New York: Rhinehart and Co., Inc., 1953), pp. 61-62.

⁴⁸Dubnov, pp. 224-226.

⁴⁹Flavius Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, trans. William Whiston (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1976, 13th printing), p. 208.

⁵⁰Parts that had fallen over a long period of time were not cared for by previous kings and lastly were thrown down by the king of Israel upon entering Judah and imprisoning Uzziah's father, King Amaziah.

⁵¹Dubnov, p. 198.

⁵²Josephus, p. 208.

⁵³Hermann Gunkel, "The Secret Experiences of the Prophets," The Expositor, 2 vols., 9th Series, (1924) 2:24.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶AS in the episode of Jehoshaphat and Ahab consulting the prophet Micaiah, see II Chronicles 18:6.

⁵⁷Gunkel, 1:432.

⁵⁸Gunkel, 2:26.

⁵⁹Ibid., 2:27.

60 I call Amos "man" here rather than "man of God" since he refused to be categorized as a "son of a prophet."

61 Harry M. Orlinsky, Essays in Biblical Culture and Bible Translation: "The Seer-Priest and the Prophet in Ancient Israel" (New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., 1974), p. 40.

62 Ibid., pp. 40-41.

63 Abraham J. Heschel, The Prophets, 2 vols. (New York: Harper and Row, 1962; rev. ed., New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1975), 2:252.

64 Samuel and Elisha are two prime examples of being apprentices under a great master. Samuel's mother gave her son to study with Eli, the priest of Shiloh--to give her son to the Lord was a fulfillment of her gratuitous vow upon conception (I Samuel 1:28). While in the case of Elisha, he was chosen to be Elijah's protege (I Kings 19:16, 18-22).

65 "The terms hozeh and ro'eh can hardly be differentiated in their biblical usage." There are beliefs that hozeh was Aramaic and is now upset by Ugaritic-Phoenician usage. M. Jastrow Jr. suggested "that ro'eh is the 'inspector' . . . who looks for a sign and interprets it, the hozeh is the one to whom a sign appears, and who recognizes its meaning when it manifests itself" (Orlinsky, p. 59).

66 Ibid., p. 41.

67 Heschel emphasizes that "Samuel is consistently called seer (ro'eh), not prophet . . ." (2:186). Orlinsky notes that scholars tend to believe that when Abraham, Moses, Samuel, Nathan or an unnamed person (ish navi) is termed prophet, it is the interpretation from a later period, (p. 59).

68 Heschel, 2:187.

69 Ibid., 2:185-186.

70 Ibid., 2:128, 186.

71 Ibid., 1:12.

72 Ibid., 2:186, f47.

73 Gunkel, 2:24.

74 Ibid.

75 "It is now widely recognized that the expression $b^e ne ha-n^e vi'im$ (lit. 'sons of the prophets') means 'members of the prophets' guild, order.' This term, just like 'visionary' and 'seer,' is never applied to any of the literary, canonical prophets, for they did not constitute guilds or orders" (Orlinsky, pp. 50-51).

⁷⁶ Samuel anointed Saul and blessed him, 'that [he] may cause [him] to hear the word of God'--(I Samuel 9:27). Saul then encountered a "band of prophets" whom he joined and with whom he prophesied (I Samuel 10:5). Prophesying is not a usual occurrence for Israel's prospective kings.

⁷⁷ Heschel re-examines the "pathological symptoms" attributed to the prophets. He states that Isaiah was literally told to "loose the sack-cloth from your loins." This meant to remove only his outer garment and thus appear as a slave or one in mourning. Walking barefoot was an additional sign of severe poverty or mourning. Therefore, the sigh of Isaiah would have great symbolic connotations, (2:180).

⁷⁸ Ecstasies happen in many forms and on various levels. "They are different in a pious, sublime, noble man, such as Plotinus, and in camel drivers who smoke hashish. The most common form is the wild, artificially produced orgiastic act which, . . . is at home in many cults," such a Phoenician Baalism. Thus to inspire ecstasy, the cults' means of stimulation were: "Dramatic gestures, dance, music, alcohol, opium, hashish, the drinking of water of a sacred well, or of the blood of an animal" (Heschel, 2:111, 138).

⁷⁹ "In the days of the . . . schools or colleges of the prophets; where one part of employment of the persons trained in such schools was to sing the praises of God, accompanied with various instruments." See Hugh Blair, Lectures of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, 2 vols., (Southern Illinois Press: 1965), 2:387.

⁸⁰ Gunkel, 1:360.

⁸¹ Moses was not a professional seer. But he, as well as other "leading representatives of the Hebrews were believed to be able--with direct intervention of God--to duplicate and even surpass the 'super-human' qualities of their non-Hebraic counterparts" (Orlinsky, p. 50, f20).

"Moses . . . may be well called a prophet, and for his age one of an exceptionally high order." Because we know only a minute amount of his methods, "he cannot well be included in the history of prophetic origins" (Cripps, p. 17; f3).

⁸² Heschel, 2:104.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 2:105.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 2:132, 146.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 2:138.

88 Ibid.

89 Josephus, p. 198.

90 Heschel, 2:134.

91 See footnote 77, on Isaiah.

92 Heschel, 2:182.

93 Ibid., 2:183.

94 Robert Vaughan, Hours With the Mystics, 2 vols., (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893), 1:81.

95 Ibid.

96 Harper, p. cv^f.

97 Church, p. 65.

98 As previously defined--being affiliated with the guild and a master.

99 We assume Amos, like Elisha, was from a simple unrenowned family since he does not claim any superior self-images. Furthermore, if his family was renowned it would have apparently been an unhidden fact to Amaziah--possibly even the compiler of the book--as was the case of David's reputable father (I Samuel 16:18; 17:58).

100 Otto Eissfeldt, The Old Testament, an Introduction, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), pp. 396-397.

101 Church, p. 66.

102 Hans Walter Wolff, Amos the Prophet: The Man and his Background, introductory by John Reumann, ed., trans. Foster R. McCurley (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 77.

103 Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions, trans. John McHugh (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1961), p. 354.

104 Cohen implies in his introduction that all was going well for Amos until he angered Amaziah (p. 81).

105 Church, pp. 63-64.

106 Julius A. Bewer, The Literature of the Old Testament, 3rd ed. revised by Emil G. Kraeling (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), p. 90.

- 107 Church, p. 65.
- 108 Harper, p. cvi.
- 109 Richard S. Cripps, p. 11.
- 110 Wolff, pp. 77-78.
- 111 Harper, p. cix.
- 112 The Jewish Encyclopedia, 1964 ed. s.v. "Education: Biblical and Pre-Talmudical Data," 5:42.
- 113 Ibid.
- 114 Encyclopedia Judaica, 1971 ed. s.v. "Education," 6:391, 395.
- 115 Ibid., 6:390, 395, 396.
- 116 Ibid., 6:396.
- 117 Ibid.
- 118 Ibid.
- 119 Harper, p. cvii.
- 120 Cripps, p. 11.
- 121 Harper, p. cviii.
- 122 Ibid., p. cxxiv.
- 123 Ibid., pp. cxxv-cxxvi.
- 124 Dubnov, p. 239; f60.
- 125 Ibid., p. 240.
- 126 Vaux, p. 49.
- 127 Dubnov, p. 240.
- 128 Cripps, p. 65. Robert Gordis believes that "The Book of Amos contains two collections of prophecies--the first (Chapters 1--7:9) delivered before the encounter at Beth-el (A), the second, Chapters 8 and 9 added later and consisting of oracles delivered after the encounter (B). The historical material (7:10-17) (H) was added to the first collection before the second part of the book." Hence the history of the composition may be summarized in the formula A+H+B. See R. Gordis, Poets, Prophets, and Sages: Essays in Biblical Interpretation (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), p. 222.

129 Harper, pp. cxxvi-cxxvii.

130 Tucker, p. 431.

131 Dubnov, p. 241.

132 During the reign of Jeroboam I, a man of God ascended from Beth-el. This nameless prophet predicted northern disaster (I Kings 13) --parallel to that of Amos. Through Harper we learn that some believe this story is "a distorted account of . . . [Amos'] ministry" (p. cxxiv). There may be parallels but it is quite doubtful that this anachronism would have occurred. It would mean approximately 150 years before the literary prophetic period--preceding even Elijah and Elisha--a prophet possessing Amos' attributes, viz. a public orator and a skilled poet, would have appeared.

133 Cripps, p. 18.

134 Harper, p. cvi^f.

135 Lewis, p. 200.

136 Harper, pp. cxxxvii-cxxxviii.

137 Church, p. 65.

138 Ibid., pp. 65-66.

139 Ibid., p. 67.

140 Ibid., p. 62.

141 Lloyd Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," in Contemporary Theories of Rhetoric: Selected Readings, ed. Richard Johannesen, advisory ed. J. Jeffery Auer (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 386-387.

142 Cohen says in his introduction that Amaziah was "the false priest in the idolatrous shrines of Jeroboam II" (p. 81, italics mine).

143 Bitzer, p. 389.

144 Buber, p. 108.

145 Bitzer, p. 384.

146 Buber, p. 108.

147 The feast was called Sukkot (Sukkos) and celebrated for nine days in the autumn of the year. Besides being the longest of the Hebrew festivals, it was also considered the greatest and most joyous. It was a time to show gratitude after reaping the crops from the fields and orchards, and the grapes from the vineyards.

"This festival had, at one time, many names and titles the Festival of the Ingathering; also . . . the Festival of the Booths. Its name was shortened too, to . . . the Festival, and it was even called . . . God's Festival though Sukkos, officially, had the same status as Pesach [Passover] and Shovuos [Festival of Weeks], it played a much greater role in the life of the people than did the other two agricultural festivals; and when people said, 'The Festival,' without any other specifications, the great autumn festival, Sukkos, was meant.

In the older books of the Bible . . . the only festival given considerable attention is Sukkos. Sukkos, then, was apparently the main festival of the Jews of those times.

We learn from these old biblical books, that this festival was celebrated by the Canaanites, the older inhabitants of Palestine." See Hayyim Schauss, The Jewish Festivals: History and Observance, trans. Samuel Jaffe (New York: Schocken Books, 1962; 10th printing, 1975), pp. 170-171.

148 Ibid., p. 170.

149 Prior to the adoption of Sukkot, the Hebrews celebrated the birth of the new year upon the opening of the spring season.

150 Schauss, p. 172.

151 Buber, p. 96.

152 Harper, p. cxxviii.

153 Wolff disagrees with this view. He states that "very rarely does this prophet exhort: 4:4f.; 5:4-6, 14f. On the whole exhortations are hardly to be observed in Amos. To exhort and to warn was apparently not his distinctive commission as prophet" (p. 45). It seems that Wolff expects Amos to be quite consistent in his form if one is to label his speeches as exhortations. Wolff leaves little room for variation.

154 Heschel, 1:37.

155 Ibid.

156 Ibid.

157 "Again and again, He had sent into Israel warning portents, that Israel might take heed and return to Him" (Heschel, 1:35). Hence these messages were not in reality new; only to those who have never heard such words will the message seem novel. The only novelty was perhaps Amos' manner of presentation.

158 It is strongly believed by scholars, that Amos spoke in many of the cities mentioned in his speeches:

We may however, certainly assume that he also appeared in the capital and those diatribes and threats which explicitly mention Samaria--iii, 9-11; iv, 1-3; vi, 1-7--are naturally to be thought of as having been spoken there. (Eissfeldt, p. 397)

His preaching was not confined to the king's sanctuary in Beth-el, though it seems to have started and ended there. Amos visited and preached in other sanctuaries and temples, and so did a good deal of wandering about, seeing and learning conditions as he went. (Church, p. 69)

Amaziah's accusation that the prophet had conspired against Jeroboam . . . implies that Amos had not confined his activity to Beth-el. His concern in his oracles with Samaria and Gilgal suggests that at these places too he had made himself heard. No doubt at a number of the sanctuaries where at festival time pilgrims and traders came together the prophet's dire message of doom had been pronounced. (Interpreter's Bible, p. 767)

Other sermons of which have extracts were delivered at Samaria (iii. 9, 12, iv. 1, and cf. vi. 6). During this visit to the kingdom of Ephraim, doubtless Amos preached at various centers, e.g. at Gilgal (iv. 4, v. 5), where pilgrims or traders could be found gathered together. (Cripps, p. 12)

159 Heschel, 1:38.

160 "The Ten Tribes (in the Book of Kings, and elsewhere) were known by the title 'Israel,' as distinct from the Southern Kingdom which was called 'Judah.' Most critics hold that this is the usage here. However, in these words, the Prophet, even if he is addressing the inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom alone (as in the case in vv. 9-15), may be merely styling them, what they actually were, 'descendants of Jacob.' The expression itself does not necessarily single out the population of North Israel. It would seem likely, indeed, that the words definitely cover all the 'children of Israel'" (Cripps, p. 150). "The words of Edghill . . . are to the point: 'Though his ministry was mainly confined to the Northern Kingdom, his indictment was directed to the whole house of Israel.' Battenweiser, Prophets, pp. 232-236, goes so far as to claim that only in iii, 9-iv. 3, v. 6, 15, vi. 6, 13, vii. 9b is the Prophet addressing Northern Israel specifically" (Cripps, p. 13).

161 Ibid.

162 Ibid., pp. 13-14.

163 Gordis, p. 224.

164 Cripps, p. 117.

165 Bitzer, pp. 385-386.

166 Ibid.

167 A short missionary period was probably intentional from the beginning, although Amaziah expelled Amos. As we already noted, Amos being aware of the festival time, took advantage of the opportunity when crowds would gather. This audience was evidently his anticipated listeners. According to the length of the celebration, he had at least nine days in which to speak. Although references estimate a two year mission, I feel he would have directed his time of oratory to traditional gatherings. The autumn feast may well have been his initial time to establish precedence for the coming months as he travelled, which puts a strong focus on the nine days of the Sukkot festival.

168 Gerhard Von Rad, Old Testament Theology, 2 vols., trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 2:132.

169 Cripps, p. 117.

170 Wolff, p. 1.

171 Buber, p. 96.

172 Ibid., p. 99. "From the beginnings of Israelite religion the belief that God had chosen this particular people to carry out His mission has been both a cornerstone of Hebrew faith and a refuge in moments of distress. And yet, the prophets felt that to many of their contemporaries this cornerstone was a stumbling block; this refuge, an escape. They had to remind the people that chosenness must not be mistaken as divine favoritism or immunity from chastisement, but, on the contrary, that it meant being more seriously exposed to divine judgment and chastisement" (Heschel, :32).

173 Heschel, 1:35.

174 "God is the Lord and the prophets are His servants," is the way Heschel succinctly explains the relation of Yahweh to the prophets (Ibid., p. 38).

175 Harper, p. cxxix.

176 Gordis advocates that the Book of Amos, "Shows evidence of clear-cut careful organization." But he explains that the encounter between Amos and Amaziah which appears between visions three and four (7:10-17), shows a striking irregularity in such a careful order. "All critics are agreed that it is not in its proper place, but there is no unanimity as to its original position . . . Sellin places 7:10-17 after 9:10 and claims that 9:10-15 is the end of this historical account," Sellin supports his theory with the fact that Amos was expelled because of his visions and therefore 7:10-17 should appear after the visions (Gordis, pp. 217-218).

177 Church, p. 72; Dheilly, p. 94.

- 178 Gordis, p. 218.
- 179 Church, pp. 70-71.
- 180 Gordis, p. 224.
- 181 "Analysis: Book I," trans. Lane Cooper, The Rhetoric of Aristotle, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1960), p. xxxvii.
- 182 Robert Cathcart, Post Communication, (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1966, 3rd printing), p. 45.
- 183 Ibid., p. 48.
- 184 Cripps, p. 123.
- 185 Cohen, p. 88.
- 186 Buber, p. 97.
- 187 Lewis, p. 65.
- 188 Heschel, 1:32.
- 189 Cohen, p. 95.
- 190 Lewis, p. 46.
- 191 Bewer, p. 95. The citation 3:1 is incorrect and should read 3:2.
- 192 Plotinus, see footnote 94, p. 37.
- 193 Bewer, p. 94.
- 194 Ibid.
- 195 Rene Descartes, Discourse on Method and Meditations, trans. with introduction by Laurence J. Lafleur (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1960), p. 109.
- 196 Heschel, 2:263.
- 197 Lewis, p. 66.
- 198 Aristotle, pp. 107-108, 110.
- 199 Heschel, 1:9.
- 200 Cohen, p. 101.
- 201 Ibid., p. 113.

202 Heschel, 2:63.

203 Ibid.

204 Ibid., 1:33.

205 Ibid., 2:5.

206 Ibid., p. 11.

207 Ibid.

208 Hans Walter Wolff, Joel and Amos, trans. Waldemar Janzen, S. Dean McBride, Jr., and Charles A. Muenchow, ed. S. Den McBride, Jr. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), p. 90.

209 Eissfeldt, p. 399.

210 Gordis, p. 217.

211 Eissfeldt, p. 398.

212 Wolff, Joel and Amos, p. 144.

213 Lewis, p. 44.

214 St. Augustine, On Christian Doctrine, trans. with introduction by D. W. Robertson, Jr. (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1958), p. 131.

215 Ibid., p. 132.

216 Buber, p. 104.

217 Wolff, Joel and Amos, p. 100.

218 Lewis describes the seven sensory images of nonverbal communication: visual, auditory, gustatory (taste), olfactory (smell), tactual, kinaesthetic (muscle strain), and organic (internal), (pp. 55-56). Rather than reiterate his diligent work, I will indicate in analysis those sensory images most prevalent. Nearly all if not every image listed above, can be found in each discourse with little difficulty. It is my intention to focus on other vital areas of Amos' style.

219 Harper, p. cxxxix.

220 Ibid., p. cxxxviii.

221 Wolff, Amos the Prophet, p. 42.

222 Wolff, Joel and Amos, p. 138.

223 Meir Weiss informs that others say it signifies an indefinite number, an approximation, three or four transgressions. Still "others argue that they indicate $x + 1$ thing, i.e., four transgressions," "The Pattern of Numerical Sequence in Amos 1-2, A Re-examination," Journal of Biblical Literature 86 (Dec. 1967), p. 416.

224 E. Z. Malemed, "Break-up of Stereotype Phrases as an Artistic Device in Biblical Poetry," Scripta Hierosolymitana, 8 (Jerusalem, 1961), pp. 115-53, cited by Weiss, p. 419.

225 Weiss, p. 421.

226 Ibid., p. 420. Gordis also mentions the apparently significant number seven. He sees it occurring in two other places: 3:3-7, where there are seven series of questions "through which Amos seeks to emphasize the Divine Source of his prophetic activity." He then adds the seven disasters in 4:6-12 (p. 223).

227 Ibid., p. 420-421.

228 Buber, p. 110.

229 Harper, p. cxxxvi.

230 Ibid.

231 Cripps, p. 103.

232 Harper, p. cxxxvii.

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