

Amherst College
Class of 1891

Papers on Old Testament Prophecy

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CLASS OF '91, AMHERST COLLEGE.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT REGARDING THE STUDY
OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE IN AMHERST.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

The following papers, together with the introductory statement, are printed in response to repeated requests for information regarding the study of the English Bible as a part of the curriculum of Amherst College. These inquiries come largely from those who are at present teachers of the Bible in schools and colleges or who are designing to enter upon such instruction. Information in detail is desired; it is asked: "Just what are your classes doing, and just how are they doing it?" It is found practically impossible to reply satisfactorily through correspondence; yet, in the present state of aroused interest regarding scientific study of the Scriptures in our institutions of higher learning, each one should endeavor to contribute to the subject whatever light he may be able. The best revelation of class-room work, as regards its character and its method, is found in the results attained by the students themselves. It is believed, therefore, that a careful examination, in the light of the statement of facts made in the introduction, of the following theses, as results illustrative of the method of instruction described, will enable interested friends of college Bible study to gather quite clearly and fully such information as is sought.

It only remains to call special attention to the fact that these papers are the work of college Juniors, taking up for the first time the historical and literary study of the Scriptures. They are selected, as will be seen from a reading of the introduction, from the work of the first part of the Junior course, practically from its first third. It has seemed wiser, however, to place before the reader a few specimens of attained results selected from a limited portion of the course and that the commencement, rather than to glean here and there from its entirety. Such defects and crudeness as may readily be detected by the critical examiner will possibly be of no inconsiderable service to one desiring to attempt work along the same lines. The prize thesis was, indeed, written at the close of the first term's work, but it will be seen, on examination, that it deals almost entirely with the ground covered in the papers which precede it.

THE STUDY OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE IN AMHERST COLLEGE.

Bible study in college is a many-sided problem. It can be solved only by the co-operation of instructors, students and those interested in the moral and religious welfare of our institutions of higher learning. Moreover, its solution can be reached only by moving carefully along the paths of experience and observation. What can be done is largely discoverable by noting what has been done.

First, we ask, What should be the aim of college Bible study? The answer will greatly simplify matters. Is its purpose simply a devotional use of the Scriptures? Should it aim only at the production of the worshipful spirit? The evoking of religious feeling, especially for a practical influence on conduct, is a high and important end of the study of the Scriptures anywhere. It is certainly to be sought in the college. But how? If we could assume, in the case of the young man entering college, an understanding of the Bible in any degree commensurate with his knowledge of other subjects, the situation would be quite other than it is. But such an assumption is out of the question. The fact is, there is not at present sufficient knowledge of the Scriptures among our college students, themselves being judges, to admit of extensive and thoroughly successful devotional or practical Bible study. The college must do what it can to remedy this defect. It must try to do what ought to have been done long before. It must aid the student in obtaining a knowledge of what the contents of the Bible are.

What has been said justifies a prompt negative reply to the inquiry as to whether the purpose of college Bible study can be an intellectual grasp of the Scriptures alone. To desire simply to know the Scriptures is a good and also a high motive for entering upon their study. But it is evident that the present condition in the college demands intellectual study of the Bible especially as a means to the use of the volume for the up-building and the maintenance of the moral and spiritual character of the individual student. The existing situation therefore shows us that the purpose of college Bible study should be intellectual knowledge of the Scriptures, not as an end in itself, but

as a means, all-essential, to their practical use, throughout life, in the upbuilding and maintenance of moral and spiritual character.

How can this purpose be attained? Will a class, gathered on Sunday, under the direction of a competent instructor, with the intention of emphasizing the intellectual element in the study of the Scriptures, meet the end in view? I have yet to find the earnest and judicious Christian student or professor who, face to face with the situation, advocates that such intellectual mastery of the Bible as the college to-day needs, be sought through a voluntary, or a required, Sunday exercise. Increasingly it is becoming evident that such study as is necessary can only exist as it finds a place for itself in the college curriculum. In but one way can the situation be met. Special professorships of Biblical instruction must be founded and filled with men fitted by natural endowments and special training to carry on this difficult yet important work. Thoughtful and generous benefactors must see to it that no institution of importance as a center of education is left destitute in this particular.

How then shall Bible study, as a part of the curriculum, under the direction of a competent and efficient instructor, devoting his entire time to the task, be carried on? This question must be answered in each individual case according to the circumstances. Certain things will, however, I believe, be found true in general everywhere. Certain principles, therefore, as we may perhaps call them, may be laid down, the application and illustration of which are the privilege of the teacher in each individual case.

First, the work should be made as thoroughly a means of mental discipline as any other part of the curriculum. Painstaking, accurate, thorough scholarship should be expected and required by the teacher. The work should be as exacting and exhausting as any other study occupying an equal portion of time.

Second, Bible study, as a part of a college curriculum, should be conducted from the points of view of history and literature. True, philosophy and social science are also to be legitimately found in the Scriptures, and legitimately are these to be drawn from them; but, first of all, the Sacred Library must be studied with the historic and literary sense; otherwise all further work is vain. The teacher, therefore, must be one possessed of aptitudes, at least, for instruction in both history and literature. The wider his researches in these fields and the more manifold his resources as the result, the better. The student must also have attained such a degree of mental development

that a personal insight into historical movements and some intuitive perception of literary forms may reasonably be expected of him.

Third, the same general considerations which would influence the allotment of time, together with its arrangement, in the case of any other college discipline, should prevail regarding this one. Who would think of extending a course of philosophy or of social science through the four years of a college course as a weekly exercise? Who would advocate such an arrangement for a course in history or literature? Increasingly, in preparing a schedule of exercises for a given college term, the tendency prevails to "bunch" the hours of a given study. Better results can unquestionably be thus obtained. It would seem far better, therefore, to permit a student to study the Bible during a single term of a college year, allotting from two to four hours a week to the exercise, than to make the study a weekly exercise throughout the year. If so much time can be commanded for the subject, a four-hour course, extending through one term, might well be arranged, either as required or elective work, for each class. And if the example of other disciplines be followed in this particular also, it might be quite proper to expect that the work at the outstart should be required and later on become elective.

Fourth, and most emphatically, Bible study, as demanded by our colleges at present, should be scientific in character. Its method must be inductive. Its highest form, for most advanced work, should be the laboratory or German seminary system of instruction. Its lower forms should approximate, so far as may be, to this. The great object of the discipline is to develop independent and original students of the Scriptures. The general road, therefore, to this goal must be that universally accepted to-day as the proper one along which to proceed in the effort to produce original scholars in the sciences, while the special pathway may well be that method which is increasingly meeting with large success in the pursuit of the historical sciences, to which Bible study certainly belongs.

The following account of what has thus far been attempted in Amherst College in the study of the Bible, as a part of the curriculum, should be regarded as a narrative of illustrative experiments along the lines of the general principles which have been laid down.

In the beginning of its history, Amherst planned for Bible study. The first printed statement of its course of instruction includes "a critical recitation in the Greek Testament, once a week, during a part of the year, for each of the classes." Five years later, a weekly

exercise, for each class, in the English Bible was made a part of the curriculum. The Freshmen studied the historical books, the Sophomores the prophetic, the Juniors the N. T. epistles, the Seniors the Assembly's catechism in connection with the Scriptures. By far the larger part of the faculty participated, in turn, in the instruction of the three lower classes, while the President took charge of the work with the Seniors. The hour of instruction for all was assigned to Thursday afternoon, in order thus to bring religious influences into the mid-week. Evidently a devotional result was the end specially sought. Later on, this arrangement was so modified, as regards the three lower classes, that each professor taught something in, or concerning, the Scriptures kindred to his own department. At this period Bible-listening was taking the place of study on the part of the students and lecturing that of active class instruction on the part of the teacher. The difficulty of finding instructors who could and would conduct these exercises with profit, the comparative inutility of a single meeting with a class during the week, together with the fact that all work, on the part of the student, in preparation for the exercise, had disappeared, led to the gradual abandonment of this plan of instruction, until the only Bible study remaining in the curriculum, except the catechism and the Bible exercise with the Seniors, was that of the Sophomores and Juniors in the Greek Testament. The former passed with the Greek professor, in consecutive lessons, through a gospel or the Acts, the latter through one of the epistles. Finally, these exercises also were, for good reasons, omitted. Meanwhile, another force for religious instruction in the college had begun to make itself felt. A professorship in Biblical history and interpretation having been founded, the president became its first incumbent, and, in connection with his conduct of the regular morning prayers, consecutive Bible readings and expositions, necessarily limited as to time, were carried on. Subsequently this professorship was separated from the presidency, and, although still connected with the college pastorate, opportunity has been afforded through it for the re-establishment of a systematic course of Bible study, as a part of the regular instruction of the college, quite unlike, however, in character and manner of conduct, that pursued in the early history of the institution.

The present development of Bible study in the curriculum may be largely attributed to the earnest request of students of the upper classes that time for such study might be allotted to those who desired it from the other work of the college, and that this study in its methods

and its thoroughness might be placed on a level with other studies of the last two years of the course. The insufficiency of the results attained in the work attempted on Sunday, doubtless, contributed largely to the request. An elective, of four hours a week, running through the winter term, and open to Juniors and Seniors together, was the first step taken. The work was so planned that a different course should be presented alternate years. The first year O. T. history, poetry and prophecy were studied in selected books and also certain of the N. T. epistles. The aim of the O. T. work was largely to show the prophet in his historical setting and the historic progress of O. T. religion under his guidance. At the same time, the literary form in which his deeds and words have been transmitted to us commanded careful attention. The Semitic genius and the theocratic elements in O. T. literature were considered. Personal peculiarities of temperament and education, and their expression in the language employed, were noted. Back of the book was seen the living man, thinking, moving, a great factor not only in Hebrew, but also, indirectly and subsequently, in world progress. The study of the N. T. epistles, pursued along the same general lines, was designed to give an insight into the personal elements in the development and history of primitive Christianity, together with a careful consideration of the points of contact between this new life and the older religious civilizations, Jewish, Greek, and Roman, among which it found the soil for its growth and its place of influence. The second year of the course was devoted to the historical and literary study of the gospels, with the attendant problems. The synoptic gospels, the question of their literary similarities and differences, their relation of dependence upon one another and their relative date, their authorship, genuineness and authenticity, including the question of the supernatural historically considered, occupied attention first. Then followed the study of the Fourth Gospel, at first by itself, along the same lines, subsequently in comparison with the synoptics. Thus the whole field of early Christianity was passed over, the foundation for the study having been laid in the investigation of the epistles, especially the four undisputed Pauline ones. the previous year.

Soon, however, it was manifest that much better results could be obtained by separating the Juniors and Seniors, permitting the former to elect work in the Biblical history and prophecy, together with the epistles, and opening the critical study of the gospels to Seniors alone. The influence of the studies in Junior year, especially those of English

literature and history, was found very helpful in connection with the former course, and considerable progress in these quite desirable as a preparation for the latter. Moreover, the qualities of mind developed by such Senior studies as political economy, constitutional history and philosophy were seen to be very desirable in the work of gospel criticism. Thus two separate terms of work, of four hours each, were opened, the one for Juniors only, the other for Seniors alone, while, in all ordinary cases, no one would be expected to take the work of the Senior elective who had not previously taken the Junior course. This division of the study, which is the existing condition at the present, has led to some modifications in the work of both years. While naturally the Junior work is prefaced by remarks on method, and practice work, making certain the student's understanding regarding it, must be done at the threshold, these can be omitted Senior year. Moreover, there is now opportunity for the profitable giving of supplementary lectures, applying, in their larger relations, the facts and principles which the student is discovering and putting into practice in his own personal inductive work. These lectures cover in the Junior year the entire field of O. T. literature, giving a fair survey of the ground, although certain questions, as for example that of Pentateuch criticism, cannot be entered into in detail. Little, if anything, however, is lost here, as the student at this stage is not fitted to handle such a problem, nor, in the opinion of the writer, are final results yet clearly enough attained or formulated to permit of its profitable consideration at any length in a college course. In the Senior year, the lectures deal with the entire N. T. literature, the development, historically viewed, of apostolic Christianity, the personal and historical factors tending to the unity, while rendering necessary the variety, of Christian thought and practice in the first days. Thus many subjects for further investigation are marked out before the student and the lines along which they may be approached are indicated. He is taught to believe that he is to be throughout life an independent, yet humble, investigator of truth as it presents itself in living form in the literature of the Scriptures, and to find in the Christ its highest and complete personal manifestation.

But it must be emphasized that these lectures are supplementary: they presuppose and rest upon the personal inductive work of the student, which is the essential part of the course. This requires some extended explanation.

First, as has been stated, the characteristics of inductive Bible study

are emphasized in introductory lectures, and practice work is assigned each student, in the doing of which he is most carefully watched and searchingly criticised. The class then begins to apply what has been thus learned to a single book, characterized by unity and limited in scope. The revised version is the single text-book, the student being encouraged in N. T. work to make constant comparison with the original Greek. The special book selected is studied by paragraphs; the contents of a given paragraph are concisely stated in writing; occasionally its condensed sense is written out; thus by generalization the scope of the book as a whole is determined. This work is daily submitted to the instructor. Meanwhile, questions of importance are, as they occur to the student, briefly noted and classified. Next, an inductive study, prepared by the teacher, is put into the hands of the student. It consists entirely of questions, standing in close connection with one another and intended to bring out the leading thoughts and topics of the book, thus preparing the student to appreciate its marked individuality. While this study is being worked through and the results are being submitted to the teacher, the time in the class-room is occupied with a brief survey of the book, paragraph by paragraph, following after, but never preceding, the inductive study, and consideration is given to the most important questions which have been raised by the students individually. After the inductive study has been completed, a list of topics, suggested by it, is submitted to the class; a given one is assigned to each student for personal investigation, a thesis upon which, short and concise, is the goal of his work upon that individual book. Interviews are had with each student privately regarding his topic; suggestions are made and inquiries answered. While the theses are in preparation, the bibliography bearing upon the topics as a whole is treated, and the supplementary lectures, which have been described, proceed. Upon these matters, written recitations are held at least once in two weeks, and in these the student is encouraged to present freely his own views and any difficulties which have occurred to him along the line of his personal research. These difficulties are met in private conference with each student. The theses, when completed, are read before the class and each is criticised by the teacher in private, general criticisms only being given in public.

Of course only a limited number of books can be taken up in this exhaustive way, yet after the first has been handled, the work becomes much more rapid. In the Senior year but four, the Gospels, are to

be considered ; in the Junior year four to six, according to their size, may be passed through by each student ; but these will be representative books, e. g. in prophecy Amos or Micah, in the epistles Galatians or Romans. The class is generally divided this year, after passing over the first book, into two or more sections, each working a separate book. Thus the results of work upon eight or twelve books at least may come before the class in the theses. In moving from book to book, comparative study is insisted upon ; thus the conception of the organic character of Biblical literature is brought out and the development of revelation in historical movement and inward experience is seen.

What students elect such work? Generally those who are good scholars in other departments. Not alone those who are professing Christians ; by no means those only who are looking forward to the ministry. These are always in the minority. They may postpone their Bible study for the theological course ; others can not. With these it must be a part of the college course or something, in most cases, never done. Inquiring minds are attracted ; those who have religious difficulties are often met with. This is well. It is better to meet a difficulty squarely and with help than to evade it or struggle with it alone. Students of literary and historical tastes are specially attracted. In number, from twenty to twenty-five per cent. of a given class are found to elect the study.

What are the observed results of the work? Increased respect for the wealth of beauty and the power of truth found in the Scripture literature. Increased humility before great subjects, whose magnitude and difficulty are clearly seen. Increased reverence for the personalities of Bible history, profound reverence for the Christ. Fortified, intelligent Christian faith ; a mind open to the evidence of experimental religion. Increased reading of the Bible in private ; increased devotional appropriation to self of the life which it contains.

GEORGE S. BURROUGHS.

THE HISTORICAL SITUATION IN THE BOOK OF AMOS.

A thorough understanding of the book of Amos is, in great degree, dependent on a knowledge of its historical situation, on some conception of the times in which the prophet uttered his message and the condition of the people to whom it had reference.

We inquire: How is this historical situation to be discovered? The book itself is the great source whence our knowledge both of the external and internal condition of Israel at this time is derived, though other sources may furnish some light in our search.

Let us first consider the external condition, as being the key to the internal; and the situation of Israel with respect to the states of Palestine is a natural starting point for our inquiry. At this time Jeroboam II, son and successor of Jehoash, reigned in Samaria.^a The northern kingdom was at the height of its prosperity. Its monarch was successful in war; his armies had overrun Moab and Ammon,^{aa} and had conquered the hosts of Syria and driven them to the very gates of Damascus^b. Judah, humbled by Jehoash,^{bb} offered no disturbance in the south, and, thus, Israel was the leading state in Palestine. Her energies could now be devoted to commerce, the results of which we shall see later. Her victories over Syria were the more easily obtained because the latter power was weakened by the attacks of the Assyrian Empire on the east. We find, however, no definite mention of Assyria in the book of Amos, but it is certain, from other sources, that this power is in the mind of the prophet when he speaks of Israel's going "into captivity beyond Damascus"^c and prophesies "an adversary shall there be even round about the land."^d

The internal situation was the result, in great measure, of the external. The wealth, which, as the writings of Amos show, was abundant in the northern kingdom,^e was the result of Jeroboam's victories and of the prosperous commerce with the East and the states of Palestine. Israel's territorial extent was greater than it had been since the days of Solomon.^f The monarchy seemed firmly established, and Israel apparently had entered upon a period of remarkable national prosperity. But all this glory was external. There was no equal distribution of wealth among the population, and that which flowed into the country seems to have been shared by the aristocracy alone. The material condition of this aristocracy was prosperous in the highest degree. Mansions of hewn stone rose everywhere^g. These were wainscoted, even furnished, in ivory. Couches of this valuable material were upholstered with cushions of silk.^h Houses for comfort in summer, others for protection from the dampness of winter, were erected.ⁱ At their feasts, reclining on their rich couches, they were entertained by musicians who sang, to the accompaniment of instruments, not the praises of Jehovah but songs of idleness.^j On the other hand, the condition of the poorer classes was

a. 1:1. aa. 6:14; 2 Kgs. 14:25. b. 2 Kgs. 14:25-28. bb. 2 Kgs. 14:8-14. c. 5:27
d. 3:11. e. 6:4-7. f. 6:2. g. 5:11. h. 6:4; 3:12. i. 3:15. j. 6:5.

most pitiable. The successes of the armies in war and of the merchants in peace seem to have brought them no prosperity. The husbandman had often to make a gift of a portion of his wheat crop which he could ill afford to lose.^a Monopolies of the wheat market sprang up and the poor were frequently compelled to pay full price for an inferior quality of grain.^b Such was the material condition of Israel in the days of Amos.

The moral condition of a theocratic people like the Hebrews is so intimately connected with, and dependent upon, its material condition that the task of treating the two subjects separately is no easy one. At this time, the presence of prosperity led to wrong methods of enjoying it. The first effect of the material welfare to be noted is the loss of religious character. There is no doubt that the outward observances of religion were followed in the strictest manner; but the heart was gone from them.^c The King was himself an idolater, and because of his wickedness incurred the prophet's special curse.^d The monarchy was upheld by a brutal soldiery necessary to protect it against the constant risings of the oppressed multitude.^e There was no justice in legal proceedings. Officers of the law wronged the just, scorned the needy and delighted in bribes.^f Nor was the wickedness of the rulers confined to quiet wrong-doing; they permitted and in some cases joined in public robbery and violence.^g The immense wine crops made drunkenness common^h and a profligate life led to a long series of crimes: robbery,ⁱ oppression of the poor,^j debauchery in its worst forms;^k false dealing in business, as the use of false balances, false weights in money, false measures for grain.^l The religion of Jehovah did not aid the oppressed, for its representatives, the priests, were corrupt. The prophet speaks bitterly of their "feasts and solemn assemblies."^m That the moral condition of the people at large was very low there can be no doubt. There was even a strong prejudice against any one who dared to stand for the right, so strong that the prudent man "kept silence in such a time."ⁿ So great was the corruption of manners that to speak in behalf of reformation seemed useless as well as perilous.

We may sum up our discoveries as follows. The power of Israel was only apparent, and, under the external coating of splendor, the nation was rotten to the core. Though some culture and conscience were left in Israel, else the people could not have understood and received the lofty and severely just language of Amos, yet the conclusion must be that it was indeed, as the prophet tells us, "an evil time" and that Israel was indeed a "sinful kingdom".^o

H. F. JONES.

a. 5:11. b. 8:4-6. c. 4:4,5. d. 7:9. e. 3:9. f. 5:12. g. 3:10; 6:3. h. 6:6. i. 3:10. j. 5:11. k. 2:7; 6:3-6. l. 8:5,6. m. 5:21-24. n. 5:10,13. o. 5:13; 9:8.

THE PERSONALITY OF AMOS, AS DISCLOSED IN HIS PROPHECY.

The scenes described in the book of Amos occur during the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam II, king of Israel^a. Jehovah has been forsaken by the Ten Tribes and idolatry is prevalent. The people have become luxurious in the extreme, dwelling in palaces finely constructed of hewn stone^b, finished in ivory^c and richly furnished with ivory^d and silk^e. They delight in feasting and revelry, drinking wine in bowls, singing idle songs to the viol and other instruments of music^f. Fig and olive trees they possess, pleasant vineyards which they have planted^g; fat beasts and horses are theirs.^h Oppression is severeⁱ; the needy are crushed and sold for a pair of shoes^j; violence and robbery are not unusual^k; wantonness, adultery, bribery, tumult are common.^l

There lived at this time, in Tekoa, a city of northern Judah, a herdsman named Amos, known to us as the prophet.^m To him comes the call from the Lord to prophesy, and from God he receives his message. His attitude of modesty and humility are well seen in his own words, as he declares that 'he was no prophet nor prophet's son, only among the herdmen, a dresser of sycamore trees.'ⁿ If not a learned man, as we now understand the term, he had a fitness, equally as necessary, for the task before him. He was a man of great natural ability. His shepherd life had made him thoughtful, as he gazed at the heavens, at Pleiades and Orion, at nature about as well as above him. In these he saw Jehovah, him who "calleteth for the waters of the sea and poureth them out upon the face of the earth," "who maketh the day dark with night," "that formeth the mountains and createth the winds."^o Not only had he this natural quality of thoughtfulness, but he must also have been an observer of human affairs. How fully must he have known the situation, as he proclaims forcibly and pointedly the sins of his own home, Judah,^p of Israel adjoining,^q and of the surrounding nations^r!

His message is to Israel,^s but not of their own sins does he speak at the first. His sound judgement leads him to denounce the sins of their enemies, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Moab, and even Judah, before he denounces the great and terrible evils in Israel.^t Thus winning their attention and interest by condemning the transgressions of the outlying nations and their most bitter rival, Judah, he boldly accuses those of the northern kingdom of their transgressions, and to their rising resentment he puts the question, "Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel?"^u How often this interrogative form shows his directness and force, and at the same time invites to consideration of the justice of God's judgements!

Amos has portrayed vividly the condition of the people and the enormity of their iniquity in speech simple yet decisive, plain but convincing. He has included in his charge all classes, the poor, the wealthy, the notable men of the chief of the nation, even the rich women of Samaria: all alike are to receive the vengeance which the Lord is to send upon Israel.^v

a. 1:1. b. 5:11. c. 3:15. d. 6:4. e. 3:12. f. 6:4, 5, 6, 7. g. 4:9; 5:11. h. 5:22; 4:10. i. 3:9; 4:1. j. 2:6. k. 3:10; 6:3. l. 2:7; 5:12; 3:9. m. 1:1; 3:7; 7:14, 15. n. 7:14, 15. o. 5:8; 4:13. p. 2:4, 5. q. 2:6-8. r. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1. s. 7:15; 2:6. t. 1:6, 9, 11; 2:1, 4, 6. u. 2:11. v. 4:1; 5:16, 17; 6:1; 7:17.

Although thus boldly and fearlessly he has taken up his task, and has declared the message of Jehovah directly, even, we may think, severely and harshly, still, through it all, we see another side of the prophet's nature. He has a deep realization of sin; he has been stirred to his depths; but he comes also with a special appeal to remind Israel of God's goodness and mercy in the past; "I brought you up out of the land of Egypt;" "You only have I known of all the families of the earth;" "I have sent affliction upon you, I have taken away your friends, I have caused temporal disaster to come upon you, all to the end that ye might return unto me, yet have ye not returned."^a Such thoughts as these move the heart of Amos. Thus deeply impressed, he appeals to his hearers: "Seek good and not evil, that ye may live, and so God shall be with you."^b Then again, feeling that the judgment can not be withheld, with tenderness and solemnity, he calls the people to do what alone remains; "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."^c

How deeply Israel is moved by the words of the shepherd prophet we see from the message sent by Amaziah, the priest, to Jeroboam: "Amos hath conspired against thee, the land is not able to bear his words." At length Amos is commanded to flee the country.^d The prophet's work is done. Yet though he has declared to Israel the punishment of sins and destruction, he does not leave them without hope, for in the dim future he sees Jehovah 'bringing again the captivity,' 'the cities rebuilt, and themselves no more plucked out of the land God had given them'.^e

Let us gather up the characteristics of this man of Judah and estimate his personality. We see in him a man daily laboring, by no means wealthy but doubtless well to do, rude perhaps in speech but not in knowledge, an intelligent believer in the God whom he saw revealed in nature, one reverential and humble, yet in no sense shrinking from the world, a student of human nature, an observer of his own times, one as well informed and educated as his station would permit. From his style many a trait is discoverable which indicates a strong personality. We find here directness, simplicity, clearness, conciseness, force. A large warm hearted man, tender yet strong, a devout worshiper of the God of Jacob, a man among men, a man of God—such was the prophet Amos.

G. L. LEONARD.

a. 3: 1, 2; 4: 6, 7, 9, 10, 11. b. 5: 14. c. 4: 12. d. 7: 10-13. e. 9: 14, 15.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DIVINE LOVE AS SEEN IN THE BOOK OF HOSEA.

To truly understand the book of Hosea, either as a whole or in any of its different characteristics, one must study the character of Hosea himself.

The prophet is one who stands between God, whom he loves with all his heart and in whose love he has perfect trust, and rebellious Israel, whom he also loves with a strong affection. By reason of the very strength of these two affections, he longs to bring rebellious Israel back to God. To accomplish this, he feels that all that is necessary is that Israel should know him whom he loves and serves. Hence he earnestly urges: "Let us know, let us follow on to know the Lord."^a Moreover, in Hosea's personal history we find a light upon his prophecy. His wife was unfaithful to him and in his deep and child-like trust he believes this affliction has been sent directly from God for his instruction.^b And so by this sorrow he finds himself brought into a closer fellow-feeling with Jehovah, whose boundless love Israel has rejected. We find the prophet of so intense a nature that the conflicting emotions of his heart almost unbalance his mind.^c He is all on fire with the desire to reunite Israel and Jehovah. His one message, born out of his life and heart, is an entreaty to receive again the affection of God. God showed his divine power in choosing such an one to be his mouth-piece as thoroughly as if he had dictated to him certain exact words for utterance.

In describing this love of God in its relation to Israel, Hosea uses as a text his own domestic sorrow.^d He proceeds to draw a parallel between this personal experience and the circumstances of moral and religious life about him. Israel, the chosen people of God, had often been spoken of in their sacred literature as the spouse of Jehovah.^e Though at first thought the comparison may seem irrelevant, yet it was thoroughly natural to the Hebrew mind, and we find it used, as it were, spontaneously throughout this prophecy. Moreover, the prophet rises above the ordinary conception of this relation. Among the Semites the wife was the property of her husband as much as the horse which he rode. In fact the same word is used by the worshiper in addressing the god and by the wife in addressing her husband.^f When then Jehovah says that he will no longer be called "master" but "husband,"^g a degree of love is shown that was in general unknown to the Israelites.

But mother Israel had been and was unfaithful to her husband, Jehovah.^h She had adopted the natural religion of the people about her, and she had accepted the prosperity which she enjoyed as coming from these divinities.^b On account of this unfaithfulness, the wife might be utterly cast off. But here the mighty love of Jehovah shows itself. He will send afflictions upon her, severe ones it may be,ⁱ but only that she may be forced to come back to him at last.^j And then, when she becomes his faithful wife, he will bless her abundantly.^k Thus is the extreme tenderness of Jehovah's love brought out.

If, however, Jehovah is the husband of mother Israel, he can also be taken

a. 6:3. b. 1:2-9. c. 9:7. d. 1:2-9; 3:1-5. e. Ex. 34:15, 16; Deut. 31:16; 1s. 62:5; Jer. 3:14, etc. f. 2:16, 17. ff. 2:16. g. 2:2. h. 2:5, 12. i. 2:6-13. j. 2:14, 17. k. 2:19-23.

as the father of the Israelite, and in the latter part of the book we find Hosea using this figure of father and son. In primitive society every stranger was regarded as an enemy, and relations of love are either identical with those of kinship or are conceived as resting on a covenant. The relationship existing between the Israelite as a child and Jehovah as a father, is of this latter kind. The Israelite is rather a child by adoption. He is not simply the offspring of a God whose worship might tend to a merely natural religion.^a His adoption makes the relationship between himself and his God more spiritual. In the prophecy the dealings between father and son rest on a covenant, and any breaking of this covenant may cut asunder all bonds of love. But is^b this the case? Certainly the child has done wrong, and in his guilty fear he has sought protection from foreigners.^c Yet Jehovah, though his child has gone far astray, still loves him and longs to have him return that love.^d Even in his sinfulness, Jehovah is ever ready to save and to heal him.^e The one desire of Jehovah is that the son should put himself in such an attitude that the father may do everything for him. The word translated mercy four times in the book of Hosea^f signifies *dutiful love*, this is what Jehovah looks for in the Israelite, his son.

Finally, there are in Hosea's prophecy several beautiful Messianic passages which show the great blessings that will follow true repentance and genuine love toward Jehovah as the husband and the father of Israel. And all through the book we find the prophet manifesting his conviction that the highest good which he can desire for his people is but a small part of that which Jehovah is willing and waiting to give. The prophecy is throughout preeminently a revelation of love.

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a. 11:1; 13:4; 9:10a. b. 6:7; 8:1, etc. c. 5:13; 7:11; 12:1. d. 11:3, 4, 8-11. e. 7:1a. f. 4:1; 6:6; 10:12; 12:6.

THE RELATION OF RELIGION AND MORALITY IN AMOS AND HOSEA.

It is as though we had asked ourselves, What is the prophet's purpose? How does the prophet work? when we center our thought upon this theme, for we enter the very work-room of prophecy. True it is that the history with its facts and allusions, the mirror of its age, is a mine of value; and as truly is the style, with its poetic beauty and wealth of imagery, an untold treasure; but in the relation of religion and morality we come upon the very core of prophecy. To discover God's truth and will, to know widely and deeply the current of human life, these things were for the prophet to lay hold of his materials. To help toward uniting these, to guard the former and to upraise the latter, this was the prophet's work.

First, then, is search for truth. We need not undervalue the divine in prophecy, to grant that men, whom God can use, must be in the deepest sense "men of knowledge." Wise both in truths of God and in comprehension of their fellowmen. Thus we may understand how closely the personality of the man affects his preparation for his work. It enters into his vision of God; it moulds his deepest study and thought; it fashions his impression of the life about him.

Another thought follows upon this. No factor can be greater in the study of our theme than the prophet's conception of his God. From this conception comes his view of religion, its attributes and duties, and from this conception as well comes the standard by which he judges life about him, the power of his thought, the courage of his utterance.

And now of the men whose words we study. The shepherd Amos has been a deeply thoughtful man. He has studied God in nature, he has studied God in his own heart, until he is alive to a power above him, majestic in its strength,^a worthy of complete obedience and no less of deepest reverence.^b He has had little of direct contact with the world,^c but to his ears have come tidings of sins and immoralities which fill him with sorrow and with fear, almost with hopelessness.^d

Hosea, like his brother prophet, has led a thoughtful life; he has studied God, but less in nature than in men. His life has been in daily contact alike with good and bad, and here he has seen God not less in majesty and power,^e perhaps, but more in mercy and patient, loving-kindness. His own heart has taught him a God of love, and thus, with wider conception, he brings forth the new truth needed for his time. Upon such men, then, God sent that power, which would not let them rest until they had declared His truth.

In the times of Amos, Israel was at the height of power,^f and while without doubt there was at the very basis disobedience and wrong attitude toward God,^g as more and more they came in contact with the Canaanites, yet, on the whole, there seems to have been another natural cause in the mind of the prophet as that which led them to the point at which he came to them. The land had become prosperous; luxury had taken hold upon the people;^h and to supply its need their greedⁱ had been indulged, even with dishonesty^j and cruelty^k as its servants. Quickly following, as indeed was necessary, were

a. Amos 5: 8, 9. b. Ib. 4: 6-11. c. Ib. 7: 14, 15. d. Ib. 5: 15. e. Hosea 10: 10. f. Amos 6: 1, 2. g. Ib. 3: 14. h. Ib. 5: 11; 6: 4. i. Ib. 2: 6, 7. j. Ib. 8: 4, 5. k. Ib. 3: 10.

carelessness,^a unthankfulness,^b irreverence,^c formalism,^d and disobedience,^e until at last the people whom the Lord has known,^f hate one reproving them and "abhor him that speaketh uprightly".^g And, now, what hinders their incorporating in their formalism the rites of an idolatrous worship? All this the prophet sees, and he knows how severe must be the sentence of a righteous God upon a faithless nation, forgetful of their moral duties, confident and thoughtless,^h bewitched by idol worship.

As yet, either the people have not adopted to any degree Canaan's worship, or Amos does not realize it, for he comes forth denouncing not so much the idol worship as sinful life and formalism.ⁱ To a people who are fast forsaking God, he comes a herald of Jehovah's righteousness.^j

But turn to Hosea. We find him opening his message: "The land doth commit great whoredom departing from the Lord."^k What is the condition of Israel? The people, who in the time of Amos had incorporated in their formal worship the rites of Canaan's Baal, have now gone on to thorough Baal worship.^l As in those times they were forgetful of God's law^m and God Himself, so now they are oblivious to His blessingⁿ and render thanks to other Gods.^o They think to deceive God^p because their own hearts are divided;^q they try to hide their irreligion behind the symbolism God has given them.^r From this the step is short to image worship,^s and soon they have rejected not knowledge only^t but God,^u and stubbornly hold on their course in wickedness^v

A few years pass, and meantime Hosea watches, until with such terrible immorality before him, he can no longer withhold the message God would have him speak. He knows full well that these errors in morality have sprung up from irreligion and idolatry and, thus, all through his later prophecy, a striking feature is the fierce denunciation, not so much of Baal as of the molten bull-images.^w While Amos says no word against these, Hosea sternly denies any divine power behind them^{xx} and describes them as a source of all the many evils of his time.^{bb} He bursts forth with the words: "There is no truth nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. There is nothing but swearing and breaking faith, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery; they break out and blood toucheth blood."^{cc} An impassioned and severe testimony of national apostasy with deep prevailing immorality as its fruit!

Compare the two. In Amos luxury, greed, dishonesty and cruelty, with necessarily something of disobedience, has led Jehovah's people on until they stand, in confidence and thoughtlessness even, somewhat over the line between true worship and idolatry. Amos in these circumstances sets before them a God of righteousness who must judge their sin and curse their formal worship. In Hosea, the great mass have gone beyond the line of idolatry, and wickedness has grown from irreligion, until the land is rotten to the core with sin. Yet Hosea brings to them not alone a God of righteousness and power^{dd} but of tender patient love, and never failing kindness.^{ee}

a. Amos 6:3, 5. b. Ib. 2:9, 11; 3:2. c. Ib. 2:7, 8. d. Ib. 4:4, 5; 8:5. e. Ib. 2:12. f. Ib. 3:2. g. Ib. 5:10. h. Ib. 6:1. i. Ib. 5:21-24. j. Ib. chs. 7 and 8. k. Hos. 1:2. l. Ib. 1:10b. m. Am. 3:10. n. Hos. 13:6. o. Ib. 2:8. p. Ib. 11:12. q. Ib. 10:2. r. Ib. 3:4. s. Ib. 2:13. t. Ib. 4:6. u. Ib. 8:3; 10:3. v. Ib. 7:13, 16 a. w. Ib. 8:4, 6; 13:2. aa. Ib. 8:5, 6. bb. Ib. 8:11-14. cc. Ib. 4:1, 2. dd. Ib. 10:10. ee. Ib. 6:4; 11, 8, 9.

The prophecies were perfect messages to their times. The one, when growing sin and formal worship, leaving out the heart, was gaining full control, revealed a cause of the evil and the godlessness which filled the land, and summoned back the people to true worship. The other, where idol worship was a widespread curse, and immorality was spreading everywhere, held forth the only remedy, the God of righteousness, and yet the God also of love and mercy, who gladly would restore Israel to Himself.

H. DEW. WILLIAMS.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF MESSIANIC PROPHECY IN THE TEN TRIBES AS ADAPTED TO THEIR SITUATION.

In studying Messianic prophecy two great factors are to be taken into consideration, the personality of the prophet and the historical situation of the people to whom he speaks. As the first must, to a large extent, be overshadowed by the second, it in consequence has less significance. The prophetic utterance, since it dealt with every-day life, was mainly moulded and controlled by the condition of society, and, even in its Messianic statements, existed especially for its own age. Each prophet was seeking, first of all, to reach and save the people of his own generation. It was, therefore, always his aim to lay open the future in a manner peculiarly suited to their need. Thus he pictured the coming Kingdom of God by means of the familiar colors of their own national life; he gave them only those phases of the Divine rule that were required by their present circumstances.

At the time when Amos labored among the people of the Northern Kingdom society had become extremely depraved. The Nazarites and prophets no longer performed the duties of their holy offices in purity;^a those in high places, even the women,^b were given over to revelry and debauchery.^c In the general decline, justice and judgment had been swept away,^d thus giving free rein to avarice and passion. Pitilessly were the poor and righteous ground down.^e Nothing was deemed dishonorable, if only it furnished those luxuries that had become so much a part of Israelitish life.^f Religious rites and ceremonies had indeed been continued,^g but this worship, hollow and heartless, was addressed to a God whose law they had rejected.^h

The whole situation presents a picture of extreme degradation in the material and moral condition of the people. Their history tells us only of the abuse of the divine blessing. They themselves display none of the higher spiritual qualities; these indeed are, in their present condition, beyond the range even of their understanding. They are living upon a low plane. To men upon that plane and with a thorough knowledge of their situation, Amos delivers his Messianic prophecy.

The nation is, first of all, to be cleansed of its sin, that it may once more be pure in heart.ⁱ And then the house of David is to be raised up and restored to its former position of importance among the nations.^j Corruption, perversion of justice, avarice, luxury, insincerity, all are to give place to a purer condition of things.^k After that are to come showers of blessing, material blessing, just such as the Israelites had been striving for in their blind, sinful way.^l Prosperity, wealth and happiness, things that they understood so well, were to be theirs without end,^m for in these could they best see the symbols of the highest good.

Now, as we turn to Hosea, we find the same deep-seated demoralization of the people; but the situation is quite different. The government was almost

a. Amos 2:12; 7:12, 13. b. 4:1. c. 6:3-7. d. 5:7, 12; 6:12. e. 2:6, 8; 5:11, 12; 8:6-4 f. 3:12; 6:4-6. g. 4:4, 5; 5:21-24. h. 2:4. i. 9:9, 10. j. 9:11, 12. k. 9:9-11. l. 9:13-51 m. 9:15.

in a state of anarchy. Revolutions, plots, and acts of lawlessness were of common occurrence.^{aa} The Israelites themselves recognized their national weakness and had sought the aid of foreign powers to prop up the tottering state.^{bb}

With comparatively a brief allusion to the national situation, the prophet directed his reproaches to a wide-spread lack of spiritual qualities. Immorality in its worst forms, he showed them, had laid hold upon them.^a They had forgotten all true knowledge;^b they no longer cared for honor and uprightness.^c More than all, they had deserted God, had left his worship, and were eagerly serving gods made with hands.^d It was a dark picture of spiritual back-sliding. Material conditions, though still given a place in the prophet's thought, were subordinated to the one great idea of spirituality. The people had a wider horizon of knowledge than the men of the time of Amos, and therefore might have risen to a higher plane of life. They had the capacity for discerning spiritual things, but they had chosen to pervert their possibilities by the worship of idols.

Hosea's Messianic utterances are perfectly in accord with this condition. Temporal needs are, indeed, met by declarations of temporal prosperity for the future.^e Civil dissensions and dependence upon foreign powers are to give place to national unity and strength.^f But it is in appeals to their thoughtfulness, in pleadings with their spiritual nature, that the prophecy of Hosea reaches its height. He tells the Israelites of the power and majesty, the awful grandeur, of God;^g and at the same time he expresses the boundless love and compassion which that mighty God bears to his children.^h He reasons and pleads with them that they return unto Him who tenderly watched over Israel when a child.ⁱ He meets, too, their greatest need in revealing God's readiness, even yearning, to pardon their sin and idolatry,^j and to again make them his chosen people.^k

But the way in which these two men deal with the surrounding nations shows, perhaps even more clearly, the influence of the historical situation upon their prophecy.

The neighboring peoples, in the time of Amos, were merciless warriors.^l They were wont to sell their captives into slavery,^m and to treat even those who should have been their brethren with extreme harshness.ⁿ Oppression and avarice were their ruling passions.^o While thus deep in sin, they could have, in the mind of Amos, no part in God's great plan. For their iniquity they were as nations to be destroyed.^p No mercy is held out to them. The prophet is dealing more with material conditions, and in his eyes the material blessing of Israel demands that her enemies be swept from national existence and that the surviving remnant be placed under her control.^q

Hosea in the very brief mention of other peoples which he makes, describes them as dishonest and oppressive.^r They are mighty in political power,^s

aa. Hosea 6: 9; 7: 1; 9: 15. bb. 5: 13; 7: 11; 8: 9; 12: 1.

a. Hos. 4: 12-15; 4: 18; 7: 4, 5. b. 4: 6; 7: 2, 3. c. 4: 1; 10: 4, 13; 11: 12; 12: 1. d. 1: 2; 4: 6, 10, 12, 17; 5: 4, 7; 6: 7, 10; 7: 13-16; 8: 1, 14; 9: 1; 10: 1, 2; 11: 2, 12: 11; 13: 2, 6. e. 2: 21-23; 14: 5-7. f. 1: 10, 11; 3: 5. g. 6: 1-3. h. 11: 8, 11. i. 14: 1, 2, 8; 11: 1-4. j. 2: 14-20, 14: 4. k. 1: 10. l. Amos 1: 11, 13; 2: 1. m. 1: 6, 9. n. 1: 9, 11; 2: 1. o. 1: 3, 13. p. 1: 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15; 2: 2. q. 9: 12. r. Hosea 12: 7. s. 5: 13; 7: 11; 8: 9; 12: 1.

bnt are given up to idolatry, and are not the people of the living God. The prophet, however, since he deals more fully with individual life than did his predecessor, seems, if we may read between the lines, to recognize more clearly their personal responsibility and possible personal blessing. They are apparently to share Israel's temporal good; and thus to have peace and prosperity. True to the more spiritual atmosphere of his thought, he may be seen here and there in the prophecy holding out to them, at least by inference, God's pardoning grace and declaring that they also are to be sons of the Living God. We may certainly, with the apostles, see in the pardon of Israel a type of the reception of the nations to the divine favor and thus a foreshadowing of the calling of the Gentiles.⁴

It is, in conclusion, evident that there existed no defect or weakness in the condition of society about him on the one hand, and no possibility of better things on the other, which the prophet of Israel did not clearly perceive. He put himself so intensely into the spirit of the needs of that society, he represented so earnestly its highest aspiration, that the perfection of God's Kingdom seemed to him nothing more nor less than the present condition of society freed from these defects and weaknesses and crowned with the fruition of forth-reaching desire. Thus he gave to those for whom he labored a conception of the days of the Messiah and of their characteristics that was suited to the range of their intelligence, a conception that appealed to the highest sentiments developed in their nature.

W. L. WILLIAMS.

t. 1: 10; 2: 23; cf. Rom. 9: 25; 1 Pet. 2: 10.

THE LITERARY FEATURES OF PROPHECY AS ILLUSTRATED BY A STUDY OF THE WORDS OF JOEL, AMOS AND HOSEA.

In the early days of world history, a family received the promise from God: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great."^a The descendants of that family became a mighty people, distinguished from other peoples, as the ancestral family had been from other families, because its God was the Lord. Man had not yet lost himself amid abstractions and philosophic conceptions. The Hebrew nation, true to the youth of the world as well as to its native simplicity, looked upon Jehovah as a great paternal ruler, and upon the works of nature as the revelation of his mighty power. The Mosaic ritual was given this people as a rule for their daily living, since they were not yet in a position to maintain an upright life from an adequate sense of moral obligation, still less from any true spiritual conception of obedience. A long career of sin and apostasy lay before them, which was to educate them to a position where they could receive a spiritual revelation of God's attitude toward man in the person of Jesus Christ. The system of penalties and sacrifices was a stepping-stone to lift them to higher things and a purer life.

For a long term of years the nation was prosperous, and seemed to be progressing toward the desired goal. But there came a change. In the latter days of the Kingdom of All-Israel, and, after the disruption, especially in the Kingdom of the Ten Tribes, the people became engrossed with conquest, pleasure, and the acquisition of wealth: Luxury, insinuating its way into the national character, found itself attended by injustice, vice, and idolatry. The life of the nation was on the eve of a terrible crisis. Their enemies perceiving it, began to form alliances and to divide in anticipation the rich spoil of the coming conquest. But the Hebrews themselves were all unawares. They bought, sold, drank, debauched, and went through the forms of sacrifice, with no thought of danger or retribution. Meantime, far in the north a cloud of dust was rolling up from the advancing hosts of Assyria, soon to seize upon Israel and carry her away into ignominious exile. Nor very far off was the day of Judah's overthrow at the hand of the Babylonian. Should the crisis come without warning? Should this people be forced to the level of the nations round about, and receive the fruit of their apostasy, simply as the fortune of war? Above all, should the principles of the divine Kingdom, destined through the Hebrew nation for all posterity, be suffered to pass away amidst defeat and exile? It was in truth a crisis, not only in Israelitish but also in world history, in the great progress of the redemption of man.

No; Israel was to have her warning. The death-sentence was to be read to her in the words of the Judge himself, and the great reprieve, the depth

a. Genesis 12:2.

of which few of those who heard it would ever fully fathom, was to be sounded in her ears. Divine justice, tempered with mercy, was to find its revelation. That voice of the public conscience, the prophet, had long been hushed. But now, when most needed, prophecy, bursting forth anew, enjoyed the days of its maturity, and shone resplendent before the dark background of the future which it interpreted. The men of God of these trying times had not their only qualification in standing in a line of prophetic successors. They were individually possessed of broad, sagacious minds, and also of deep spiritual insight, by which they could, through communion with the Almighty, interpret the divine word. The prophet stood, as it were, upon a lofty eminence. He looked back over the history of the theocracy and traced the design of the divine King through the past. Then, with a sagacity equal to that which any statesman of to-day puts forth, he studied the future, until gradually, before his strained vision, the horizon receded and he saw whither the nation was tending. To speedy ruin, it seemed, and no human hand could save. But, like David of old, "he prayed to the God of his fathers, and was not afraid.^b Then certain fixed principles, the thoughts of the divine mind, came into his heart, disclosing the attributes of Jehovah, not merely a just and jealous God, but also a God of love. The dark and forbidding future became bright and auspicious. He forgot the terrible scourging of the Assyrian and Babylonian, and the horrors of the coming exile. Far beyond was a harbinger of joy to all peoples, a sign whose import he himself could not fully understand. The Messianic promise and hope shed a new light upon present and future. A conception of the true relations of things and of the full attitude of Jehovah toward his people crystallized in his soul, and he stood enraptured at the completeness of the divine plan.

It was a sublime conception. Some such an one, coming to a cloistered monk, has only rendered more dense the cold walls which separated him from the outer world. But the prophet could not thus selfishly clasp his newly found treasure. Scarce had he received it, when he was aroused to the situation by the voice of conscience: "Why stand ye here, gazing? Go, prophesy unto my people, Israel!" As he turned away from the vision, and set his face toward his appointed work, he emerged from the position of mourner over the sins of his people, and assumed a new relation toward his times. He became the interpreter of God's will toward man. He was to set up the divine standard of religion and morality, and to fearlessly rebuke until man should accept it. To the faithful remnant he was to preach also endurance and trust. He was, moreover, to take the first steps toward breaking down the exclusiveness of the Hebrew, by predicting the participation of other nations in the coming blessing. It was a difficult mission and required the utmost faith and confidence in Jehovah.

The prophet was no blind instrument of the divine hand. Though the divine element permeates his whole work, its basis and inspiration, the human element is there also, and upon it the divine thought is reflected. Therefore, as in other literature, we find in prophecy a true adaptation of the style to

b. Browning's Saul.

the matter and to the Hebrew audience, while the whole, conceived by the divine mind, bears at the same time the impress of the prophet's individual character. Let us examine more closely into the qualities to be expected in a prophetic discourse, and afterward take up the closer study of certain individual prophecies, showing the wide variety which they exhibit in style and treatment.

In the first place, the prophet's message was not his own. The situation and revelation itself demanded more than human power. He was depending upon Jehovah for the inspiration, the spirit of his work. We are impressed with his position as the interpreter of the divine by the frequent reiterations of the phrase, "Thus saith the Lord!", the spirit of which pervades all prophecy. The man loses himself in his message. The absence of self-consciousness is his, since the sublime self-consciousness of Jehovah takes its place. This feature of self-abnegation acted both as a seal of the divinity of his office, and as a shield from the malice of his hearers, shifting, as it did, the tremendous responsibility of the message from the spokesman to its Author.

Having thus seen the attitude of the prophet toward his message, let us look for a moment at his audience, as they are related to this message. We have already seen that the matter of prophecy, is the great spiritual truths of God, localized, so to say, and applied to the Hebrew nation in such manner as to reveal to them Jehovah's attitude and plan. Now there are limitations in any language when spiritual things are to be set-forth. It is as impossible to clothe these in full expression as for a painter to produce a perfect ideal. The speaker can lead his audience so far only; he must then leave them upon the borders of that promised land which only the eye of the sympathetic soul can penetrate. The Hebrew prophet came before an audience in whom the spiritual vision was not developed, yet they had the elements of this spirituality, and one of the prophetic duties was to foster its growth. In the absence of this most essential medium for the conveyance of higher truths, the prophet could not revert to the opposite extreme and prove in due form of logic the coming woe and its bearing upon the theocracy. The Hebrew mind never troubled itself with cause and effect or logical sequence. It was purely intuitive. Man was still a child of nature; such, indeed, the Hebrew remained long after other nations had explored the province of the intellect. The revelation of Jehovah to his chosen people had been ever through intuition. Their worship naturally took on the sensuous forms of sacrifice and priesthood. Jehovah was to them a Ruler, and further revelation of him must come in concrete form. The person of Jehovah, his wrath, his mercy, and especially the pictures of the future Messianic triumph are in some sense unsatisfactory to the Christian of to-day. He sees far more in the future of the Hebrew nation than is therein expressed, and perhaps wonders at the seeming superficiality of these sensuous figures. But such figures, crude as they were, conveyed vastly more to a Hebrew audience than would an attempt at a spiritual revelation of the mission of the Christ. Prophecy was thus to materialize thought, to convert the unseen and spiritual into what was practical, active, and concrete.

In the concrete the Hebrew nation saw truth, but fortunately it did not stop with the merely concrete. They went a step farther, and were intensely poetic. An idea to impress them must not only be in sensuous form but must also be fitly clothed in beautiful or sublime expression. And more, the truths to be spoken invited the poetic expression which was demanded. A righteous Judge and a merciful Father, an erring people, wandering like sheep without their shepherd, an immediate future, overhung by clouds of exile and ignominy, a bright and radiant restoration under the Messiah!—could such subjects be presented concretely without frequent recourse to the lofty strains of song? The prophet, too, was fresh from communion with the Almighty, his heart throbbing with great thoughts both of man and his Maker. The conception of the Messiah which he must present to the popular mind, amid the present horrors, nerved him to a pitch which only poetry could relieve. Spiritual conceptions, thus vividly realized, find their natural outlet in a heightened manner of expression.

The heart of humanity is seen in Hebrew poetry. When some sweet singer of Israel sweeps the strings of his harp and sings his hymn of thanksgiving or sobs out his prayer of penitence, he is but echoing the changeless emotions of the human soul. Thus also was the prophet to interpret human life, not as the poet of to-day, by a glorification of man, but by a glimpse of the human nature of the time as contrasted with the ideal subject of the theocracy. Poetry in general has an uncertain element. Its original lofty purpose, to interpret the finer emotions and thus ennoble man, is too often subordinated to that esthetic taste which finds in its forms pleasure and satisfaction. It thus becomes a mere luxury, refining indeed, yet by no means fulfilling its complete mission. But the poetry of prophecy had an end in view. To be sure, its figures are taken from nature and many of them are surpassingly beautiful. A modern poet might have succumbed to this temptation, and wandered about "with many a sweet digression," enchanting the reader by beautiful pictures and striking scenes. But here every figure had its place in the development of revelation. The message was the all important part. We must, therefore, expect no digressions or conscious artistic motive, for all other ends were frowned into subservience by the summons, "Go, prophesy."

We have seen that it was not the ideal audience to which the prophet was to speak. The people had not only forfeited religious privileges but had degenerated far toward brutehood. Instead of ruling the body in self-continnence, they were ruled by it. Sin was publicly and privately tolerated, and the nation was not only a source of displeasure to Jehovah, but, from its seeming failure, was become a byword among the peoples. The prophet, therefore, was to speak directly against the public sentiment of his degenerate day. He was to rebuke sin long countenanced, and set up a standard of justice and righteousness long forgotten amid national infamy. It was thus necessary that in some way he should win the confidence of his hearers. The presentation of his message must be arranged with especial reference to the state of his hearers and throughout we are led to expect the utmost variety, with frequent and abrupt transitions from reproof to exhortation,

from scathing delineations of the present, to glowing pictures of the future. By such a manner alone, could he hold the restless audience before him and force their reluctant ears to listen. Then, too, the power of truth must find its forcible expression. Tact was indeed a necessary accessory, but no compromise could be tolerated. Compromise had brought the people into their sin; they had not sustained the character of a "peculiar people." The very majesty of truth and the divinity of his calling must render the prophet a man of power, whose unflinching purpose and rigid, almost Puritanical, spirit send every word home to the heart.

With such a general idea of the office and methods of the prophet, we are prepared to examine the works of three of the so-called Minor Prophets, and by comparison to evolve the peculiarities and literary features of each.

First, then, we study the Prophecy of Joel. "The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Bethuel" was directed to Judah at the time of a terrible locust plague, which, followed by drought, had swept the land to desolation, leaving scarcely enough for the sacrifice. National reverses also, fresh in memory, seemed but harbingers of more terrible disasters. Spiritless and discouraged under their calamities, the people seemed to have lost their faith in Jehovah's guardian care. Yet it was out of such seeming desertion and in contrast thereto that their God was to reveal to them a glorious future.

The prophecy is in the form of two orations, the former covering 1:1 to 1:19, the latter 2:18 to 3:21. In the former, bold strokes paint the horrors of the famine and drought, and represent a "Day of the Lord" already at hand, in which their trust in him is to be put to the test. In the midst of the sad recital, the prophet's feelings burst forth in prayer for deliverance, and in exhortation to the priests to call the people to worship, that the Lord may spare his people and not make them a reproach among the nations. In the second oration there is a great change. The mutterings of evil, the picture of woe, and the cry to a spiritless people give place to the inspiring words: "Then was the Lord jealous for his land, and had pity upon his people."^b The locusts are to be scattered; the trees, vines and beasts of the field are to be glad in the unparalleled fruitfulness of the land. The people, delivered from their miseries, are to rejoice and regain their position of honor. Afterward the spirit of the Lord is to come upon all flesh, and "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered."^c After their captivity has been turned back, the people, with their enemies, are to be called to a great judgment-harvest, when the sins of the latter and the faithfulness of the former shall receive their due requital. Jehovah is to destroy Judah's enemies, pitying the while her weakness, and, by a new revelation of his mercy, help and encourage man, and thus draw him into closer union with his God.

The book of Joel presents a much more evident plan than do some books of prophecy. While this may have been developed in writing out the orations after the prophet retired to private life, yet it would not have detracted in the least from the force or naturalness of the spoken words. In the former

^a Joel 1:1. ^b 2:18. ^c 2:32.

oration, reproof and exhortation are alternated. In the latter, we find material blessing followed by spiritual. Then comes the gathering of the nations before Jehovah, the punishment of these enemies, already typified by the annihilation of the locusts, and the resulting blessing, delineated, as before, first in the material form, and then in the spiritual. These blessings, the result of the influence of Jehovah's spirit, are not local but universal, world-wide in their bearing upon mankind.

Joel was bearing in essence a spiritual message to Judah. The locust plague, the drought, disasters were upon them, horrors which no pen could make more real, but that the Lord would, taking pity upon his land, pour out of his spirit upon all flesh, and judging the Gentiles, deliver Judah and Israel, —these were high thoughts for them; they appealed to a side of their nature hitherto largely unawakened. Spiritual things are therefore interpreted in sensuous images, such as the fruitfulness of the earth; the descent of Jehovah's spirit is connected with visions and dreams,^a because the people could, through these forms, come nearest to an adequate conception of the truth. The greatness of the judgment is symbolized by "wonders in the heavens,"^b and finally the judgment itself is represented as the treading of a great wine-press. Thus Jehovah condescended to reveal himself to man's short-sighted vision.

The reformatory tone in the prophecy it directed mainly against formalism in religion. The people were still virtuous as compared with their neighbors of the north, but the command, "Rend your hearts and not your garments!"^c implies a need of deeper feeling in worship. This was especially called for if any understanding was to be had of the blessing of the spirit of Jehovah, the conception which forms the most valuable part of the message. The Messianic prophecy of the book covers the delivery of Judah from her enemies, the judgment, and this outpouring of the spirit, in a word, the revelation of the love of Jehovah toward man through his people. Here we have a long step forward. The position of Jehovah as a Redeemer as well as a Judge foreshadows the as yet unnamed Messiah. The outpouring of Jehovah's spirit upon all flesh is one of the first revelations of the final issue of the theocracy into a spiritual world-empire.

The style of Joel is unique. In its dignity, terseness and elegance it reminds one of Tacitus. But there is an emotional element, a suppressed fervor, produced by an inspiration which Tacitus never knew. A master of descriptive power, the prophet delineates the locust-army in its approach; "At their presence the people are in anguish; all faces are waxen pale;" "The earth quaketh before them; the heavens tremble."^d Again the locust plague is before our eyes. "How do the beasts groan, the herds of cattle are perplexed . . . yea the flocks of sheep are made desolate."^e There is little invective in Joel save in his rebuke of the priests; "Lament ye priests; howl ye ministers of the altar!"^f As for the poetic element, his whole book is a continuous poem. The succession of highly wrought figures, delineating past, present and future, are not only full of poetry, but fall readily into the peculiar verse which belongs to prophecy.

a 2:28 and 29: b 2:30 and 31. c 2:13. d 2:10. e Joel 1:18. f 1:13.

Such a production, so terse, lofty and esthetic externally, and embodying such precious truths, must have made a profound impression, the trace of which is clearly evident in subsequent prophecy.

Turning now to the book of Amos, we are confronted by a far different scene. We behold not rugged and virtuous Judah, but sin-stained and idolatrous Israel, living in voluptuous ease and godlessness. Those wars with Damascus, which had increased the wealth of the upper classes, but left the poor in a pitiable condition, were not long overpast. Intercourse with heathen nations, bringing with it their idolatry, had caused the altars of Jehovah to be forsaken, or to become the haunts of vice and debauchery. Famine, pestilence and war had failed to convince the people of Jehovah's displeasure. The prophet's voice was silent, and the nation seemed on the brink of ruin. Sin and misery were within, the threatened invasion of the Assyrian without such was the sad state of Israel.

The prophet Amos, as he himself says, "was no prophet nor the son of a prophet, but a herdsman of Tekoa."^a He was called away from his herds and sent into the Northern Kingdom to represent Jehovah in the crisis. His message is as different from that of Joel, as were the circumstances under which they labored diverse. The prophecy has not the elaborate and correlated plan which we found in the book of Joel; but it may be divided, quite accurately, into the introduction, covering 1 to 2:5; the body of the the book 2:6 to 9:10, and the conclusion 9:11 to 9:15. The introduction is an announcement of the divine vengeance coming upon the neighbors of Israel, gradually drawing nearer through Judah. Thus, having tactfully gained the attention of his audience, the prophet arraigns Israel herself for public and private sin. Calling the people to hear, he enters into a statement of this sin and its punishment as cause and effect. After referring to the former judgments of Jehovah as of no effect, and pronouncing sentence against nation, family and individual, he concludes his denunciation with the significant words, "I will rise up against you a nation, they shall afflict you, saith the Lord."^b Then follow five visions, setting forth various aspects of the coming judgment. The certainty, suddenness and justice of the destruction have been pictured, when Amos, as though relenting, declares that it shall not be complete, but that the way of the righteous, as ever, shall be secure.^c The prophecy closes with a glimpse into the distant future, foretelling the tabernacle of David renewed in the time of the Messiah, and portraying in material figures the spiritual blessing which was to accompany the true emancipation of Israel.^d

Amos was emphatically a reformer. It was his mission to rebuke sin and reveal the danger involved therein, and to forcibly delineate the attribute of stern justice as prominent in Jehovah's nature. The "selling of the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes,"^e the fornication and the idolatry meant ruin. Warnings repeatedly unnoticed now culminate in a thrilling cry of danger. Amos entered upon his work with uncompromising and resolute spirit. "The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?"^f were his words, and when Amaziah the priest of Bethel reported him to the

a Amos 7:14. b Amos 6:14. c 9:8b, 9. d 9:11-15. e 2:6. f Amos 3:8.

king and ordered him to return to Judah, his answer was a curse upon his house forever. "Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus.^a" is the burden of his message, and the reasons for the divine decree are dreadful sins called by their own names in such a scathing rebuke as must have made the hearer blush with shame and tremble at the thought of the divine anger.

The conception of Jehovah presented by Amos is quite different from that shown by Joel. In the first part of the book he appears in the character of an angry king whose ungrateful subjects have deserted him. Further on, this conception takes on the element of mercy both in the words "Seek ye me and ye shall live,^b" and also in the answers to the prophet's prayers.^c Next to Jehovah's infinite Justice, tempered with mercy toward the faithful, his power as ruler of the universe is brought out grandly in descriptions of creation and of divine omnipresence. The significance of this is evident when we remember that Jehovah was revealing to the Hebrews that he was God of the whole world and not of a single nation. The main work of Amos being denunciation, we can expect a corresponding disclosure of the horrors of the immediate future, and but little regarding that spiritual triumph which should show itself later. Near the close of the prophecy, however, beginning with the words "I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,^d" we have a picture of the restoration of the tabernacle of David, a sign of the divine favor to be realized in the Messiah. Here, less than in Joel, could any spiritual conception of the future be understood, and accordingly, we have what would the better appeal to a "wicked and perverse generation," a beautiful picture of material prosperity. "The plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the trader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountain shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt.^e" In Joel we had a full prophecy of future blessings to spur on a flagging yet faithful people. Here the present sin must be frowned down with but a glimpse of the Messiah's day to comfort the faithful remnant.

The style of Amos is powerful and in the main denunciatory. He even goes so far as to ironically call the people to their idol-worship.^f With all the abhorrence of a rugged nature he paints sin in all its horrid reality, before a mob to whom every word is a blow. His imagery is taken from nature and out-of-door life. The lion, the cart of sheaves, the cedar, the hunter and the husbandman are used with vivid effect, while the references to the courses of the stars fall naturally from a shepherd's lips. We have in his book the normal prophetic style, always concrete and forceful, dropping into vigorous prose in the delineation of the facts, but rising into a semi-poetic fervor in places where the feeling is more intense. The poetry of Amos is not like Joel's, classic and almost studied. It is natural and spontaneous, savoring of the open air. Perhaps for this very reason it is more beautiful in its rustic ruggedness and grandeur.

Closely following the work of Amos, and in sharp contrast with it, came the revelation of Jehovah to Israel, through the words of Hosea, the prophet of the decline and fall of the Northern Kingdom. The words of Amos would

a 5:27. b 5:4. c 7:2, 3, 5, 6. d Amos 9:8. e Amos 9:13. f Amos 4:4, 5.

seem to have had but a transient effect upon the people, for the description given by Hosea of the immorality, violence, and, worst of all, of the shameless and licentious worship of idols, is a sad and discouraging recital of national decay. To arrest it the revelation of Jehovah must be very direct and plain, and must appeal to something beside mere fear of punishment. The new truth which Hosea was to give to Israel he had worked out and realized in a domestic trial which well nigh broke his heart. He had married a wife who proved unfaithful. Children were born to them; yet she persisted in breaking her marriage vow, finally leaving her husband, and remaining with her unlawful paramours. But even in the midst of her harlotry, Hosea loved her, and though he loathed her sin, he pitied her abandoned condition, and in her desertion he found her, bought her back to him, to learn gradually the faithfulness of true wifehood. It was through such a personal experience that the prophet received his idea of Jehovah's relations with his people. To him his wife, Gomer, was a type of sinning and fallen Israel, who had forfeited all claim to the forgiveness of her husband, Jehovah. The infinite purity of the divine mind shrank from the uncleanness and infidelity of the chosen people, with abhorrence. But with infinite tenderness was Jehovah to deliver Israel from the wilderness after a season, to lift her up from her sin and win her back to faithfulness. It was, indeed, a new thought to Israel that Jehovah was grieved as well as angry, merciful as well as just. The truth, however, had become woven into the very fibre of Hosea's emotional nature, and thus in his prophecy the personal element is unusually prominent.

This prophecy divides itself naturally into two books, the former covering chapters 1 to 3; the latter chapters 4 to 14. The former book contains a statement of the family history, already narrated, followed by an elaborate allegory giving the bearing of this history upon the message of the man of God. The conception is set forth of Jehovah as the husband of Israel, delivering her from her self-wrought folly and winning her back to a complete reconciliation to himself. The lovers of the unfaithful wife are the idols of Baal worship. To them the blessings of each day have been prostituted, but soon these blessings are to be cut off. "I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feasts, her new moons, her Sabbaths and all her solemn assemblies."^a Yet wandering Israel was to be sought and brought back to Jehovah's love. The second book is in striking contrast with the orderly discourses of Joel and Amos. The position of the prophet, standing between the mercy of a God of love and the utter prostitution of everything good, was a difficult one. A merciful father, when Israel was in direst sin? The love of God to be bestowed upon a people so utterly depraved and apostate? The only answer to the problem was for the prophet to look at his now faithful wife, reclaimed by his love from her sin. Here was the solution. If a human heart could love to the rescue such a sinner, surely the Divine Father could have compassion upon his erring children. But this dilemma, as it were, of mercy and justice, causes the prophet to run through the whole scale of human emotion, from utter despair, at the awful state of the nation, to sublimest faith, as he looks away to the perfectness of the Divine Love.

Such a treatment of such a subject no more admits of a careful plan or logical sequence than does the restless cry of the human soul tortured by a sense of sin, and feeling after the God of mercy, if haply it may find him.

We may, however, trace several leading motives which embody the main thoughts of this so-called second book.^{aa} These paragraphs are "sparsa quaedam sibyllae folia," says Bishop Lowth, and thus cannot be divided chapter by chapter. The thoughts presented may be thus generalized: The immorality of the Northern Kingdom; the sinfulness of the confusion of Jehovah, and Baal worship; the sinfulness of the foreign policy, and of the separation of the two Kingdoms; the conception of the love-bond between Jehovah and Israel. It was Hosea's chief work to impress upon Israel the divine quality of love, and he accordingly denounces immorality as an impediment to the exercise of such a bond. With Amos, immorality was measured according to divine justice and the sinner found guilty. Here the sinner is brought face to face with the throbbing heart of Jehovah, grieving over his people, and thus one of the strongest appeals is made of which human nature is susceptible. The greatest sin of the nation, and the one to which all her other short-comings could be traced was her apostasy. She had indeed "gone a-whoring from her God."^b The mingling of the two worships was particularly demoralizing, because the people thought themselves faithful to Jehovah, when in reality their worship was the hollowest of mockeries. The finger of scorn was thus pointed at Jehovah by the heathen round about in the same way as the father of the Prodigal Son might well be imagined as mocked by his friends for having reared a son only to have him fall into sin. Israel's foreign policy was also disastrous. She had cemented alliances with Egypt and Assyria which would soon prove her ruin. The "peculiar people" had become not only a nation of idolaters, but of those who put their trust in princes. Hosea urged them to break their alliances before it was too late.

The leading thought, God's love and care over his people, is well shown in Chapter 11: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt. . . . I taught Ephraim to go; I took him on my arms; but they knew not that I healed them. . . . How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? . . . I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger. . . . They shall come trembling as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria, and I will make them to dwell in their houses, saith the Lord."^c What more winning and appreciative conception of the love of God to his creatures! Have we not here the principles which, clarified in the character of the Christ were given to the world by the writer of the Fourth Gospel? In Joel we have a revelation of the divine love in mystic phrases, in Amos the element of fear cast out perfect love, but here we have the whole story of the secret of the divine heart reflected from the heart of one who had seen its manifestation in his own troubled life.

Says Cheyne, "the proverb 'le style c'est l'homme' is peculiarly true of Hosea." His delicate, almost feminine, nature, so susceptible to the beautiful and poetic, found its natural expression in discourse the very antipodes of

aa. chs. 4-14 b. Hosea 4: 13. c. 11: 1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11.

Joel's measured dignity or of the oratorical denunciation of Amos. There is very little in the prophecy of either of these sterner prophets which is unclear. The obscure passages are lighted up by the frequent repetition in which they indulged. But the changeable character of Hosea's discourse and the absence of this parallelism have made many passages in his prophecy enigmatical and obscure. There is nothing studied in the poetry of Hosea, as in that of Joel or Amos. It is simple, passionate, adorned with figures not so bold and striking as those of Amos, yet having a beauty all their own. The conception of Jehovah as the dew and again as the lily and the fir-tree^d reveals a delicacy which impetuous Amos did not possess. Hosea was more of a poet than an orator. Yet the Hebrew heart, susceptible as it was to the strongest, as well as the most delicate, of human emotions, must have been more strongly moved by the heart-words of Hosea, than by the elegant phrases of Joel, or the burning denunciation of Amos. Hosea must be felt to be appreciated. If we are in full sympathy with his nature, we can trace in his words some of the grandest emotions which stir humanity, we can find in his mission some of the grandest work for a righteous God.

The literary study of the prophetic works is inspiring. The truths involved are eternal; they can never grow old. The attitude of these faithful men toward their generation might well be emulated by the Church of to-day. Could the same earnestness, consecration and self-abnegation, the same implicit confidence in the Divine Guide, the same love of the Truth, which inspired the prophets of old take the place of that lifeless and half-hearted spirit which is too often abroad to-day, God, Righteous and Loving, would not lack a true representation upon the earth. The prophets were indeed grand men. No monument need stand to their memory save the written words which have come down to us. They served their generation. Their words are ours, a priceless heritage to the student and the seeker for truth, a fitting memorial of lives given up nobly for the redemption of mankind.

CHARLES N. THORP,

d. Hosea 14: 5 and 8.



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