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A Comparative Study of 'People' in the Old Testament and the Minjung Concept

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF 'PEOPLE' IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE MINJUNG CONCEPT AMONG KOREAN THEOLOGIANS

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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Minjung Theology" is a Korean version of liberation theology.[1] It has been popular in Korea since 1975, even though Minjung theologians insist that it is original Korean theology, not influenced by the outside theologians. Among Minjung theologians there are some Korean Old Testament scholars who suggest that the Old Testament provides proof for Minjung theology. According to them the meaning of minjung is apparently equal to that of "people" (עַם) in the Old Testament. Therefore it is necessary to compare and contrast the usage of עַם in the Old Testament with the understanding of the term among Minjung theologians.

Statement of Problem

The term "people" in the Old Testament has had both socio-economic and historical-grammatical interpretations. Minjung theologians interpret עַם in the Old Testament only socio-economically. This study will compare and contrast the usage of "עַם" in the Old Testament with the understanding of the term in Minjung theology.

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[1]Won Yong Ji, "Minjung Theology," Concordia Journal 9 (1983): 82.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out whether or not the concept of עַם in the Old Testament is the same as it is used in Minjung theology. Therefore the first part of this thesis will deal with outside influences, such as secular theology, the theology of hope, liberation theology, process theology, and theology of history on Minjung theologians, specifically on these three: Jung Choon Kim, Hee Suh Moon, and Joon Suh Park. All three insist that the origin of Israel was the Habiru. Therefore the origin of עַם (Israel) in the Old Testament will also be treated. The second part of this thesis will determine whether עַם refers to a religious entity or a social entity, since Minjung theologians maintain that it refers only to a social entity. Finally, an evaluation will be given. Certain points of contact between the concept of עַם and Minjung understandings of it will be presented.

Limitation and the Scope of the Study

A brief history of outside influence on Minjung theologians will be considered, along with the study of three Old Testament scholars: Jung Choon Kim, Hee Suk Moon, and Joon Suh Park. Jung Choon Kim began to apply the socio-economic method to Old Testament interpretation in Korea. Hee Suk Moon has applied Walter Brueggeman's two trajectory theory to his works. Joon Suh Park contends that the origin of Israel is the Habiru.

There are several Hebrew words which can be translated into English as "people". Among them, עַם and גּוֹי will be studied, because of their prominent

usage. עַם is used 1,752 times in the Old Testament, with 80 percent of the occurrences (1,404) referring to Israel, the rest referring to other nations. גּוֹי is used as a synonym of עַם in many places in the Old Testament.[2]

Chapter II will discuss the three Minjung theologians. In order to understand them, this thesis will give a definition of the term minjung, provide background on the rise of Minjung theology in its social, theological, and hermeneutical aspects, and present a brief history of the interpretation of the Old Testament in the Korean Church. It will treat, analyze and assess the works of the three Old Testament Korean scholars: Jung Choon Kim, Hee Suk Moon, and Joon Suh Park in chapter III. A discussion of the problem of the origin of עַם (Israel) will be presented here too.

Chapter IV will consider the usage of עַם in the Old Testament from the period of the Patriarchs to the period of the Settlement. Chapter V will deal with the usage of עַם in the period of the Monarchy. Chapter VI will treat עַם in the Exilic and postexilic period and consider the "people of the land" (עַם הָאָרֶץ) from which Minjung theologians draw the character of Minjung. In the final chapter, summary assessments are given, comparing and contrasting the usage of Minjung with the understanding of the Old Testament.

Methodology

The works of three Korean scholars will be analyzed and assessed. The

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[2]E.g., Ex. 19:6, Is. 1:4, etc.

influence of the West upon them will also be treated. The usage of the word עַם will be dealt with according to the historical periods: the patriarchs, the Exodus, the settlement, the monarchy, the Exile, and the postexilic period. Minjung theologians have not considered עַם throughout the whole history of Israel. They cannot understand עַם wholly. This thesis will discuss עַם according to each period in the history of Israel. Some passages which contain this word עַם will be selected and studied exegetically, employing a historical-grammatical method which recognizes the absolute authority of the Bible.

CHAPTER II

THE RISE OF MINJUNG THEOLOGY

This chapter will treat the causes of the rise of Minjung theology: what the definition of "Minjung" is, why Minjung theologians want to keep using their own "Minjung" jargon and what the social and theological background of Minjung theology is. It will deal with what theologies have influenced Minjung theologians. A brief history of the interpretation of the Old Testament in the Korean church, a study of Gerhard von Rad's theology, and a review of the sociological approach to the Old Testament will also be given.

Definition of the word "Minjung"

Minjung is a Korean word, but actually it is a combination of two Chinese characters "min" and "jung." The word "min" may be translated as "people" and "jung" as "the mass." Literally, then, minjung would be translated into English as "the mass of people." Minjung theologians are not satisfied with this simple English translation. Hee Suk Moon states,

> For "Minjung" is not a concept or object which can be easily explained or defined. Rather, "Minjung" expresses a living reality which is dynamic, changing, and complex. This living reality defines its own existence through its actions and the place it makes for itself in history, making it difficult to come to any agreement regarding the precise definition of the term. But as a starting point I would like to posit the following general definition of "Minjung": The "Minjung"

> are those who are oppressed politically, exploited economically, alienated socially, and kept uneducated in cultural and intellectual matters.[1]

The other reason is that Minjung theologians find the "mass of people" inadequate. "People" is a politically dangerous term in anti-Communist Korea, for it has become a "Communist" word. Most Communist countries use "People" in their national names. In the Chinese cultural area (China, Korea, and Japan), inmin is used for the English word "people." Minjung theologians want to distinguish between minjung[2] and inmin and they do not want to be misunderstood as Communists. Theologically, the Minjung theologians think that "the people of God" limits the concept minjung, because "the people of God" is church jargon, while minjung includes those who do not believe in Christ.[3]

Another way of expressing this would be to say that minjung are han-ridden people. The word han is also a Korean word, which might be translated as "grudge" or "resentment." Han is the anger and resentment of the minjung which has been turned inward and intensified as they have become objects of injustice. It is the result of being repressed for an extended period of time by external forces: political oppression, economic exploitation, social alienation, and restrictions against becoming educated in cultural and intellectual matters.

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[1]Hee Suk Moon, A Korean Minjung Theology (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1985), p. 1.

[2]The capital letter is used for the proper noun, "Minjung" in order to distinguish between it and the common noun, minjung.

[3]David Kwang Sun Suh, "Minjung and Theology in Korea" in Minjung Theology, ed. Yong Bock Kim (Singapore: The Commission on Theological Concern, 1981), pp. 17-18.

The term han is a hallmark of the Korean minjung. They have a troubled social biography which stretches back for centuries; they have suffered repeated foreign invasions and internal exploitation. For thirty-six years they endured humiliation under Japanese colonial rule. National emancipation in 1945 did not improve the situation at all, for the nation was divided into two hostile parts by the two superpowers for their own selfish interests. The tragedies brought about by the national division are beyond description. Hee Suk Moon says,

> han, however, is a starting point for a new human history. Through the experience of han one's spiritual eyes are opened and one is enabled to see the deep truths about life. In han, we come to see the infinite value of personhood and are able to assert our precious rights as human beings. In han we see clearly what is good and evil and learn to hate evil and love good. In han we encounter God who comes down to the han -ridden people and justifies their plight. With han as our point of departure we begin to dream of a new, alternative future and to dedicate ourselves to the cause of making that future a reality.[4]

The definition of minjung, however, differs from one Minjung theologian to another. According to Nam Dong Suh, minjung is different from laos in the biblical tradition, but is similar to "the poor" in Ex. 20:22-23:39. Minjung is a collective group of people alienated from the society by its antagonistic social structures.[5] Young Hak Hyun defines minjung as those without political power, economic wealth, social position, and higher education. They are, therefore, "nameless."[6] Wan Sang

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[4]Moon, p. 2.

[5]Nam Dong Suh, The Study on Minjung Theology (Seoul: Hangil Sa, 1983), p. 53.

[6]Young Hak Hyun, "Theological Understanding of Korean Mask Dance" in Minjung Theology (Singapore: The Commission on Theological Concern, 1981), p. 47.

Han, a sociologist, defines

> minjung according to the social situation and the times. There are three kinds of Minjung: cultural, economic, and political. One of these kinds of Minjung appears, depending on the age. In the Feudal Age, the aristocracy had power and wealth, according to the social classes. Minjung of the feudal age is called cultural Minjung. In the Industrial Age, the rich become the dominators, and the Minjung of this age is called economic Minjung. In the Modern Age, the dominator can be determined depending on who is the ruling power, Minjung of this age is called political Minjung."[7]

Yong Bock Kim describes the characteristics of Minjung: "Minjung are the permanent reality of history. They are dynamic and changing, and are decided politically. In the case where women are ruled politically by men, then women belong to Minjung."[8]

A summary of the definitions is that "Minjung" are the only subjects of history, the economically suppressed, the politically oppressed and used, and the culturally alienated. Those are the only ones qualified to be called "Minjung."

Background of the Rise of Minjung Theology

The Social Background

The rise of Minjung theology stemmed from Korean social conditions in the 1970s. The one factor was the economic situation. During the 1970s Korea was rapidly becoming a prosperous nation. Cities were growing, the export business was flourishing. This fact is clearly reflected in the steady rise in the nation's gross national product. This surge in the economy, however, has not been without its cost.

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[7]Sung Jae Kim, "Methodological Study on Minjung Education," in Minjung and Korean Theology (Seoul: Korean Theological Study Institute, 1982), p. 397.

[8]Yong Bock Kim, "Messiah and Minjung," in Minjung and Korean Theology (Seoul: Korean Theological Study Institute, 1982), p. 287.

This newly achieved national wealth has redefined the line between the middle and upper classes and the Minjung.[9]

A second factor was the political situation: The crucial motive for the rise of Minjung theology was the military coup d'etat, led by General Chung Hee Park, on May 16, 1961. His regime came to an end with his assassination on October 26, 1979. The characteristics of Park's military regime were the political authoritarianism of a long-term presidency and the economic modernization which has already been noted. Under his political authoritarianism the democratic spirit which was stimulated by the Students Revolution of April 19, 1960 was severely suppressed. Hee Suk Moon says,

> In the early years of the 1970s a new discussion centered on the Minjung in Korea, the theologians were concerned with the theme of Minjung liberation. It was at this time that many theologians were dismissed from their posts in seminaries and universities because of their position of defending the oppressed and students imprisoned by government implementation the oppressive policies of the Chung Hee Park regime.[10]

The Theological Background

Minjung theology came about under the influence of other theologies, even though Minjung theologians insist that it is of Korean origin. Moon states,

> This theology can be truly called an indigenous, "grass roots" theology, for it grew, and continues to grow, directly out of Christian experiences in the political struggle for justice. Moreover, Minjung theology is Korean theology; it begins with the Korean Minjung, their suffering and struggle.[11]

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[9]Moon, p. 51.

[10]Ibid., ix.

[11]Ibid., p. 53.

In fact, the establishment of Korean Minjung theology was made possible through a synthesis as a secular theology, the theology of hope, liberation theology, process theology and the theology of history.[12] Missio dei theology is another movement which has influenced Minjung theology. Under the influence of missio dei, Minjung theology appeared as a "Doing theology" which is concerned with social participation for the purpose of social justice.[13]

The Beginning of Minjung Theology

The starting point of Minjung theology was the "Declaration of Korean Christians" in 1973.[14] At that time Nam Dong Suh, together with a group of other theologians made that declaration. However, many Minjung theologians regard its origin in the historical Korean events such as the Donghak Rebellion (1860) and 'March-First' Independence Movement (1919).

Actually the Minjung movement began in 1960. University students led a nationwide revolt. Their focus was civil rights and freedom from dictatorial policies. Hyung Gang Ha says, "The April student revolution was significant in that for the

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[12]Kyoung Jae Kim, "Theological Problems of the Korean Church in tradition," in The Theological Thought. 28 (Spring 1980): 19.

[13]Young Bok Kim, "The Theological Task of the Korean Church in the 80s," in The Theological Thought (Spring 1980): 12-3.

[14]The Korean Christian Declaration reads: "We believe that God is the one who necessarily protects with His justice the oppressed, poor, and weak from the evil forces and judges those forces in history. We believe that Jesus the Messiah proclaimed that the unjust powers should be destroyed and the kingdom of Messiah come, and that His messianic kingdom should be the heaven of the poor, oppressed, and despised."

first time in Korean history the Minjung overthrew a corrupt dictatorial government."[15] The political background of the "Declaration of Korean Christians" was the Yushin constitution -- "a revitalizing reform," because the Minjung were suffering the heavy burden of political oppression and socio-economic deprivation under the military government.

The term "minjung"[16] began to be used by Nam Dong Suh, a systematic theologian, in 1974. Suh recalls when he introduced the term:

> My theological theme is explicitly "Minjung" I have established intentionally "Minjung" as my theological central theme since 1974. On the next year, I held a lecture: the theme was "Jesus and Minjung" at the retreat of the college of theology in Yonsei University. I began to use the word "Minjung" from this time.[17]

Suh came to use the term "Minjung theology" for the first time in his article, "Theology of Minjung" in which he responded to Hyung Hyo Kim's criticism of his first article.

Subsequent to Suh's first article, "The Captives' Declaration for the Restora-

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[15]Hyun Gang Ha, The History of Korea (Seoul: Shinku Munhwa sa, 1979), p. 307.

[16]"Minjung" is a Korean term for "the people". This term began to be used in the sense of class-consciousness during the 1920s in Japan. It was introduced to Korea but its lifespan of usage was short. See Yong Hun Park and Jung Soo Ahn, Nation and Idea of Freedom (Seoul: Goryuwon, 1987), 245-246. This term has been used in the political sense again since 1960 by Korean historians such as Ki Back Lee and Sok Hon Ham. These historians understood minjung as the underdogs, victims of social injustice. But the politico-theological sense of minjung was introduced to Korea under the influence of Japanese theologians. This portion is taken from Yong Wha Na, A Theological Assessment of Minjung Theology, Systematically and Biblically doctoral dissertation, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO, 1988, 1.

[17]Nam Dong Suh, Study of Minjung Theology (Seoul: Hangilsa, 1983), p. 173.

tion of Democracy" (February 21, 1975),[18] the term minjung was the dominant theme in Byung Mu Ahn's speech, "Nation, Minjung, and Church" (March 1, 1975)[19] and "The Declaration of the Catholic National Clergy for the Realization of Justice" (March 10, 1975).[20] From this time on, "church for minjung" and "Minjung theology" became popular terms among the liberal churches in Korea.

A Brief History of the Interpretation of the Old Testament in the Korean Church

In order to understand Minjung theology, it is necessary to have a brief history of the interpretation of the Old Testament in the Korean Church. This history will be divided into two periods: the first, from the beginning of the Korean Church (Protestant Church) to 1978; the other from 1979 to 1989.

The first Protestant clergy missionary to put his feet on Korean soil was a Lutheran. German missionary Karl Guetzlaff went to Bangkok in 1828, and from there to the west coast of the "Hermit Kingdom," Korea, in 1832.[21] In 1884 the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions appointed Rev. J. W. Heron, M.D., and Horace N. Allen, M.D., as medical missionaries to Korea. Two resident clergy

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[18]It declared: "We stand here with solemnity, relying upon the capacity of minjung who have fought against dictatorial government which rejects the desperate historical demand of minjung."

[19]He spoke: "Minjung, who consist of the nation, have been suffering under the disguise of nationalism which Park's military government calls for."

[20]It declared: "A true democracy can be established by the democracy in which minjung take part as its subject."

[21]Won Yong Ji, A History of Lutheranism in Korea (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary, 1988), p. 43.

missionaries landed in Korea: H. G. Underwood, a Presbyterian, and the other, Henry G. Appenzeler, a Methodist. Both of them came from the United States. In the United States, the Reformed church was challenged by the rationalism of that time. But the first missionaries' background was fundamentalism.[22] W. D. Reynalds from taught C. Hodge's book, Evidence of Christianity which is a fundamentalist book.[23] Harold S. Hong describes the early Korean Church:

> Most of the believers used to embrace the idea of the infallibility of the Bible and the theory of its mechanical inspiration. The predominant theological trend had been an extreme fundamentalism, believing in the verbal inspiration of the Bible.[24]

During 1930-1940, the fundamentalist view of the Bible was established in Korea. During this period there were two conflicting tendencies. On the one hand, the Methodist Seminary started to teach the documentary hypothesis. On the other hand, the Korean Presbyterian Church condemned that hypothesis. For example in 1935 the Abingdon Commentary was translated into Korean by Presbyterian pastors. The books contained Juliud Wellhausen's theory and Hermann Gunkel's view of oral tradition. That commentary, however, was officially rejected by the Korean Presbyterian Church.[25]

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[22]Young Hee Park," A Historical Study of the Korean Commentaries and its Current Movement" in Presbyterian Theological Quarterly 201 (1984): 6-7.

[23]Hee Suk Moon, A History of the Interpretation of the Old Testament in the Korean Church (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society, 1982), p. 55.

[24]Harold S. Hong, Korean and Christianity (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society, 1966), p. 17.

[25]John P. Brown, "The History of Biblical Interpretation in the Korean Church," in Church and Theology 5(1972): 96.

During 1941-1956, there were two major events in the history of Korea. First, Korea became an independent country from Japan in 1945, Second, Korea had a war between the South and the North, which began in 1950. During the Korean war many Korean pastors went to the United States and Germany for advanced study. One of them, Jae Choon Kim, came back to Korea and introduced historical criticism. He also founded a liberal theological seminary. The Korean Presbyterian Church had two seminaries.[26] Later the Korean Presbyterian Church was divided into two groups because of historical criticism of the Bible. One has remained a conservative church and the other became a liberal church. The liberal church followed the history of religions approach. The theology of von Rad was introduced to some Korean Old Testament scholars and von Rad's method was applied to their works.

Among the liberal Old Testament scholars Jung Choon Kim and Hee Suk Moon were influenced by von Rad himself. Kim learned Old Testament theology from von Rad. Moon studied at Emory University. Moon describes the tendency among Korean Old Testament scholars: "Generally speaking, most of modern Korean Old Testament scholars belong to the school of von Rad's salvation history. Especially Jung Choon Kim and Hee Suk Moon have applied the method to their books."[27]

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[26]Young Hun Lee, A History of the Korean Church. (Seoul: Concordia Press, 1979), pp. 248-251.

[27]Hee Suk Moon, A History of the Interpretation of the Old Testament in the Korean Church p. 97.

Kim himself says, "I don't have my own theology, but I introduce the western theology, especially Gerhard von Rad's theology to Korea."[28] Chan Kuk Kim describes von Rad's influence on Jung Choon Kim: "Von Rad's The People of God in Deuteronomy influenced him greatly. Kim applied von Rad's method to his books."[29] Indeed, Jung Choon Kim has written the book, An Understanding of Gerhard von Rad's Theology. [30] Kim tries to find out the faith and national identity of Israel and Korea in his book, The History of Israel and the History of Korea. He concludes that in the history of Korea faith did not develop national identity, as was the case in the history of Israel. However, there is one common point in the two histories, that is, that both are the history of suffering.[31] Kim understands salvation history as not only that of the history of Israel: he also sees the history of the whole human race as the history of God.[32]

Hee Suk Moon wrote a book, The Salvation Work of God, based on von Rad's salvation history. When Moon describes salvation history, he "emphasizes that the Bible is for 'Minjung.' The Israelites' covenantal community of Yahweh should be understood as one of the communities of faith. The faith which was confessed by

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[28]Chan Kuk Kim, "Life and Theology of Jung Choon Kim," in Theological Thought 35 (1981): 685.

[29]Ibid., p. 689.

[30]Jung Choon Kim, An Understanding of Gerhard von Rad's Theology (Seoul: The Christian Literature Society, 1973), p. 38.

[31]Chan Kuk Kim, p. 687.

[32]Jung Choon Kim, p. 40.

the Israelites has come down to us through the Bible."[33] It is clear, therefore, that Jung Choon Kim and Hee Suk Moon were influenced by von Rad's theology.[34] They apply von Rad's theology to Minjung theology.

The year 1979 was the watershed for Korean Old Testament scholars to apply a socio-economic method to their works. One could find that they did not use the socio-economic method of Minjung theology prior to 1978. Hee Suk Moon, who is one of the Old Testament scholars among Minjung theologians, published a book, A History of the Interpretation of the Old Testament in the Korean Church 1900-1977. In this book he says nothing about the application of the socio-economic method to their works. Two years later, Jung Choon Kim wrote an article, "Old Testament Reference for Minjung." In this article he insisted that the objects of the salvation of Yahweh are those who are "Minjung": the poor, the oppressed, and the alienated.[35] Also in 1979 In Suk Suh, a Catholic priest, wrote a book entitled, The Poor in the Bible. He states, "We should find the truth of the poor in Torah, and should hear the voice of the poor in the books of the prophets."[36] Suh insists that the Covenant Code (Ex 20:22-23:10), the Deuteronomic Code and the Holiness Code (Lev. 17-26)

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[33]Hee Suk Moon, A History of the Interpretation of the Old Testament in the Korean Church p. 98.

[34]Young Jin Min, "Old Testament Theology in the 1970's," in The Theological Thought 36 (1982): 19.

[35]Jung Choon Kim, "Old Testament Reference for Minjung," in The Theological Thought 24(1979): 22.

[36]In Suk Suh, The Poor in the Bible (Waegwan: Benedict Press, 1979), p. 125.

should be interpreted as law for the protection of the rights of the poor.[37] In 1981, Joon Suh Park wrote an article, "God in the Old Testament." Hee Suk Moon, in his 1982 article, wrote "My People in Micah." He interpreted the concept "עַם" by applying the socio-economic approach to it and insisting that "עַם" are economically poor and politically oppressed people.[38] Moon wrote a similar article in 1985, "A Meaning of Minjung in Amos". Young Jin Min produced a "Sociological Interpretation of the Old Testament" (1983), which introduced the theories of Max Weber, G. E. Mendenhall, and N. K. Gottwald.[39]

Influence of Gerhard von Rad on Minjung Theologians: Korean Old Testament Scholars

A Study of von Rad's Theology

The Background of von Rad

Von Rad has two aspects to his background: first, the political, second, the theological. Gerhard von Rad was born on October 21, 1901. He entered theological studies at Erlangen and Tuebengen. During this time his initial interests were not in Old Testament. After completing his theological study in 1925, he accepted a position as pastor in the Bavarian State Church. At this time he had no intention of entering

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[37]In Suk Suh, "The Law is the Right of the Poor," in Minjung and Korean Theology (Seoul: Korea Theological Study Institute, 1982), pp. 58-85.

[38]Hee Suk Moon, "My People in Micah." in Minjung and Korean Theology, p. 104.

[39]Young Jin Min, "Sociological Interpretation of the Old Testament," in Sociological Interpretation of the Bible ed. Byung Mu Ahn. (Seoul: Korea Theological Institute, 1983), pp. 23-39.

the ranks of the scholarly community. However, his daily struggle with the growing anti-Semitism prompted him to seek an answer to the problem posed to the Christian church by the Old Testament.

When anti-Semitism became stronger, he left Jena to become the chief pastor at Hamburg. Von Rad worked diligently and published prolifically. During these years, many popular works in defense of the Old Testament appeared, such as The Old Testament- God's Word for the German and Moses. After World War II, von Rad came to Heidelberg.[40]

When von Rad began his theological studies the "theology of revelation" was beginning to appear. For several decades before von Rad, the school of the history of religion had been dominant in Germany. The school concentrated on studying the history of the religion of Israel and on treating it as one of the ancient Near Eastern religions. It did not accept the uniqueness of the Israelite religion. As a reaction to that school, the "theology of revelation" appeared. Thus, von Rad began to study Old Testament theology at the period of the rebirth of the Old Testament.[41]

Influences on von Rad

Von Rad, however, did not reject entirely the heritage of the school of the history of religion. He tried to overcome the weak points of that school because he

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[40]James L. Crenshaw, Gerhard von Rad (Waco: Word Books, 1978), pp. 18-21.

[41]Jung Choon Kim, An Understanding of Gerhard von Rad's Theology pp. 9-10.

knew those points very well.[42] But he received Wellhausen's documentary hypothesis and Gunkel's form criticism. Wellhausen focused upon literary sources that comprise the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy. Gunkel searched for the life-situation of literary forms, believing that form and content were appropriate to function. For Wellhausen, the written sources from different eras underlay the Pentateuch. Gunkel, meanwhile, emphasized the long period of oral transmission when competing accounts met various spiritual needs of the people. Composition was decisive for Wellhausen. Gunkel down played the importance of the actual writing down of such traditions. Both literary criticism and form criticism tended to isolate individual units within the Pentateuch and consequently placed its unity in question. James L. Crenshaw says, "To both Wellhausen and Gunkel, von Rad owed a great debt. But he endeavored to recapture the thematic unity of larger textual units."[43]

Von Rad differed from the school of the history of religions, that he escaped from the historicism which characterized that school. He accented more the world of faith than the world of history. In this respect he owed a debt to scholars such as Walther Eichrodt, Otto Procksch, and Albrecht Alt. James Barr insists on Eichrodt's influence on von Rad:

> We may well ask, however, whether von Rad, in spite of pushing to all extremes the domination of Heilsgeschichte, has really succeeded in avoiding the description of the "world of faith" or "mental world" of Israel, and likewise the approach through "Hebrew concepts" and the like. If we are to work solely from what Israel itself has directly enunciated about Yahweh, why do we find ourselves

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[42]Ibid., p. 10.

[43]J. L. Crenshaw, p. 18.

> investigating 'the specific Hebraic understanding of time' which is apparently taken to be an integral part of the theological survey? What did Israel directly enunciate about time? Is not this a study of a Glaubenswelt or Geisteswelt in Eichrodt's sense, just the thing which von Rad has rejected from the subject? [44]

Therefore Eichrodt and von Rad have the same world of faith.

Another scholar who influenced von Rad was Otto Procksch who supervised his dissertation. Procksch emphasized that the Old Testament is the book of Christians even though historicism searches for historical meaning and value in his days. John N. Schofield says,

> To Procksch "all theology is Christology" as the fullest revelation of God, and the goal of the Old Testament is Christ. He begins with an account of his own Christology, describing the relation between Christ and the world, church, and individual Christians in much the same way as he uses later of God and the world, Israel and man[45]

Jung Choon Kim agrees with this point and states, "Von Rad's purpose of theology is the relationship between the Old Testament and NT, that is, the confessional element. Von Rad owed a debt to Procksch's presupposition that "all theology is Christology."[46] Von Rad himself says:

> All these writings of ancient Israel, both these which were concerned with her past relationship to God and those which dealt with her future one, were seen by Jesus Christ, and certainly by the Apostles and the early Church, as a collection

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[44]James Barr, "Recent Biblical Theologies VI. Gerhard von Rad's Theologies des Alten Testaments," in Exptm 73 (1961-2): 143.

[45]John N. Schofield, "Otto Procksch, Theology of the OT," in Contemporary Old Testament Theologians, ed. R. Laurin (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1970), p. 116.

[46]Jung Choon Kim, An Understanding of Gerhard von Rad's Theology p. 44.

of predictions which pointed to him, the saviour of Israel and of the world.[47]

Albrecht Alt is the third man to whom von Rad's dissertation owed a debt. One could say that von Rad's theology is the history of tradition. Alt and Martin Noth employed the concept of "tradition." The long history of Israel had been transmitted from generation to generation. The writers of the history of Israel used both oral traditions and written materials. At first, each tribe of Israel had its own history. Later, they became one history of Israel. One must study each tradition of the tribes in order to find the formation of Israel's history. The materials of each tribe tradition are scattered in the Hexateuch. Alt presupposes that there was an amphictyony among the twelve tribes.

According to Alt, the traditions of Israel had been transmitted by the Amphictyony (Shechem). Because Alt and Noth were historians, their goal was to form the history of Israel with the concept of tradition. They were concerned primarily with history rather than theology. But the problem of history cannot be solved without understanding the theological motive of tradition. This thought influenced von Rad to form his theology. Therefore his Old Testament I has the subtitle The Theology of Historical Tradition of Israel.[48] Josef Greig agrees with this point:

> Von Rad rejects the idea that the Heilsgeschichte should be subjected to historical criticism. Rather, he declares that Israel's faith is unrelated to the critical picture. This negative attitude is surely at least partially dependent upon his historical

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[47]Gerhad von Rad, Old Testament Theology II (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1965), p. 319.

[48]Jung Choon Kim, An Understanding of Gerhard von Rad's Theology pp. 45-54.

skepticism, a trait born largely out of his acceptance of the Alt and Noth school of historical research and nourished by his own historical criticism utilizing the same methods of research.[49]

The Concept of People in von Rad's Theology

The concept of people is very important in von Rad's theology. Von Rad began to develop his theology with this concept in his first essay, The People of God in Deuteronomy. In this essay he proposes that עַם קָדוֹשׁ, עַם נַחֲלָה, and עַם סְגֻלָּה were understood by the Israelites as their identity which differed from that of other ancient Near Eastern countries. The Israelites understood themselves to be the people of God.[50] Von Rad insists that Deuteronomy is not an utterance of God, but rather, that Deuteronomy is composed as a speech of Moses.[51] In contrast to the Book of the Covenant, the Holiness Code, and the laws of the Priestly Document, Deuteronomy is a divine charge of the kind given second-hand to the lay community. That in itself explains the absence of all that is ritual in the technical sense, so far as it concerns only the cult personnel.[52] Therefore Deuteronomy lays its claim to the department of the peoples' lives that lies quite outside the Book of the Covenant's area. It is the people who handed down the traditions through the generations.

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[49]Josef Greig, "Some Formative Aspects in the Development of Gerhard von Rad's Idea of History" in Auss 16 (1978): 319.

[50]Von Rad, Das Gottesvolk im Deuteronomium (Stuttgart: Druck von W. Kohlha Meer, 1929), pp. 9-10.

[51]Von Rad, Studies in Deuteronomy (London: SCM Press, 1963), p. 11.

[52]Ibid., p. 13.

Therefore von Rad insists that the purpose of Deuteronomy is the answer to the question, "Is it then still Yahweh's people?"[53] The reason why they asked this question is that this Israel, in actual fact, no longer has any point of comparison with the Israel which in the past stood at Horeb: It is separated from the events at Horeb by a very long and extremely incriminating history. In the later regal period, Israel's whole religious and political life had been called into question. The answer is clear: It is to this Israel, the people just as they were, that Deuteronomy proclaims Yahweh's election and promise of salvation. Von Rad advocates a composition of Deuteronomy in the seventh century B.C. This word of salvation runs "This day thou art become the people of Yahweh thy God" (Deut 27:9, cp 26:16-19). "This day" is the tremendous "here and now" in the divine election that lies in back of Deuteronomy's attempt to re-comprehend the Israel that was now in the grip of an inner disintegration as the holy people of God.[54] Therefore the book contends paradoxically that Israel is still faced with the full realization of Yahweh's promise of salvation.[55]

The provenance of Deuteronomy was the traditions of the old Yahweh amphictyony. Therefore Deuteronomy's noticeable silence on the important political functions of the king can only be taken to mean that Deuteronomy originated in circles where sacred conceptions of the "anointed of Yahweh" had perhaps never

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[53]Ibid., p. 70.

[54]Ibid., p. 71.

[55]Ibid., p. 73.

really gained a footing.[56] Von Rad connects the עַם of Yahweh to the amphictyonic militia. Von Rad treats עַם הָאָרֶץ as a political group:

> The initiative lay no doubt with the high priest Jehoiada, but he alone with the palace guard cannot have set things in motion without a previous understanding with some influential political group, and that group was the property-owning citizens of the country districts. Their presence in the Temple while the dramatic events were enacted was certainly no accident. "The city was quiet" but, the עַמהָאָיִז rejoiced. It was they who through their acclamation set the young king on the throne.[57]

Von Rad considers the examples of the removal of Athaliah and the raising of Joash. When Josiah's father, Amon, fell victim to a palace revolution, here the עַם הָאָרֶץ intervened. Von Rad points out:

> They set aside the Jerusalem clique of traditions, that is, they balked against their political programme and raised Josiah to the throne (2 Kings 21:24). The goal of the עַם הָאָרֶץ was national independence (2 Kings 2:33ff) and the עַם הָאָרֶץ raised Jehoahaz, a son of Josiah's, to the throne.[58]

Von Rad insists that the old patriarchal tradition of the strict Yahweh faith had long remained alive amongst the free peasant population and had given rise to an opposition to the capital which expressed itself in strong impulses toward revival both in the cult and in politics.[59] The spokesmen of the peasants were the country Levites. The Levites and the ark had a close connection with the holy war, for the Levites and the ark were together (2 Sam. 15:24), and the ark was plainly the palla-

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[56]Ibid., p. 62.

[57]Ibid., p. 63.

[58]Ibid., p. 66.

[59]Ibid.

dium of the holy war.[60]

Von Rad thinks that the authors of Deuteronomy were the country Levites. The people were important in the transmission of traditions and the country Levites were their representatives. These people were the subjects of Israelite history because they removed a king and raised a king and transmitted the traditions to succeeding generations. According to von Rad, the Deuteronomic history was written with the choice of material being made by historians who had a unique theological viewpoint. He calls those historians Deuteronomists, because they took as normative for their judgment of the past certain standards laid down either exclusively or chiefly in Deuteronomy.[61]

The criterion by which these historians judged the past was the pure Yahweh cult in Jerusalem. Because the Deuteronomist measures the past in this light, all kings of the northern kingdom are judged negatively, since they "all walked in the sin of Jeroboam." Five of the kings of Judah receive qualified approval. Deuteronomistic historians see history in light of its theological significance. Therefore the catastrophes of 721 B.C. and 586 B.C. happened because God rejected both kingdoms. The Deuteronomist's sole concern is a theological interpretation of the catastrophes which befell the two kingdoms. Consequently, he examined the past with that in view, and the result was clear: the fault was not Yahweh's. Rather, for generations Israel had been piling up an ever-increasing burden of guilt and faithlessness, so that in the end

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[60]Ibid., p. 67.

[61]Ibid., p. 75.

Yahweh had to reject his people.[62] Therefore, obedience is the first fundamental element in the Deuteronomistic presentation of history.

Salvation History

Salvation history is the central concept of von Rad's theology and is related to the concept of people. The theological and philosophical influences of salvation history go back to J. C. K. von Hofmann, who, in turn, was influenced by Cocceius and the pietist Bengel.[63] Pietism was basically reactionary, standing between the controversies of Orthodoxy and the more innovative approaches to theology. The basic concern of the Pietists was religious experience. Johann Bengel attempted to demonstrate that in Scripture there was revealed a divine economy from the beginning to the end of all things. The historical dimension of Bengel's work betrays the influence of Johannes Cocceius's Federal Theology in Pietistic circles.[64] Therefore the theological goals tended toward religious experience. Friedrich Schleiermacher is the most notable example of the attempt to go beyond the mere rationalistic quest for certainty and the Pietists' preoccupation with religious experience. Pietism was stimulated by rationalism to search for a theology of immediacy and inwardness.

In contrast to rationalism, romanticism revived an interest in history. It attempted to feel a relationship to the past. Therefore in theology both J. G. Hamann

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[62]Ibid., p. 77.

[63]D. S. Spriggs, Two Old Testament Theologies (London: SCM Press, 1974), p. 34.

[64]A. Josef Greig, pp. 314-5.

and J. G. Herder emphasized history as the bearer of revelation for the rational thinker. According to Hamann,

> the entire world history and nature constitute the sphere and medium of divine glory. This means, however, that the revelational character of history . . . and of biblical history in particular . . . is only a symbolic one, because eternity does not appear in its supernatural character among men, but in a form suitable for their power of comprehension and faith.[65]

Thomas Wizenmann understood revelational history as the history of a personal relationship.

The status of the personal experience of salvation was a dominant factor in the Heilsgeschichte theology of J. C. K. von Hofmann. He saw two ways of treating Scripture, the first of which emanated from Christian experience. This experience was a fact of the believer. The theologian recognized the fact of rebirth and in this rebirth the entire "Holy History": the beginning and movement of which could be derived from its end-personal belief. The second approach was a historical one, but interpreted according to similar idealistic laws of development. In this approach, one reconstructed the "Holy History" from its center, identified by the Scriptures. The unity and self-consistency of this history would be valid for everyone who, through the experience of salvation, was able to understand it.

The reasons for this subjective and inward movement of Heilsgeschichte seem clear. Theories of the natural development of man had raised the question about the supernatural concept of salvation, and historical criticism was bit by bit cutting away at the accuracy and unity of the historical picture presented in the Bible. Von

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[65]Ibid., p. 315.

Hofmann answered the question of Christian certainty by suggesting that certainty was rooted in one's saving faith and that this faith apprehended the saving truth witnessed to it by Scripture. Thus theology tended to move inward. Emphasis was placed on the experience of salvation that one has in history and on the comprehension of the goal of history through this experience, rather than on the critical determination of the external facts of history.[66] Pietism emphasized a religious experience of salvation. The subject of the experience is man, that is, the people. When von Rad dealt with salvation history, the credo (Deut. 26:5-10) which was confessed by the people of Israel was the most important thought, because it was the people who confessed the credo. The subject of confession was the people. Thus salvation history is what people confess concerning what they experience. So people are the subjects of history.

There is yet another scholar to whom von Rad was indebted, namely, Wilhelm Dilthey. Von Rad cites Dilthey on two points regarding the nature of poetry and how it relates to Israel's historical presentations: poetry is an organ for the understanding of "life," and by it a concept is produced that "transcends reality."[67] Dilthey understands history as an "inner" subject matter. History is the facts of human consciousness. The inner life and the techniques of historiographical science developed from the natural sciences cannot be applied to it. These inner elements provide the material for his theory of "lived experience." The historian's understand-

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[66]Ibid., p. 317.

[67]Ibid., p. 324.

ing is immediate and true even if the "outer event" has been lost. The outer event thus becomes merely a supporting condition for the inner event, which is the real object of investigation.[68] According to Dilthey this sympathetic reliving of the inner life of another describes the method of historical interpretation designated "understanding" (Verstehen).

These ideas of Dilthey influenced von Rad's philosophy of historical understanding. In von Rad's theology, interpretation is given a higher rank than the historical facts, and there is an emphasis on the historicity of the faith without concern for the historical basis of that faith. Thus the emphasis is on what Dilthey called the "inner" side of an event or the inner side of history.[69]

Von Rad rejected historicism and turned to the "inner" side of an event. Therefore he accepted the history of tradition and sought to discover the role of people in transmitting a tradition. The people are the subjects of the history of tradition. The confession of people is called "salvation history."

In von Rad's salvation history, the most important event is the deliverance from Egypt. Von Rad states:

> Even the earliest avowals to Jahweh were historically determined, that is, they connect the name of this God with some statement about an action in history. Jahweh, "who brought Israel out of Egypt," is probably the earliest and at the same time the most widely used of these confessional formulae.[70]

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[68]Ibid., p. 325.

[69]Ibid., p. 326.

[70]von Rad, Old Testament Theology I (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), p. 121.

Alongside these brief formulae, which are content with a minimum of historical subject-matter, there were certain confessional summaries of the saving history. Among these the most important is the Credo in Deuteronomy 26:5-9. The Credo led von Rad to point out the omission of the events of Sinai and thus to suggest that the Sinaitic tradition had its own separate origin and transmission and that only at a much later date was it combined with the other and canonical pattern.[71] Von Rad assumes that the statements of the Credo marked the beginning or fountain of the streams of tradition. But G. Henton Davies counters:

> This assumption that the credo is the beginning of the growth of tradition is probably the fundamental error. The Credo is not points of inauguration: They are rather summaries of known tradition.[72]

Von Rad accents that Credo is a confession of faith:

> These words are not, of course, a prayer . . . there is no invocation or petition . . . they are out and out a confession of faith. They recapitulate the main events in the saving history from the time of the patriarchs (by the "Aramean," Jacob is meant) down to the conquest, and they do this with close concentration on the objective historical facts.[73]

The other confession can be found in Joshua 24:2-7. Von Rad says:

> The retrospect of the history given in Josh. 24:2ff is closely allied to Deuteronomy 26:5-10. Admittedly, it goes into considerably greater detail in the presentation of the saving history, but the two are alike in confining themselves to the objective facts.[74]

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[71]Ibid., p. 187-88.

[72]G. Henton Davies, "Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology," in Contemporary O.T Theologians, ed. R. Laurin. (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1970), p. 70.

[73]von Rad, Old Testament Theology I, p. 122.

[74]Ibid., pp. 122-23.

Some of the Psalms (such as, 136 and 78) make it clear that this span of time was regarded as the time of the saving history proper. In Psalm 78 the historical summaries in hymn form are still thoroughly confessional in nature. They are not products of a national or even a secular view of history, but clearly take their stand on that old canonical picture of the saving history, the pattern of which was fixed long ago for all time.[75]

The traditions of salvation history came down to each generation with additions to it and a widening of its theological range. Von Rad explains the method:

> The chief method employed in the theological unfolding of the tradition was a different one still: it was much more indirect, for it consisted in the way in which separate pieces of material were connected. The layout of the primeval history, the story of Abraham, the relationship of the period of the patriarchs to that of Joshua, etc. is arranged in quite definite theological tensions, which the great collector intended, arising out of the sequence of the material itself. This indirect theological way of speaking through the medium of the traditional material and its arrangement makes clear once more that remarkable preponderance of the matter-of-fact historical over the theological which is so characteristic of the witness of Israel.[76]

The traditions finally became the Hexateuch form. The Hexateuch retained a confessional stamp. A "confessional stamp" means that the later Israel saw in the historical witness of the Hexateuch something that was typical for the people of God. What was there related to the immediate concern of every subsequent generation, because of the latent contemporaneousness in it.

In von Rad's salvation history it is people who made the credo and transmit-

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[75]Ibid.

[76]Ibid., p. 125.

ted the credo to later generations. The motivation for the transmission of the credo is their consciousness (identity) as the people of God. In Studies in Deuteronomy von Rad adopted Alt's amphictyony hypothesis. Alt maintained that the traditions of the Israelites were transmitted by the amphictynony. Von Rad held that when Israel's life had become drastically broken down and disintegrated, the concept of "the people of God" gathered her into a new unity. "The people of God" is given in the older period as a designation for the amphictyony militia. Von Rad thinks that "the people of God" is the same as "the people of the land." The people were the subjects in Alt's amphictyony, the one who transmitted the traditions of Israel. Von Rad accepted that idea and developed the concept of "people." The people are the subjects of the salvation history.

A Review of the Sociological Approach to the Old Testament

The first book about the sociological approach to the Old Testament is Early Hebrew Life: A Study in Sociology, written by John Fenton in 1880. This first attempt to interpret the data of the Old Testament in the light of social structure had little to say about the relationship between the social organization of the Hebrew people and the development of their religion.[77] According to Herbert F. Hahn, there are two basic presuppositions: 1) Every religion arose in a particular social milieu and was subject to its influence, and 2) The correlative proposition that the religion, in

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[77]Herbert F. Hahn, The Old Testament in Modern Research (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), p. 158.

turn, exerted an influence upon the formation of the social structure.

Characteristic of the sociological approach was the study of religion in its relation to the group, rather than to the individual. To the sociologist, religion was a social phenomenon, and therefore the sociologist emphasized collective factors, rather than personal experience, as the essential element in religion.[78]

Max Weber was the first to contribute to the sociology of the Old Testament religion. He was influenced by Marxist historians. According to Weber, in Western capitalistic society the religious side of life was not a secondary factor of little importance, but rather the original mainspring of economic activity. The capitalistic spirit had been generated by the Protestant ethic. Therefore religion has determined the economic life. Weber held that the covenant not only defined and maintained Israel's relation to its God, but also established the political unity of the tribes in the premonarchical period. He contended that the Israelites were seminomadic people, and so he began his interpretation of the economic life of the early Israelites by emphasizing the distinction between seminomadic and settled agricultural clans.[79] The keystone of Weber's interpretation of Israel's history was the thesis that the further development of its religion in the prophetic movement was the result of a crisis in the socioeconomic development of the nation.

Those who applied Weber's principles to the Old Testament were Adolph Lods, Abraham Menes, Louis Wallis, and William C. Graham. Adolph Lods rewrote

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[78]Ibid., p. 159.

[79]Ibid., p. 161.

the history of Israel in terms of the tension between the desire of the Israelites to preserve old ways peculiar to themselves and the tendency to follow new ways learned from the Canaanites. He described the change of the social and economic order as Israel adjusted in Palestine. On the economic side, the principle of the common tribal domain was supplanted by the principle of the individual ownership of land. On the social side, the principle of equality between the members of the clan was lost as the difference between the rich new landowners and the poor landless remnants of the old social order became more and more accentuated.[80]

Abraham Menes found the sociological approach useful in explaining the history of law among the Israelites. Studying the two pre-exilic law codes (the Book of the Covenant and the Deuteronomic Code) in the light of the socio-political and the economic data, Menes decided that the chief purpose of each had been social rather than religious reform.[81]

Louis Wallis sought to elaborate the "social process" by which the religion of the Old Testament had come into being. He held that the dominant factor in the Old Testament history was the struggle for supremacy between the original nomadic way of life of the Israelites and the civilized urban institutions of the Canaanites. In light of this thesis, Willis asserted that monotheism is a by-product of a utopian struggle to impose migratory clan ethics upon a territorial state.[82]

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[80]Ibid., p. 166.

[81]Ibid., p. 172.

[82]Ibid., p. 174.

William C. Graham studied the social process through which Old Testament religion had progressed to the stage of ethical monotheism. He contended that Yahwism was a unique religious and cultural expression of the "nomadic ideal" born in the desert through the establishment of a covenant with the tribal deity. It was an intrusion into the cultural situation in Canaan.[83]

In 1962, George Mendenhall proposed a fresh way of understanding the conquest and the pre-monarchial period of Israel (1250-1000 B.C.). In contrast to the dominant views of conquest, either by invasion or infiltration, Mendenhall maintained that the habiru mounted a revolution against tyrannical Canaanite city-kings, rejecting the given social order.[84] Because of this hypothesis, the nomadic hypothesis has been placed in question. Thus Israel is to be understood as socio-political outsiders. Tribe is to be understood as an intentional community deliberately committed to a different ideology and a different social organization. Such an understanding of the social unit provides a way by which greater stress may be placed on "covenant" as an ideology and form of social organization.[85]

Norman K. Gottwald rejected the pastoral nomadic hypothesis and the theory that confederated tribes bonded together in a sacral league, but he did accept the revolt hypothesis. Israelites were poor farmers in Canaan who revolted against the Canaanite

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[83]Ibid., p. 177.

[84]Walter Brueggemann, "Trajectories in Old Testament Literature and the Sociology of Ancient Israel." in The Bible and Liberation, ed. Norman K. Gottwald (Maryknoll: Orbis Books,1983), p. 309.

[85]Ibid., p. 310.

feudal system.[86] There were the lower-class people who were alienated both politically and economically and who were oppressed. They were peasants (hapshu), and apiru, and so on. The Israelites did not come from outside of Canaan. The structure of Israelite society was not a religious community which consisted of nomadic people but a confederation of tribes in a league.[87]

Walter Brueggemann traces Israel's two traditions of covenant, the Mosaic and Davidic traditions. He denies that the Davidic covenant derived from the Mosaic covenant and asserted that there is tension and conflict between the two covenants. He states:

> As a result of social value, use, and transmission, continuities in terms of cultural context and in terms of theological perspective become decisive for interpretation. Applied to the two covenantal traditions in the Old Testament "trajectories" suggest that we might be able to trace continuities in the literature shaped and energized by the Mosaic and Davidic covenants. Specifically, as will be evident in what follows, the Mosaic tradition tends to be a movement of protest which is situated among the disinherited and which articulates its theological vision in terms of a God who decisively intrudes, even against seemingly impenetrable institutions and orderings. On the other hand, the Davidic tradition tends to be a movement of consolidation which is situated among the established and secure and which articulates its theological vision in terms of a God who faithfully abides and sustains on behalf of the present ordering.[88]

Brueggemann applies socio-economic method to the interpretation of the those covenants. His study follows the periods of Israel's history and analyzes the tension and conflict between them. Paul Schrieber summarized Brueggemann's approach as

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[86]Normann K. Gottwald, The Tribes of Yahweh (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979), pp. 204-209.

[87]Ibid., pp. 210-219.

[88]Ibid., pp. 308-309.

follows:

> Brueggemann considers that the old Moses tradition (the Liberation Trajectory) continued to interface with this new development, which found expression in the "Royal Trajectory" of the Zadokite priesthood, which had (supposedly) fabricated Aaronic lineage. According to this untenable theory (advanced by Frank M. Cross) the Zadokite ideology won preeminence because of the disfranchisement and expulsion of the Mushite/Levitical priesthood (who claimed Moses as their ancestor) from Jerusalem to the Northern Kingdom. According to Brueggemann, the royal trajectory included the so-called "J" corpus, while the "E" tradition was a "separatist statement concerned for the purity of the community and aware of the threat of syncretism." "D" especially belonged to the pure Mushite trajectory which accented Yahweh's will for justice and social transformation. The "deuteronomic" corpus thus reflects the ideals of the disfranchised Levites of the north. Also included in the Davidic/Zadokite anti-liberationist material is "P", Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Chronicles. In opposition, the Mushite/Levite/Liberation group produced material including Hosea and Trito-Isaiah, as well as redacted portions of other prophetic books, recasting them according to their liberationist ideology.[89]

Finally Brueggemann made a scheme such as this:

A. The Royal Trajectory

(1) prefers to speak in myths of unity.
(2) speaks a language of fertility (creation) and continuity (royal institutions).
(3) preferred mode of perception is that of universal comprehensiveness.
(4) appears to be fostered by and valued among urban "haves."
(5) tends to be socially conserving with a primary valuing of stability.
(6) focuses on the glory and holiness of God's person and institutions geared to that holiness.

B. The Liberation Trajectory

(1) prefers to tell concrete stories of liberation.
(2) speaks a language of war and discontinuity.
(3) preferred mode of perception is that of historical specificity.
(4) appears to be fostered by and valued among peasant "have nots."

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[89]Paul Schrieber, "Liberation Theology and the Old Testament: An Exegetical Critique," in Concordia Journal 13-1 (1987): 36-37.

(5) tends to be socially revolutionary with a primary valuing of transformation.
(6) focuses on the justice and righteousness of God's will.[90]

Summary

Minjung theologians insist upon using their own "Minjung" jargon in order to distinguish from "people of God" by applying the thought of Missio Dei. The rise of Minjung theology has a specific social and theological background. It has the unique Korean social background of the 1970s. Economically, this included the attainment national wealth, and redefined the line between the middle upper classes and the Minjung. Politically, there was the authoritarianism of a long-term presidency. It also has theological background from various contemporary theologies which arose outside of Korea.

The first missionaries to Korea were conservative and have been the chief formative influence of most Korean churches. As a result of this, most Korean churches have a conservative tendency. On the other hand, liberal theology was also introduced to the Korean churches. Minjung theologians have adopted the contemporary theologies. Some Korean Old Testament theologians were influenced by von Rad prior to 1979. Von Rad's concept of "the people" influenced some Korean Old Testament scholars. In von Rad's understanding of salvation history, the people are the subjects of the history. It was the people who made the credo and confessed it. Minjung theologians applied the ideas of von Rad and stressed "the people" more than

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[90]Brueggemann, p. 322.

God in their interpretation of the Old Testament.

From 1979 the Korean Old Testament scholars began to apply a socio-economic method to their works: Gottwald's revolt theory which postulates a sociological conflict between different sociological classes, and Brueggemann's "two trajectory" theory. Minjung theologians treat the people only sociologically such that they emphasize more deeds and existence of humanity than God's acts. The next chapter will analyze the works of several Korean Old Testament scholars in order to discuss how they apply outside theological influences to their works and how to relate their unique social background to their works.

Won Yong Ji has summarized Minjung theology as follows:

> Eine weitere bemerkenswerte jüngere Entwicklung ist die Min-jung-Theologie (Volkstheologie), die ebenfalls aus den besonderen politisch-gesellschaftlichen Verhältnissen der siebziger Jahre erwachsen ist. Sie hat ihren besonderen geschichtlichen Ort in Korea, zeigt aber sachlich manche Gemeinsamkeit mit der Befreiungstheologie. Obwohl noch in den Anfängen ihrer Entwicklung stehend, hat sie doch schon eine deutliche Wirkung hervorgerufen.[91]

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[91]Won Yong Ji, "Korea" in Theologische Realenzyklopaedie, Band xix, (Berlin-New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1989), p. 619.

CHAPTER III

KOREAN MINJUNG THEOLOGIANS AMONG OLD TESTAMENT SCHOLARS

The works of Jung Choon Kim will be analyzed from the perspective of Gerhard von Rad's influence and its application to his works and his concept of "people." The works of Hee Suk Moon will also be discussed. Moon has been influenced by Walter Brueggemann. Moon dealt chiefly with the prophets in light of Brueggemann's two trajectory theory. The focus will be on his concept of "people" in his works on the prophets. Joon Suh Park develops Minjung theology with an archaeological approach. Park tried to prove that Israel originated with the Habiru. This chapter will examine whether or not his assertion is proper.

Jung Choon Kim

Kim[1] was one of pioneers in interpreting the Old Testament in light of

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[1]Jung Choon Kim was born on November 6, 1914. He graduated from Aoyama Gokuim Seminary in Tokyo in 1943. He served a local church for three years and was called to Chosun Seminary as an OT professor in 1945. He had been hospitalized for three years because of tuberculosis. During those years he experienced the suffering of disease, and this experience motivated him to study the meaning of suffering in life. He earned his B.D. from Victoria Immanuel Seminary in Canada in 1953 and his Th.M. from the Graduate School of Theology in Toronto University in 1954. He received his Th.D. degree from Edinburgh University in Scotland in 1960. While studying the Th.D. courses, he went to Heidelberg, Germany to study the OT under Gerhard von Rad. Kim was a professor of Hankuk Seminary, (formerly Chosun Seminary, Sept. 1961 - May 1962). He served the faculty of

Minjung theology. He began to develop his Minjung thought when he was hospitalized with tuberculosis. Because he experienced sufferings at that time, Kim accents suffering people rather than God in his theological works. He had been influenced by his professor Gerhard von Rad,[2] especially by von Rad's Das Gottesvolk Im Deuteronium.[3] Therefore most of Kim's works place more co-emphasis on people, their sufferings, and their context of life than on God's actions.

With "A Study of People of God," one of his early works, Kim opened his theological thought about people, Minjung. The purpose of his study of the people of God is to discover the special meaning of the concept. The study contains Israelite cultural activities, history, literature, politics, and religion. He studied the theme of the "chosen people" and the covenantal people in order to fully understand the idea of the people of God. In relation to chosen people, he selected five Hebrew words: בָּחַר, יָדַע, הִבְדִּיל, קָרָא, לָקַח.[4] The central thought of the chosen people is a relationship between God who chooses and the people who are chosen. The chosen people became important when the Israelites began to realize their relationship to

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the College of Theology of Yon Sei University for fourteen years and returned to Hankuk Seminary as the president for six years (May 1979-Feb. 1981). He was professor emeritus for two years (March 1979-Feb. 1981). He died on Feb. 3, 1981.

[2]Chan Kuk Kim, "Life and Theology of Jung Choon Kim," in The Theological Thought 35 (1981): 685.

[3]Gerhard von Rad, Das Gottesvolk Im Deuteronium (Stuttgart: Druck von W. Kolhammer, 1929), pp. 5-10.

[4]Jung Choon Kim, "A Study of the People of God," in History and Faith. (Seoul: Korea Theological Studies Institute, 1987), pp. 53-54.

Yahweh. The thought has at least three basic elements of faith: 1) God is the author of Israelite destiny, 2) the thought of the chosen people is based on the love of God, and 3) Israel should respond to the love of God; if not, she shall be punished.[5] The chosen people is the first step of the people of God.

The other element of people of God is the covenantal people. Israel as the chosen people had an obligation to keep the covenant. As a nation, Israel began to have a covenantal relationship with God from the Sinai Covenant. In this covenantal relationship Israel became the people of God and Yahweh became their God. Yahweh had taken the initiative in this relationship. Israel, in turn, was required to keep this covenant faithfully.[6]

Kim cited the covenant concept of Walther Eichrodt in his study and concluded that the Israelites became the special people through this covenant. The Bible writers expressed this relationship as the people of God.[7]

Kim quotes the explanation of Porteous's "the people of God" and summarizes: The right to become the people of God is given not only to the Israelite but also to all nations equally. Any nation that believes in God and obeys Him can become His people. Furthermore, the people of God played a role in conveying the revelation of God through her history.[8] Kim employs the thought of <u>misso dei</u> and says "The

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[5]Ibid., p. 55.

[6]Ibid., p. 56.

[7]Ibid., pp. 57-58.

[8]Ibid., p. 62.

history of the chosen people is not holier than that of other people, thus the history of Korea is not more secular. The whole world is God's mission field"[9] Chan Kuk Kim says, "Jung Choon Kim advocated that the Korean is one of the people of God. Therefore Koreans should do the role of the people of God."[10]

Israel belonged to God in the same way that the sacrifices which were offered belonged to Yahweh. Israel is Yahweh's possession. It was not easy for Israel to become the people of God because of the strong responsibility which followed after the people of God. It was the realization of "becoming people of God" that made the Israelites unite and led them to the deep world of faith when they were captured in the Exile.[11] Kim emphasizes Israel's realization of being the people of God rather than God's election. This thought began to develop his Minjung theology.

In the previous article, Kim accents the people themselves more than God's election. In the article, "An Understanding of Human Being in the Creation Story of the J Document," he emphasizes the human situation. He follows the documentary hypothesis and analyzes the story of Priestly documents and that of Yahwist documents. The analysis is as follows: 1) The purpose of P's creation is to teach and recall the people of Israel in Babylonian Exile; the purpose of J's creation is to teach the relationship between the Creator and man and to figure our the nature of man. 2) The historical background of each document is that P's creation was during the

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[9]Jung Choon Kim, Understanding of OT Theology (Seoul: The Christian Literature Press, 1975), p. 489.

[10]Chan Kuk Kim, p. 687.

[11]Jung Choon Kim, "A Study of People of God," p. 61.

Babylonian Exile, but J's creation was at the time of Solomon's reign. 3) P's creation puts the accent on God, but J's creation, on man.[12]

Kim endeavored to describe the historical background of J's creation. According to him, the J document was written about 950 B.C. when Solomon ruled Israel. Solomon's time was the golden age in political, economical, and cultural aspects. Even though his age was the golden time, Solomon was not a good king. He had absolute authority and power and allowed foreign gods in order to sustain his power. Thus he ignored the sovereignty of God.[13] In contrast to the sovereignty of God, he elevated the possibility of man. Solomon's policy did not fit the royal ideal of the Israelite king. Kim describes that royal ideal: 1) A king must be installed by Yahweh. This means that Israel is a theocracy. 2) No Gentile can become a king of Israel. This is not mere nationalism but a religious matter. 3) A king should not have many horses. He should depend on God rather than on military forces. 4) An Israelite king should not have many wives. This is an ethical matter. 5) A king should not store an abundance of gold and silver for himself.[14] Solomon did not comply with the above items. The Yahwist wrote about the descendants of Cain (Gen. 4:1-24) in order to show Solomon's wrong doing. The Yahwist's aim is not to denote

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[12]Jung Choon Kim, "An Understanding of Human Being in the Creation Story of the J Documents," in Study of Pentateuch and Prophets (Seoul: Korea Theological Studies Institute, 1988), p. 42.

[13]Ibid., p. 45.

[14]Jung Choon Kim, "Theological Understanding of the Royal Ideology of Israel," in History and Faith (Seoul: Korean Theological Studies Institute, 1987), pp. 161-163.

mere names of descendants but to explain the process of human cultural development. The Yahwist suggested that this cultural development indicated the history of luxury and prodigality in the time of Solomon. By his luxury and prodigality Solomon oppressed his people.[15]

According to J's story of the flood, the degradation of the time of the flood reflected the corruption of Solomon and informed people of Solomon's depravity. Through the story of the tower of Babel, the Yahwist criticized Solomon's construction of the palace.[16] The Yahwist said about it, "so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth" (Gen. 11:4). According to Kim's interpretation, this means that people must use the same language and same slogan under a ruler. Dictators want people to use the same language. If people use different languages they think of it as a rebellion. This verse reflects the situation of Solomon.[17]

Kim asserted that the Yahwist emphasized the human being more than P did. The former wrote that God created man first, the latter, that God created light first. The Yahwist was concerned about many problems of the human being himself: essence, nature, position, commission, way of life, and consciousness of ethics. The Yahwist drew out the image of God from the image of man through the human being. He showed the nature of God in that there is no God without the human being. The

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[15]Jung Choon Kim, "An Understanding of Human being in the Creation story of the J Document," p. 46.

[16]Ibid., p. 51.

[17]Ibid., p. 53.

Yahwist wanted to manifest the reality and action of God through the human being.[18]

In his interpretation of the story of the garden of Eden, Kim argues that the Yahwist did not intend to explain original sin. Rather, the Yahwist was stressing that the Israelite kingdom was the kingdom of God, ruled by God. Solomon, however, reigned over it not according to God's will, but according to humanistic authority. Therefore, the Israelite kingdom, the kingdom of God, had turned into a secular kingdom. Through this story the Yahwist wanted to show how the Israelite kingdom was different from the content of the kingdom of God which God had intended.[19]

Kim concludes that in the Yahwist's explanation of creation, the human being was pivotal. Through the story of the garden of Eden, the Yahwist indicated that the kingdom of Solomon which was prosperous but luxurious and corrupted . . . that that kingdom would be broken like the garden of Eden.[20]

Kim's theme in this essay is that the human being must be respected not only as a human being as such, but also because of God who created the human being. God is concerned most about the human being. Therefore, the Yahwist showed that the theme of the Bible is not "God" but "human being": Minjung.[21] Kim identified the people oppressed by Solomon with the Minjung. According to him the reason why the Yahwist accented human beings rather than God is that Solomon oppressed

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[18]Ibid., p. 55.

[19]Ibid., pp. 57-8.

[20]Ibid., pp. 63-64.

[21]Ibid., p. 64.

and deprived his people.

In his second article, Kim accents the context of oppressed people: Minjung. The context produces han (grudge). Kim endeavored to apply han to Old Testament theology in order to resolve "han" in the light of Old Testament theology. He defines han as follows:

> "Han" is a just indignation yearning for justice to be done. It is a deep feeling that arises out of the unjust experience of oppression caused by mischief. This feeling is dormant for a while, and when it has a chance to come out it explodes.[22]

Kim finds an example out of the Bible: "You are no longer to supply the people with straw for making bricks; let them go and gather their own straw" (Ex. 5:7). This verse shows that the Egyptians persecuted and oppressed the Israelites. The Israelites had han from this situation. Another example of Israel's han can found in her history: Israel was invaded by powerful countries and oppressed politically, militarily, and economically.[23]

Kim deals with han as a subject of theology. In respect to the theological word han cannot be a theological subject, because han is a kind of human emotion. He writes:

> Nevertheless, I want to take Han as a theological subject, not because of Han itself, but because Han is related to human existence. That Han should be a theological subject is to the human being who has Han and suffering as a theological subject.[24]

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[22]Jung Choon Kim, Theology of Han," in History and Faith, p. 278.

[23]Ibid., p. 280.

[24]Ibid., p. 282.

Kim takes an example from the parable of Good Samaritan. The robbed man's situation expresses Han. The reasons why the robbed man should be a theological subject are as follows: 1) Why did God create the man who was about to be killed by the other? If the Bible does not have the answer to this question, Han could not be a theological subject. The Bible says about the neighborhood that when one hurts another, it is against the will of God. Thus Han can be a theological subject. 2) The victim on the road to Jericho suffered not alone but with God. Because God loves man, God participates in man's suffering (Is. 53:7, Phil. 2:2). 3) Han can be a theological subject,in that one is concerned about another's suffering. This is the problem of Christian ethics. Christians have responsibility for man's suffering.[25]

What Christians can do for the Han is the ministry of Shaman. The Han is that the human being should remove his suffering. Since God has participated in man's suffering, it is necessary to discuss what man can do about it. The role of Shaman releases Han and gives peace to the one who had Han.[26] Kim held that the role of Jesus released the Han of those who were under the Roman Empire and of the oppressed, sick, and alienated. Han should be removed by Christians. Therefore the theology of Han should be a part of Old Testament theology in order to release the Han of the Minjung in the light of the Old Testament.[27]

In his article, "Biblical bases of Minjung Theology," Kim explored the

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[25]Ibid., pp. 283-4.

[26]Ibid., p. 285.

[27]Ibid., p. 286.

foundation of Minjung theology in the Bible. He presupposes that most of the Old Testament was written from the point of view of the Minjung, not from that of the rulers, even though the books of Kings and Chronicles have interest in the Minjung, in spite of the royal documents.[28] This is because those books contain the story of the people such as the widow at Zarephath and Naboth's vineyard.

Kim argues that in many Old Testament theological subjects, the existence of Minjung and God's will to save Minjung have been ignored. However, it is clear that the Bible concerns itself more with the people who are ruled than the ruler, with the poor more than with the rich, with disgrace more than glory, and with the oppressed people more than the prosperous. [29]

Kim deals with the first confession of Israel (Deut. 26:5-9) as a basis of Minjung theology. He argues that many Old Testament theologians have ignored who the confessors were and in what historical condition they lived. Instead, they have dealt chiefly with God's saving action. But Old Testament theology cannot consist only of God's salvation. It is necessary also to include the existence of the human being. In Deut. 26:5-9, attention should be paid to Israel who confesses. The passage tells us that Israel was persecuted, suffered, put to heavy labor, and oppressed with hardships. Kim identifies the Israelites as the habiru.[30]

Kim cites the story of the widow at Zarephath from Deuteronomic history.

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[28]Jung Choon Kim, "Biblical bases of Minjung Theology," in History and Faith, p. 254.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid., pp. 258-9.

The Deuteronomic historian teaches through Elijah the lesson of taking care of the poor. The Deuteronomic historian says that the prophet was not on the side of the rulers but on the side of the poor, one of the Minjung, who was about to commit suicide.[31] Kim provides another example from Deuteronomic history: the story of Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21:1-9, 11-20). In this passage Naboth represents one of the Minjung.

Kim argues that the study of prophets has accented God and history, the cult problem, and society, but it has not accented how Minjung was oppressed and persecuted in such historical situations. The reason is that Old Testament scholars ignored the role of Minjung even though Minjung have made history. Kim interprets the prophets in the light of Minjung and takes Amos as an example. Kim contends that Amos accused the rich and the rulers who oppressed the poor.[32] In the book of Amos Minjung are אֶבְיוֹן, (2:6, 4:1, 5:12, 8:4, 6) and דַּלִּים (2:7, 4:1, 5:1, 8:6) and עֲנָיִים (2:7, 8:4). Kim says:

> There is no word Minjung in the prophecy of Amos. At the time of Amos, however, the rulers, the rich, and the middle class people who were faithful to the rulers oppressed and squeezed out Minjung. Thus the low class people became the poor and the suffering people. Amos proclaimed the equality of property and human right of the suffering Minjung, therefore the theology of Amos can be called as Minjung theology.[33]

Kim deals with the Psalms and Minjung, especially individual lamentation and

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[31]Ibid., p. 261.

[32]Ibid., p. 266.

[33]Ibid., p. 270.

individual thanksgiving. He says, "Even though there is not the word Minjung, those songs were sung by Minjung. Those songs contain the happiness and the sigh." In the lamentation the agony and petition can be found as follows: 1) Their social status can be known in the words אֶבְיוֹן, דַּל, and עָנִי. 2) They were oppressed by others. 3) The content of sufferings includes physical and spiritual things. Kim advocates the meaning of עָנִי to be suffering. This results from being poor and oppressed rather than from religious faith.[34]

Kim suggests the following method to interpret the Old Testament: 1) The method should depart from the doctrines of Church or ideal methods. It is necessary to apply socio-scientific method to Old Testament theology. 2) Socio-scientific method can find out that Christian theology is for the concrete life of the human being. 3) Christian theology and thought is not for the sake of the middle class who have power and wealth, but for the sake of the Minjung. Therefore, Christian theology is not only for believers; theology is also to serve those who have taken on the image of God, even though they are not Christian.[35]

In his article, "Liberation Theology in the Old Testament," Kim attempts to show from what Minjung are liberated. He maintained that God liberated Israel from Egypt and Babylon, that is, God gave them liberation not from spiritual bondage but from political and material bondage. While he exposes a liberation theology in the Old Testament, he discusses why liberation theology has been rejected by the Korean

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[34]Ibid., pp. 271-273.

[35]Ibid., p. 277.

church. Kim contends that no one in the church suggested a biblical basis for liberation theology in Korea and that the experience of "liberation from Japan" is a good method to understand liberation theology.[36]

Kim seeks to show that the Old Testament teaches liberation theology. He draws out the basis of liberation theology from the third part of Isaiah. Third Isaiah was one of the disciples of the second Isaiah and experienced the salvation and liberation from Babylon. Third Isaiah appreciated that Israel was liberated from the power of Babylon. Therefore the liberation theology of third Isaiah was salvation from God for political freedom. The key passage of third Isaiah for liberation theology is Isa. 61:1-3. Kim traces the origin of the liberation theology to third Isaiah, who in turn received the idea from second Isaiah. Neither of them used the word "liberation" but "liberty." Kim tries to prove that liberty means liberation. He takes evidence from Jer. 37:6-11 and Leviticus 25, the year of Jubilee, in order to prove it.[37] He contends that the liberation theology of third Isaiah is not political: rather, the idea was based on the sovereignty of God and the love and justice of God which guarantee human rights. The liberation from Babylon was done not by Israelite diplomatic effort or military action but by the grace of God. Kim says: "Therefore it is wrong to teach that liberation theology is related to politics."[38]

The liberation theology of third Isaiah stemmed from the Exodus tradition.

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[36]Jung Choon Kim, "Liberation Theology in the Old Testament," in History and Faith, p. 180.

[37]Ibid., pp. 184-5.

[38]Ibid., p. 186.

Third Isaiah did not see the liberation event of Israel from Egypt as a political one. He related this event to the terminology of the salvation history: חסד, תהלה, רחם, טוב. In respect to salvation history, liberation theology has its basis in the Old Testament. When Kim uses the term "salvation history," he means that salvation history has been given by God. What, though, did God save them from? Kim's interpretation is that God saved Israel from Egypt and Babylon. That is, salvation has only political and material aspects without the spiritual aspect, faith. He says:

> The liberation theology in the Exodus event is related to political, economical, and racial liberation. This is because the Exodus event liberated Israel from the power of Egypt toward Canaan. The event liberated Israel from the compulsory labor which demanded Israel to make bricks. The event liberated Israel from racial discrimination in which Pharaoh commanded all people to kill Israel's male infants.[39]

Kim concludes that "it was from the bondage of slavery and sufferings that God delivered Israel."

In succeeding articles, Kim deals with the content of the Minjung's existence: the problems of poverty and suffering. He asserts that the most important problem is the tension between the rich and the poor. The most important duty of the Church is to remove the tension. The true church must see today's situation correctly and let the people have salvation from poverty. If the Church emphasizes only that there will be no tears and sorrow in the other world, the "heavenly kingdom," even though now people are suffering because of poverty, then the message is to teach religion like a narcotic. If God is alive and wants His will to be done in this world, His will is to

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[39]Ibid., p. 190.

make this world a paradise. Today's soteriological problem concerns how to treat the poor.[40]

Kim's concept of salvation is that the poor are delivered from poverty. He says:

> In this respect it is important to treat what the Old Testament says about the poor in order to understand the salvation of Christianity. Jesus' messages, which stemmed from the Old Testament, proclaim the Gospel to the poor.[41]

Salvation means salvation from poverty, that is, material salvation, not spiritual salvation from sin. In order to prove his concept of salvation from poverty, Kim takes several texts from the Old Testament. The first one is the Book of the Covenant. He maintains that this book reflects the agricultural society under the social condition which raised the poor. Under that condition, the poverty is not absolute poverty, but a relative one, that is, the problem of more or less possessions. Kim discusses עָנִי (Ex. 22:25-27), דַּל, and אֶבְיוֹן (Ex. 23:3, 6, 10, 11) to prove his theory.[42]

Kim tries to discover the concept of the poor in Deuteronomic law: for example, in Deut. 15:4, "However there should be no poor among you . . . for in the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess as your inheritance, he will richly

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[40]Jung Choon Kim, "A Study of the Poor in the Old Testament," in History and Faith, p. 197.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid.

bless you." Kim argues that the second part of the verse was added later.[43] He ignores the latter part in order to prove his theory and emphasizes only the material aspect, not the religious one.

In Kim's conclusion, the problem of the poor was not only a social problem but a problem of faith, because of members of the community have a religious obligation regarding the welfare of others. He seems to construct the covenantal community strictly on the basis of doing social justice without reference to a special relationship with God.

Kim deals with the suffering of man and says that the Exodus event is important for forming Israelite faith, because salvation history in the Old Testament is related to it. In respect to studying the Exodus tradition, the chief subjects related to the Exodus events that have been dealt with are the Passover tradition, the יָם סוּף tradition, and the Sinai tradition. But the history of sufferings in the Exodus event has been ignored, especially in the theological aspect.[44]

Kim holds that von Rad's study on the Exodus skipped over the phenomena of Israelite suffering. Von Rad emphasized only God's action in salvation. If there had not been Israelite suffering, it would not have been a necessity of God's will to save them. Kim raises a question: "Is it, therefore, a right method of Old Testament theology to focus only on God?" The actuality of the sufferings of Israelite history,

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[43]Ibid., p. 203.

[44]Jung Choon Kim, "Theology of the Israelite Suffering Man," in History and Faith p. 221.

which was the object of God's salvation, should be given new attention in its theological aspect. Because Yahweh cannot do historical action without the human being, we cannot think of God's activities without history. Therefore salvation history is based not only on God's action to save but on the human being. He is an object of salvation.[45]

Kim claims that all Old Testament scholars have ignored this point. Strictly speaking, they have emphasized God's action of salvation without considering its existence: when, by whom, why, what, and how Israel suffered. Kim maintains that it was the reality of their sufferings that motivated God to save Israel from Egypt. Even though the reality of human suffering is the presupposition of God's gracious action of salvation, another important consideration is what human beings do in the reality of suffering. According to the first confession of Israel (Deut. 26:5-7), the people asked God to save them: "Then we cried out to the Lord, and he heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression. Kim says:

> It is remarkable to pay attention to the decision of God, "I have come down to rescue them," when God heard the cry of Israel. Therefore it is important for the understanding of Yahweh's action of salvation to know not only God's voluntary will and decision but also to understand Israel's existence and historical phenomena and the reality of suffering which had God make the decision.[46]

He ignores the grace of God in the salvation history and accents human deeds which could motivate even God.

Kim describes the character of suffering as shrewd, forced labor, oppression

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[45]Ibid., p. 223.

[46]Ibid., p. 227.

(Ex. 1:8-14[J]), and the infanticide (Ex. 1:15-2:10), which Kim interprets as a deprivation of the right to live. The expression of petition is sigh, cry, and help. He contends that God knew their sufferings not prior to their petition, but after their crying.[47]

Kim summarizes the theology of suffering as follows: 1) It is a problem between those in power and a minority people. In the Exodus, we see that the suffering of Israel was not because of their own sin and injustice, but because of the oppression of powerful men. 2) There was no evidence of protest against the power of the government, but the people made petition to God because they feared God.[48] 3) In respect to the faith of the suffering men, whether or not there was deliverance from suffering depended on the extent of their cry. The cry removes the suffering and brings liberation and salvation.[49] 4) In respect to God's interference in history, the Yahwist, Elohist, and Priest who wrote of the Exodus event thought that God's interference in history is the basis of the salvation history which liberated Israel from the suffering of Egypt. Thus, they have formulated the tradition which understood the theological base of God's salvation history as God's interference in history. Kim asserts that God has a right to interfere in secular history which happens outside of the Bible. God does interfere and give liberty to the oppressed people and save the persecuted people. God, the Father of all nations, who rules all history of human

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[47]Ibid., p. 231.

[48]Ibid., pp. 247-8.

[49]Ibid., p. 248.

beings, liberated the Korean people from Japanese rule.[50]

In assessing Kim's works, the following observations can be made: Kim's early works were influenced by von Rad. Kim follows von Rad's interpretation of the first confession (Deuteronomy 26). Kim adopts von Rad's concept of "people", that is, that it was the people who made the credo and confessed it. It does not matter whether or not God saved them from Egypt historically. Kim developed Minjung theology by accepting and applying the concept of "people" to his works. Kim holds that it is the Minjung who are the most important subject in the Old Testament rather than God. Thus he accents the people's existence rather than God's action. He endeavors to study the life situations of the suffering people (Minjung).

In his later works, Kim interpreted salvation history differently than von Rad. Von Rad's salvation history does not exclude a theological aspect. Kim, however, treats salvation strictly as liberation from oppression and poverty. Salvation (liberation) is interpreted as being saved not from sin but from poverty and oppression. That is, salvation is treated as material and only this-worldly. He interpreted salvation history as the grace of God in his early works but ignored it in his later ones.

Concerning his concept of people, Kim began with a theological concept of people. He adopts von Rad's concept of people and accents the covenantal community and confession. Later Kim applied Missio Dei to his concept of the people of God. He asserted that one should include those who do not believe in God within the people of God. Finally, he treats Israel as a strictly sociological entity. He identifies Israel

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[50]Ibid., pp. 250-1.

with Habiru. Israel under Pharaoh is a paradigm of Minjung. Within the Israelites he distinguishes between two groups: the rulers and the oppressed, the rich and the poor, the despots and the victims. He denotes the oppressed, the poor, and the victims as Minjung. Throughout the history of Israel, the "people" were the majority and they suffered. Thus the "people" is Minjung in Korea. Kim does not yet fully employ the Western socio-economic interpretation to his work.

Hee Suk Moon[51]

Most of Moon's works have been influenced by Bruggemann's theory of trajectories as is seen in his article, "Old Testament Literature and the Sociology of Ancient Israel."[52] In this article, Moon applies the royal and the liberation trajectories to his study of prophets. Especially in light of the liberation trajectory does he interpret the books of the prophets, advocating the view that the prophets followed a liberation trajectory, which agrees with Minjung theology.

First of all Moon's foundation of Minjung theology in interpreting the Old Testament is found in his article, "The Influence of the Royal Trajectory and the

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[51]Hee Suk Moon graduated from Calvin college (B.A.) and from Columbia Seminary (M.Div.) and received his Ph.D. from Emory University. He was ordained by the Southern Presbyterian Church in U.S.A. and served the Springfield Clinic Church. He came to Korea as an American missionary to work at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Seoul. He worked as an OT professor. Now he is the vice dean at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland.

[52]Normann K. Gottwald, The Tribes of Yahweh (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1979), pp. 210-219.

Liberation Trajectory on Second Isaiah."[53] In this article he holds that these two trajectories finally combined in the Babylonian Exile. It was second Isaiah who combined the two into one.[54] Moon explains how Israel learned to know Yahweh as the liberator namely through the Exodus event. He maintains that the word "Yahweh" contains the idea that God is a free being. Therefore Israel learned freedom from the proper name of God, Yahweh. God is a free being; so also His believers should be free from the ruling of other countries and from their own country's authority. "Yahweh" also means that God acts in history and interferes and makes an event such as the Exodus. It was at that time that the liberation trajectory was formed.[55]

Israel had gained emancipation from Pharaoh's power. However, Israel became slaves again under her own kings, who imitated the Egyptian governmental structure. It was David and Solomon who did this. Their government turned secular, nationalistic and egocentric. For example, David appointed Zadok as the high priest in order to get religious support and to make his dynasty stronger. At that time the royal trajectory was formed.[56]

Moon explains why second Isaiah called Israel's attention to the Mosaic covenant, rather than to the Davidic unconditional covenant. In the Exile Israel raised

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[53]Hee Suk Moon, "The Influence of the Royal Trajectory and the Liberation Trajectory on Second Isaiah," in Sociological Hermeneutics of Old Testament (Seoul: Yang Seo Press, 1984). pp. 203ff.

[54]Ibid., p. 203.

[55]Ibid., p. 204.

[56]Ibid., p. 205.

the question, "What brought us to Babylon?" Second Isaiah answered that it was because Israel had not kept the Mosaic covenant. So, second Isaiah moved from the Davidic covenant to the Mosaic covenant, that is from the royal trajectory to the liberation trajectory. Second Isaiah proclaimed that Israel had the duty to keep the Mosaic covenant. When they did they would be blessed in whatever they did.[57]

According to the Mosaic covenant, Second Isaiah recalled the Exodus event and indicated the Second Exodus from Babylon (43:2, 16; 43:3). Moon calls God the liberator, and says:

> The liberator did not forget His people. He would liberate Israel from Babylon. Second Isaiah confirmed that Yahweh would rescue Israel from under the bondage of slavery in Babylon just as He rescued his people when He had heard from His people's cry.[58]

Moon contends that Second Isaiah showed the liberation trajectory through the second Exodus. He then analyzes the Korean situation and insists that they have the royal trajectory:

> In Korean Church history, the first Protestant missionaries came from the U.S.A. to Korea. Their background was fundamentalism and orthodoxy. Their first priority was to save souls, so that during Japanese ruling they did not preach a message of liberation but a message based on a royal trajectory. Therefore most of the Korean churches have become conservative and have had a good relationship with the government.[59]

In the 1970s, some Korean scholars began to study the liberation trajectory under a royal trajectory of circumstance. Moon asserts that the Korean Church needs to

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[57]Ibid., p. 208.

[58]Ibid., p. 212.

[59]Ibid., p. 213.

interpret the Old Testament in light of the liberation trajectory.

In his article, "The Minjung Concept in the Book of Amos,"[60] Moon tries to find out whether or not "my people" in Amos is equal to the concept of Minjung. Amos has the phrase "my people Israel" four times in his book (7:8, 8:2, 9:10, 14).

The first "my people" is found in the vision of the plumb line (7:7-9). Moon asserts that Amos indicated "my people Israel" was not the poor or the "have-nots," but, according to the context, the "haves," those whom God would judge. They were the religious leaders, the religious system, and the class of leaders.[61]

"My people Israel" is found in the vision of the basket of ripe fruit. Moon maintains that Amos holds "my people" as a group of aristocrats in the northern kingdom. He interprets it as a royal court. He cites Wolf's interpretation to prove his theory.[62] In Amos 9:9-10, "All the sinners among my people" is found. Moon interprets the phrase as referring to those who had not heard the word of God which God had proclaimed through Amos . . . that is, they were the class of leaders, not the oppressed people.[63] The fourth use of "my people" (9:14) Moon treats as a later addition, and thus it is not dealt with by him.[64]

Moon holds that in Amos "my people Israel" does not refer to the Minjung.

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[60]Hee Suk Moon, "The Minjung Concept in the Book of Amos," in The Consciousness of Moses' Liberation (Seoul: Yang Seo Press, 1985), pp. 228ff.

[61]Ibid., pp. 229-230.

[62]Ibid., p. 231.

[63]Ibid., pp. 231-2.

[64]Ibid., p. 233.

Rather, the helpless (2:7, 4:1, 5:11, 8:6), the poor (2:6, 4:1, 5:12, 8:4, 16), the oppressed and afflicted (2:7, 8:4) denote the Minjung[65] who are sociologically and politically the helpless, the oppressed, and the poor in Korea.

Moon classifies the Minjung with respect to religion. Those who denote the Minjung in Amos did not have any religious authority that could help them, because the temple had a royal consciousness and was not concerned about the poor, the Minjung.[66] Moon interprets "my people Israel" as the high class, religious leaders not using a covenantal concept, but a socio-economic method.

In his article, "The Concept of Micah's My People," Moon accents how God acts, relating the activities of the prophet Micah to Minjung theology of Korea in the 1970s. He compares the Minjung situation in Korea to that of Israel in Egypt.[67] He indicates the difference between the two situations: the Minjung of the 1970s in Korea suffer and are oppressed by their own people, but Israelites had suffered and were oppressed by other people. However, the passages from the later prophets concern sufferings which one part of Israel caused another.

Moon takes his first text from Micah 2:7b-9. Micah uses "my people" and "enemy." Micah 2:8: "Lately my people have risen up like an enemy. You strip off the rich robe from those who pass by without a care like men returning from battle." Moon holds that this verse is one of those that are perfect for distinguishing

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[65]Ibid., p. 238.

[66]Ibid., pp. 239-240.

[67]Hee Suk Moon, "The Concept of Micah's My People," in Minjung and Korean Theology (Seoul: Korea Theological Study Institute, 1982), p. 107.

between the suffering people and the oppressors in the Old Testament.[68]

Moon defines "my people" and the "enemy of my people" in this way: "My people" were not the rich and the rulers in Jerusalem, but the countryside people around Moresheth. The reason for Moon's assertion is that Micah says that his home town is in the countryside. In 2:14; "You drive the women of my people from their pleasant homes," the "women of my people" refers to widows, for the houses of the helpless widows were taken away by the rulers at that time. Therefore by "my people" Micah means the economical victims, that is, the weak, those who are victimized by the social structure and the economic system. Micah did not call the government staffs and military personnel "my people" but called them "this people" (2:11), because they caused suffering and oppression for the poor and the helpless. Moon concludes that in the second chapter of Micah "my people" denotes the people of Moresheth and the countryside people.[69]

In chapter 3, the ruling politicians and judges and religious persons in Jerusalem mistreated the laborers from the countryside and the poor. In chapter 2, they deprived them of their houses and land; here they deprived them of manpower itself. The former is deprivation, the latter, oppression. Therefore Micah says, "who eat my people's flesh, strip off their skin" (3:3) and "who build Zion with bloodshed" (3:10). Moon concludes that in chapter 3 "my people" were not only from Micah's

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[68]Ibid., p. 108.

[69]Ibid., p. 112.

home town but also from all across the country.[70]

Moon summarizes "my people" of Micah in three categories: 1) The geographical "my people": those who came from such places as Micah's home town Moresheth. The reason why Micah worked in Jerusalem was to be an advocate for the poor and helpless when they were in trouble. 2) The sociological "my people": the aged, widows, and children who were homeless, poor and deprived (2:2, 9). 3) The juridical "my people." Here, personal greed is related to social law. The prophecy of Micah accented justice (3:8). The rulers and judges should keep justice (3:1).[71] Moon understands the law in Micah in this way: "The role of law is not to support the nation's prosperity and the security of society but to deliver the aged and children and to liberate them who are oppressed."[72] Therefore, Moon advocates that the suffering "my people" of Micah can be equated to the Minjung of the 1970s in Korea.[73]

In his article, "God's Saving Work through the Poor: the Poor Minjung at the Time of Jeremiah," Moon says that the problem of the rich and the poor in the Bible is at the center of God's saving work. The seventh and tenth commandments indicate that point. The thought of wealth in the Bible is that the proper possession of it is good for happiness. At the time of Jeremiah, however, that thought was

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[70]Ibid., p. 110.

[71]Ibid., pp. 115-117.

[72]Ibid., p. 118.

[73]Ibid., p. 132.

corrupted.[74]

Moon searches for God's saving work in material subjects of the poor, as he studies the Book of Jeremiah in the light of both the royal and liberation trajectories. Jeremiah followed the liberation trajectory. Therefore, he criticized King Josiah. Josiah's reformation was successful in the religious respect but it changed outwardly. In other words, Josiah followed the royal trajectory and oppressed the Minjung. Jeremiah pointed to the wrong royal consciousness in order to correct the evil attitude of the rulers (8:8).[75]

Jeremiah criticized Jehoakim's policy of turning aside the Minjung's interests and promoting the royal consciousness. From the standpoint of the royal trajectory, the fall of Israel to Babylon meant the end of her life. However, Jeremiah proclaimed a new election and the blessing of saving action according to the liberation trajectory. Moon interprets the new covenant in terms of the liberation trajectory. According to Moon, Jeremiah saw the whole of Israel as the poor, because Israel had fallen to stronger powers. She became the poor. God then gave her new hope. This does not follow the royal trajectory but the liberation trajectory, which alone could give liberation to her.[76] Moon says, "Therefore God's saving work begins with the poor."[77] He interprets even the new covenant in light of the liberation trajectory, that

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[74]Hee Suk Moon, "God's Saving Work through the Poor: the Poor Minjung at the time of Jeremiah," in Sociological Hermeneutics of Old Testament, p. 361.

[75]Ibid., p. 366.

[76]Ibid., p. 370.

[77]Ibid., p. 370.

is, the new covenant could give material liberation to the Minjung.

In his article, "The Prophet of the Idealistic World and the Realistic World," Moon relates the thought of Isaiah to the theology of the oppressed (Minjung). He contends that Isaiah knew both the contemporary situation and the idealistic world to be realized. Isaiah dealt with the tension between the realistic world and the idealistic one. Moon insists that Isaiah had a theology of the oppressed, even though he belonged to the upper class of his day.[78]

Isaiah saw the idealistic world when he saw the vision in chapter 6. Moon says that Isaiah saw that God began to act to save people from oppression. Isaiah did not want to overthrow the dynasty established by God but rather the laws, structures, traditions and attitude of faith, in order that the people would live in the freedom and שָׁלוֹם of justice.[79] Moon interprets Isaiah's vision of Zion (2:2-4, 6:1, 8:18, 14:32) as the idealistic world over which the ideal king would reign. The king would fulfill the messianic dream, which is to establish justice and a free society.[80]

Isaiah saw the contemporary situation as critical. Even though he knew the royal trajectory, he protested against kings Ahaz and Hezekiah. Isaiah protested against Ahaz when he requested help from Assyria (7:1-9:7). Isaiah was not pro-government and was not a false prophet. Isaiah proclaimed judgment upon Hezekiah

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[78]Hee Suk Moon, "The Prophet of Idealistic World and Realistic World," in The Consciousness of Moses' Liberation (Seoul: Yang Seo Press, 1985), p. 243.

[79]Ibid., p. 244.

[80]Ibid., p. 245.

(36:1-39:9). He criticized not only the military and political alliances, but also the people of Yahweh who did not keep the covenantal law (5:8-23, 10:1-4). Included in Isaiah's criticism were the drunken and those who deprived the poor and disturbed justice.[81]

Isaiah expressed his idealistic hope especially in three passages: 9:2, 11:1-5, and 12:2. Moon interprets these passages socio-economically. God will give the idealistic world to the poor and the oppressed, the Minjung. Moon asserts that Isaiah departed from the royal trajectory and later followed the liberation trajectory. Therefore the messianic passage should be interpreted as socio-economical. Moon describes a messiah as such:

> The root of the word "messiah" means "anointed," an adjective that is not necessarily reserved for a divine or semidivine individual, and the primary connotation of "messiah" is not of a divine hero who is to come, but rather of a righteous and just liberator. When this is understood, we can more clearly understand the messianic expectation of the suffering people of Israel.[82]

An assessment of Moon's works includes the following observations: 1) Moon follows Brueggemann's theory of two trajectories in his study of the prophets. He maintains that every prophet followed the liberation trajectory. He makes every prophet a spokesman of the liberator God. 2) Moon began his Minjung theology with an interpretation of the word "Yahweh" in order to define the concept of people. He holds that the people should be free from any oppressors and poverty because their God is free and a liberator. Even though he began his theology with Yahweh, he

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[81]Ibid., p. 247.

[82]Hee Suk Moon, A Korean Minjung Theology, p. 57.

wants to use the nature of God in order to prove the concept of people as sociologically free beings. Israel under oppressors and poverty denote Minjung in Korea. According to Moon, "my people" in Amos are the rulers and aristocrats in contrast to "my people" in Micah, which refers the oppressed and the victims. He interprets "my people" differently according to its different contexts. This coincides with his methodological approach. He treats "people" as a sociological entity. He does not deal with people equally in one community as understood by the prophets. Moon maintains that the people are not objects of theological salvation but only objects of sociological liberation, that is, only the objects of this worldly liberation. 3) Moon interprets "messiah" only as a liberator who is something like a hero. Therefore a liberator messiah would make a utopia in the world. The messianic prophecies which could belong to the so called royal trajectory seem to be rejected or to be reinterpreted socio-economically. Therefore there will be no eternal Kingdom of God. According to Moon the people want to fulfill an earthly utopia.

Joon Suh Park[83]

Joon Suh Park examines the nature of God in the Old Testament. In order to find out His nature, Park studies the identity of Habiru[84] in the Amarna letters and

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[83]Park graduated from the college of Law in Seoul University (B.A.) and studied at the college of Theology in Yon Sei University (B.Th.). He received his Th.M. and Th.D. from Princeton Seminary. He is an OT professor of the college of Theology in Yon Sei University.

[84]Joon Suh Park, "God in the OT," in Minjung and Korean Theology (Seoul: Korea Theological Study Institute, 1982), p. 134. He uses the word "Habiru". M. C. Astour, "Habiru or Hapiru" in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Supple-

Nuzi letters and in some books in the Old Testament. This writer will present Park's theory of Habiru as well as other theories, discuss them, and draw a conclusion.

According to Park, there are 125 occurrences of Habiru in the Amarna letters and the Habiru were scattered all over Canaan. The Habiru belonged to the low class politically and economically.[85] Park argues that Habiru denotes Apiru in the hieroglyphic characters of Egypt.[86] According to old Egyptian documents Apiru came from Asia and were captured as war prisoners, laborers, and workers at quarrying. They were plunderers in the inscription of Sethos I. Apiru appeared as thieves in the document written by an Egyptian general. Park concludes that Apiru were lower-class people or outsiders to stable society.[87]

According to the Mari letters, Habiru were mercenaries who belonged to the troops.[88] In the Nuzi letters Habiru became slaves because of economic problems and many of them had many names from different countries. Therefore they seemed to come from outside of Nuzi. Park summarizes that Habiru was an appellative of

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mentary volume (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1976), p. 382. Astour uses both Habiru and Hapiru, so this writer uses Habiru here.

[85]Joon Suh Park, p.135.

[86]M. C. Astour, p. 382. He says about the relationship between Habiru and Apiru: The Egyptian transcription is apr, pl. apr.w. It shows that the initial pharyngeal in ha-Bi-ru corresponded to (Ayin), although there have been attempts to explain the p as an Egyptian rendering of Semitic b. But numerous Egyptian transcriptions of foreign names and words always preserve the original b, with one exception (hrp="s-word"), in which, however, the final position of b may have caused its loss of sonance, which does not apply to the intervocalic position of the labial in ha-Bi-ru.

[87]Joon Suh Park, p. 136.

[88]Ibid., p. 136.

economically, politically, and sociologically weak people.[89] Meredith G. Kline, however, proposes that the Habiru were not in a dependent status or even a socially inferior status.[90]

Park presents the view that "Hebrew" equals "Israelite" generally. For example, Jonah said, "I am Hebrew" (Jonah 1:8). Park analyzes the occurrences of "Hebrew" in the Old Testament: nineteen times from the story of Abraham to that of Moses, nine times in 1 Samuel. This means that the word "Hebrew" was used before the Monarchy.[91] Park studies the relationship between Habiru and ibri philologically, and holds that Habiru equals "Hebrew." But Meredith Kline denies that theory as follows:

> The initial consonant is ambiguous because Akkadian h may represent other letters than the Hebrew (Heth: among them, the Hebrew (Ayin). The second is ambiguous because Bi represents among other values that of pi as well as that of bi in all periods of the cuneiform literature. . . . That the first vowel is A-type and the second is I-type is obvious from the cuneiform, ha-Bi-ru, but it is more difficult to determine the length of these vowels. This question requires examination before one attempts to draw conclusions concerning the possibilities of phonetic

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[89]Ibid., 139. And See Oswald Loretz, Habiru-Hebräer, Eine sozio linguistische Studie über die Herkunft des Gentiliziums ibri vom Appelativum habiru, BZAW. 160. Berlin, 1984. pp. 78ff.

[90]Ibid., p. 15. See, also E. A. Speiser, "I Know Not the Day of My Death," JBL 74(1955): 52, and Michael B. Rowton, "The Topological Factor in the Habiru Problem," in Studies in Honor of Benno Landsberger on his Seventy-fifth Birthday (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 367ff. Rowton employs topology to figure out the identity of Habiru and asserts that Habiru had their own land on the highland of Palestine. Idem, "Dimorphic Structure and the Problem of the Apiru- IBRIM," in Journal of near Eastern Studies 35 (1976). Rowton maintains that Habiru had a term between the ethnic-gentilic and the social, that is, a "social-ethnonym."

[91]Joon Suh Park, p. 140.

equation with ibri.[92]

Park contends that Abraham was Hebrew (Habiru), because Terah, Abraham's father, moved from Ur to Haran and Terah died in Haran. Abraham departed from Haran to Canaan. Abraham introduced himself to the Canaanites, "I am an alien and a stranger among you" (Gen. 23:3). He was an alien in the place of the Canaanites. According to Deuteronomy 26, the first confession of Israel was "My father was a wandering Aramean." In Gen. 14:3, Abraham called himself "Hebrew." Therefore Abraham was one of the Habiru in the ancient Near East.[93] Park takes another example from the Joseph story. In this story, Potiphar and his wife called Joseph a "Hebrew slave" (Gen. 39:14,17). In the sight of the Egyptians Joseph was a slave from the Habiru. "Hebrew" in this story is equated with Habiru.

In the Moses story, the king of Egypt commanded the Hebrew midwives (Ex. 1:15) and Pharaoh's daughter called the infant Moses a "Hebrew baby." The king of Egypt and his daughter called the people of Israel "Hebrew" at that time.[94]

In the Book of Samuel, the Philistines called the people of Israel Hebrews (4:6,9). Park says concerning this, Philistines had iron weapons at that time and Israel had bronze weapons (1 Samuel 13). Thus the Philistines thought themselves superior to Israel.[95]

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[92]Meredith G. Kline, "The HA-BI-RU . . . Kin or Foe of Israel?" The Westminster Theological Journal 20 (1957): 54-57.

[93]Joon Suh Park, p. 142.

[94]Ibid., p. 143.

[95]Ibid., pp. 144-5.

Park takes the nature of Habiru which Israel seemed to have and relates it to God. In the story of the calling of Moses, God revealed himself as "Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews" (Ex. 9:1, 13, 10:3). Park says, "These passages indicate clearly who Yahweh is in the Old Testament: It was the God of the Hebrews who emancipated the people of Israel from Egypt. The writer of Exodus repeated this point" (Ex. 3:13, 5:3, 7:16)." Park draws out the conclusion that it was the God of the Hebrews who delivered Israel from Apiru status. Thus the God of Israel was the God of the Hebrews who were in an inferior state socially, economically, and juridically. This is the starting point and the core for the people of Israel to understand God. It is the basis of Israelite faith that Yahweh was the God of the Hebrews.[96]

It is meaningful theologically that God elected Israel as His people from Habiru. Thus Yahweh was God of Habiru/Hebrews, so that the religion of the Old Testament begins with the faith of Habiru. The religion was not that of the powerful and the rich but that of the poor and the oppressed.[97] The God of the Hebrews delivered His people from the bondage of Egypt.

Park examines the nature of Habiru and holds that Habiru was a lower class of the ancient Near East. He identifies Habiru with Hebrew because Apiru equated to Hebrew. Further he maintains that Hebrews were Israelites. According to him the origin of Israel was Habiru. Therefore Yahweh, God of Habiru, is the God of the lower class people, Minjung in Korea.

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[96]Ibid., p. 146.

[97]Ibid., p. 147.

Summary

Jung Choon Kim was influenced by von Rad in his early works, Moon by Brueggemann. They turned their concern from God to the human being. They assert that "people" is more important than God in the Old Testament and the main theme is people. All three of these scholars maintain that the origin of Israel was Habiru, the lower class people of the ancient Near East. Yahweh was the God of the Habiru, therefore Yahweh is the God of Minjung in Korea.

After the exodus event they classify the people into two groups sociologically: the ruler and the oppressed, the rich and the poor, the despoiler and the victims. The "people" is strictly a sociological entity. The people are the objects of liberation from oppression and poverty; that is, a this worldly and material liberation, not an other worldly, theological salvation. Thus a messiah is coming to build a this worldly utopia. According to them, the people include those who do not believe in God. It does not matter whether or not the people believe in God. They do not understand Israel as the Church in the New Testament. Theologically, all people, including the rulers, the rich and the despoilers need salvation. This is especially so, because they are the greatest sinners in the view of Minjung theologians. Minjung theologians exclude them from salvation.

It is natural to raise questions: What does the Old Testament mean when it speaks of the people? Did the Israelites really originate with the Habiru? Is Yahweh only the God of lower class people? Does the Old Testament treat the people as a strictly sociological entity? Does the Old Testament speak exclusively of a worldly

liberation? Does Israel, that is, the people of God, include all people the world over even though they do not believe in God? These questions will be discussed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE PERIOD OF THE PATRIARCHS TO THE SETTLEMENT

The following chapters will proceed by following each period of the history of Israel from the patriarchs to the postexilic period. Minjung theologians do not deal with all of the scriptural evidence concerning the entire history of Israel. Thus, their studies cannot fully examine the concept of people in the Old Testament. The evidence which Minjung theologians ignore will be treated in order to fully understand the concept of people in the Old Testament.

This chapter will discuss the origin of Israel: whether or not the origin of Israel was Habiru, and whether or not Habiru is to be identified with Hebrew, and Hebrew with Israel. The patriarchs whom Minjung theologians almost completely ignore, will be treated one by one. The period of Israel in Egypt is an important era for understanding the concept of people. The Bible treats Israel not only sociologically, as is the Minjung theologians' assertion. During the period of wandering in the desert, Israel received their pivotal role from God and the Sinai covenant was made. The covenant renewal of Joshua will be examined from the period of the conquest of Canaan. By studying the role of judge, the concept of people will be discussed during the time of the settlement.

The Origin of Israel

Joon Suh Park and others[1] assert that the origin of Israel stemmed from Habiru. John Bright, however, rejects that theory:

> The words "Hebrew" - apparently derived from the name of the ancestor Eber (Gen. 11:14-17)- and Khapiru (Habiru) are seductively similar. Though important scholars deny that the two can be identified etymologically, the equation seems at least possible, if not probable. We cannot, however, even if this is so, simply equate Hebrews and Khapiru... Obviously, a people found all over western Asia from the end of the third millennium to about the eleventh century cannot lightly be identified with the ancestors of Israel![2]

Niels Peter Lemche rejects G. E. Mendenhall's peasant revolt and suggests the following reasons: 1) There was no evolution of the society in the central highland of Palestine, that is, the same system of city-states existed in the Iron Age as in the Late Bronze Age. 2) In Palestine proper, some of the city-states during the Iron Age came into the hands of a new element in the population, the Sea People. This process has nothing to do with a sociological evolution or revolution as understood by Mendenhall and others.[3] Lemche denies that the origin of Israel was Habiru:

> Still, this much may be read out of the Old Testament: There must have been in the later Israel a historical remembrance that their own society, during the first days of its existence, was interpreted by its neighbors or opponents as a society of Habiru. This does not, however, imply with absolute certainty that the origin of Israel was a Habiru society, even though at first sight the Old Testament

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[1]Hee Suk Moon, Sociological Hermeneutics of the Old Testament, (Seoul: Yang Seo Press, 1984) p. 253. A. M. J. Gunneweg, Geschichte Israels bis Bar Kochbu, trans. Hee Suk Moon (Seoul: Korea Theological Study Institute, 1981), p. 33.

[2]John Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1981), pp. 84-85.

[3]Niels Peter Lemche, "Hebrew as National Name for Israel," in Studia Theologica 33 (1979): 5-6.

> evidence could be used in support of the theses of G. E. Mendenhall and others concerning the beginning of Israel.[4]

Bright and Lemche thus deny that the origin of Israel was Habiru. Other scholars also deny that "Hebrew" is to be equated with Israel. Julius Lewy deals with the slavery system of Israel and denies that Hebrew meant Israelite based on Lev. 25:39: "If one of your countrymen becomes poor among you and sells himself to you do not make him work as a slave." Lewy says:

> The biblical laws pertaining to slave-holding furnish strong evidence that, many centuries before being used as an ethical name, the term Hebrew was an appellative noun to be rendered by "alien."[5]

H. L. Ellion deals with the Hebrew slave in the early Israelite society. He denies that Hebrew is to be with equated with Israel:

> During the development of the Israelite, yet he (Hebrew) was not a full citizen and had no recognized standing in society. Once Israel had settled in Canaan, citizenship for a long time depended on the possession of land. . . . So the "Hebrew" was the landless man without hope of acquiring land. Unless he had special qualifications the only way he could earn his living was to become a hired servant.[6]

According to the slavery laws of Israel, Israelites could not be their slaves, so that "Hebrew" could not equal Israelite.

This writer will deal with the word "Hebrew" in the Bible itself. The word "Hebrew" is found first in Gen. 14:13. In the previous section, Park maintains that

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[4]Ibid., p. 21.

[5]Julius Lewy, "Origin and Signification of the Biblical Term 'Hebrew'," in HUCA 28 (1957): 4.

[6]H. L. Ellion, "The Hebrew Slave: A Study in Early Israelite Society," in The Evangelical Quarterly 45 (Jan.-March 1973): 33.

the status of Abraham was that of Habiru. Lewy, however, interprets this word as an epithet of the patriarch, because in the biblical narratives and in the biblical legislation, "Hebrew" signifies "alien" and especially "resident alien."[7] Meredith G. Kline asserts that the author of Genesis had in mind Eber of the line of Shem (cf. Gen. 10:21, 24, 11:14-17). The direct descendants of Abraham from Eber had already been traced in the genealogy of Gen. 11:10-26.[8]

The status of Abraham can be known from the Bible, and the Bible indicates that his status was different from that of Habiru (Hebrew): "He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Haran" (Gen. 12:5). Thus Abraham was not one of "Hebrew"/Habiru who were poor and dependent. About the Joseph story, Park insists that Joseph was Hebrew. Joseph, however, did not once call himself "Hebrew." He was called "Hebrew" by others, by Potiphar and his wife (Gen. 39:14, 17).[9] Lewy interprets this to mean that the narrator treated Joseph as "foreigner" or "alien." He interprets the phrase, "the Egyptian could not eat with the Hebrews," as the narrator thinking here of non-Egyptians of whichever race.[10] Niels Peter Lemche advocates the geographical interpretation:

In Gen. 40:15, Joseph, who still does not declare himself Hebrew describes

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[7]Lewy, p. 7.

[8]Kline, Meredith G. "The HA-BI-RU . . . Kin or Foe of Israel?" The Westminster Theological Journal 19 (1956): 51.

[9]Bright, p. 84.

[10]Lewy, p. 4.

> how he was kidnapped from the country of the Hebrews מֵאֶרֶץ הָעִבְרִים, which means Palestine from an Egyptian point of view. Therefore the compound ארץ העברים is here used only in a geographical sense. It is not to be considered a national name, but it might be a description of the area in question as a more or less lawless territory-compared to Egypt.[11]

The Joseph story does not tell us Joseph's status, and it tells us that Hebrew denotes a certain area.

The Book of Exodus has many occurrences of the word "Hebrew." The occurrences can be analyzed in three groups: First is the word "Hebrew" as spoken by Egyptians (1:16, 2:6). Second is the narrator's usage of the term in events between Israel and the Egyptians (1:19, 2:7). The third usage consists of the designation of Yahweh as "The God of the Hebrews" (3:18; 5:3; 7:16; 9:1,13; 10:30). Park contends that "Hebrew" in the above passages can be equated with Israel because Yahweh, the God of Hebrews, is equated with Yahweh, the God of Israel.[12] According to Lemche, these passages should be interpreted in context, especially the third set of passages. The context is Exodus 1-15, where it is not so much the Israelites who are called Hebrews as Yahweh, their God, who is thus designated. When examining this formula, we should note that all the examples are collected in the pericope dealing with the ten plagues of Egypt, all the examples are literally identical, and all of them are words from Yahweh to Moses, telling him how to introduce Yahweh to Pharaoh (as, e.g., in Ex. 3:18: "The Lord, the God of the Hebrews"). As to the other usages in this section of Exodus, all examples of the use

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[11]Lemche, p. 11.

[12]Park, p. 146.

of "Hebrew women" and "Hebrew children" have been put into the mouths of the Egyptians, never into the mouths of the Israelites.[13] According to Ex. 2:13, Moses is confronted with two individuals, characterized as Hebrews, and he acts as a high-ranking Egyptian and not as an Israelite. It is necessary to pay attention to the first word of chapter 1: "These are the names of the sons of Israel." Exodus does not begin with "the sons of Hebrews."

The word "Hebrew" is found seven times in First Samuel (3:1; 4:6, 9; 13:3, 19; 14:11, 21; 29:3.) Six of these times, "Hebrew" is used by non-Israelites, that is, by Philistines. In 14:21-22, "Hebrew" is not "Israelite." The passage concerns the joining of two different groups to the side of the victor in the battle of Michmash: the Hebrews who served in the Philistine camp and the Israelites who hid themselves in Mount Ephraim. The narrator precisely defined the two groups, making it clear that the difference was not merely literary.

As a conclusion to this section, it can be said that the word "Hebrew" was used not by the Israelites but by the Egyptians and the Philistines, in order to scorn and degrade the Israelites.[14]

The meaning of "Yahweh, God of the Hebrews" which Joon Suh Park advocates is not proper. It is not accepted wholly that Habiru can be equated to Hebrew and "Hebrew" equals "Israelite." Therefore the origin of Israel is neither

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[13]Lemche, p. 14.

[14]Nadav Naaman, "Habiru and Hebrews: The Transfer of a Social Term to the Literary Sphere," JNES 45 (1986): 270.

Habiru nor "Hebrew." The Bible tells us that the origin of Israel (הָעָם) is in the patriarch Abraham. In many passages, Yahweh says: "I am the God of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Ex. 3:6, 15, 16; 32:13; Deut. 1:8; 9:5; 29:13; 30:2; Josh. 24:2, 3; 1 Chron. 29:18; Isa. 41:2; 51:2; 63:16; Jer. 33:26; Matt. 1:1, 17; 3:9; Luke 1:55, 73; 3:8, 23-24; John 8:33).

The historicity of Abraham had been suspect and ignored by Wellhausen's school. The historicity of the patriarchal period, however, is supported by archaeological discoveries. Horace Hummel says:

> At least, until recently, under the tutelage of more conservative, archaeologically oriented scholars like Albright, Wright, and Glueck, a scholarly consensus along the above lines had nearly been achieved. This synthesis dated the patriarchs either in the Middle Bronze I or MB II eras (c. 2100-1700 B.C.), and associated their migrations with the massive Amorite movements of the times.[15]

Therefore John Bright says: "We conclude, then, that the patriarchs were historical figures, a part of that migration of seminomadic clans which brought a new population to Palestine in the early centuries of the second millennium."[16]

The historicity of Abraham has been supported by the archaeological discoveries.[17] Therefore the origin of Israel began with Abraham, that is, the עַם (Israel) stemmed from Abraham. D. J. Wiseman asserts that the term for "עַם" was commonly

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[15]Horace D. Hummel, The Word Becoming Flesh (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1979), p. 67.

[16]Bright, p. 86.

[17]Ronald Clements, Abraham and David (London: SCM Press, 1967), p. 12. He insists that the testimony given to the patriarchs by archaeology, for all its substantiality, is indirect.

used as an alternative to "sons/children of Israel" (=Israelites). This word "עַם" is used primarily of a group related genetically or with a common deity.[18] Strictly speaking Israel's written history begins only in Egypt or in Palestine. As the Torah sees it, however, the story of God's people goes back to the family of Abraham.[19] This writer will follow up this thesis, based on the origin of Israel as עַם which stemmed from Abraham.

According to the Book of Genesis, the life of Abraham consists of four stages: The first stage (ch. 12-14) begins with his call and removal to Canaan; the second (ch. 15-16) with the promise of a lineal heir and the conclusion of a covenant; the third (ch. 17-21) with the establishment of the covenant, accompanied by a change in his name and the appointment of the covenant sign of circumcision; the fourth (ch. 22-25) with the temptation of Abraham to attest and perfect his life of faith.

Each stage begins with a divine revelation: "Yahweh said . . ." (12:1; 15:1; 17:1). In contrast to the journey of his father Terah, it was Yahweh who called Abraham out of Haran. Yahweh himself, without recourse to a mediator, commanded Abraham to go to the land in order to make Abraham a blessing. God intended that the world would be blessed through Abraham. A. S. Herbert says: "We are not told how the divine command came, but it was an absolute command, with the assurance

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[18]D. J. Wiseman, People of OT Times (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 20.

[19]John Goldingay, Theological Diversity and the Authority of the OT (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1986), p. 60.

of the divine blessing and requiring unreserved trust and obedience."[20] Therefore Abraham's migration was not similar to that of Habiru.

Yahweh made a covenant with Abraham that He would make Abraham into a great nation (גּוֹי גָּדוֹל). Generally speaking, the usage of גּוֹי in the Old Testament denotes a "people" considered either politically or racially. Hebrew evidences a tendency for גּוֹי to describe a people in terms of its political and territorial affiliation and so to approximate much more closely our modern term "nation." עַם is used much more frequently to denote a gentilic unit, that is, it always retains a strong emphasis on the element of consanguinity as the basis of union into a covenantal people.

In certain references, however, where עַם and גּוֹי occur together (e.g., Ex. 33:3; Deut. 4:6; Isa. 1:4) they are used synonymously. גּוֹי is used in the covenant passages in the covenant at Sinai (Ex. 19:6). Ronald Clements says:

> The reference points to Israel's unique religious constitution in its existence as a goy. The unique formulation of Ex 19:6, describing Israel as "holy nation" (גּוֹי קָדוֹשׁ), and a "kingdom of priests" (מַמְלֶכֶת כֹּהֲנִים) affirms the religious structure of Israel as state.[21]

The religious behavior of Abraham is found in Gen. 12:7: "Yahweh appeared to Abraham and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land.' So he built an altar

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[20]A. S. Herbert, Genesis 12-50 (London: SCM Press, 1962), p. 25.

[21]R. Clements, "Goy," in Theological Dictionary of the OT 5 vols., eds. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, trans, J. T. Willis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974-80); 1:430. Hereafter cited TDOT.

there to Yahweh who had appeared to him." Therefore Abraham, the ancestor of Israel was called for a theological purpose.

This writer will touch on only the second (ch. 15) and third (ch. 17) covenant passages of Abraham's life. Both chapters have Covenant passages and belong to the unconditional (Abrahamic) covenant. According to G. E. Mendenhall, there are two kinds of "covenant" in the Old Testament in the broad sense: Covenant in which God is bound and covenant in which Israel is bound. The former is called the Abrahamic, the latter the Mosaic (conditional) covenant.[22]

Critics attribute chapter 15 to "J," and chapter 17 to "P." The writer of Genesis, however, followed ancient Near Eastern literature, especially of the epic type.[23] Hummel states:

> Nevertheless, there is no difficulty in reading the two chapters as complementary, the first accenting the necessary foundation in sola gratia and personal faith, the second reaffirming the first and concerned with its "sacramental" sign, with the cultic continuation and representation of the promise through the ages.[24]

It is necessary to note the use of נוי (Gen. 15:4, 5, 6) and the "everlasting covenant" (Gen. 17:7, 13). נוי is used in the context of the covenant between God and Abraham. It is not used in a secular situation but in the context of religion.

The everlasting covenant plays an important role for Abraham's descendants

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[22]G. E. Mendenhall, "Covenant," in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, 4 vols. ed. G. A. Buttrick (New York: Abingdon PRess, 1962), 1:717-8. Hereafter cited IDB.

[23]Hummel, p. 35.

[24]Ibid., p. 68.

through the whole Bible.[25] The Abrahamic covenant was the basic covenant of Israel. God recalled the Abrahamic covenant when God rescued Israel. For example, in Ex. 2:4, "God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." (Cf. 3:6, 15; 4:5; 6:3; 26:42; 2 Kings 13:23). It was God who called Abraham out of Haran, made the covenant with him, made him the father of Israel and remembered the covenant with him afterward whenever Israel needed to be saved.

Patriarchs

This section will deal with the usage of עִם in the period of the patriarchs: Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. The word עִם with Isaac is found in Gen. 17:16. The term is used in the gentilic sense, because Isaac was Abraham's lineal descendant (17:16; 21:13) and one of the fathers of Israel (28:13). Actually, עִם is used for Isaac's mother Sarah in God's revelation which foretold her son Isaac. According to the context, "kings of peoples will come from her" means that kings of peoples will come from Isaac through her, because she would have a son, Isaac.

The other aspect of עִם with Isaac is the theological one. Isaac's story begins with the divine revelation (Gen. 17:15; 26:1). God wanted to make the everlasting

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[25]R. Clements, Abraham and David, p. 72. He holds that the everlasting covenant in Genesis 17 has been influenced by the Davidic covenant. His reason is that the Davidic covenant connected the kingship with the Abrahamic covenant which appears in Genesis 17.

covenant with Isaac (17:19). Isaac was circumcised[26] on the eighth day after his birth. According to F. Delitzsch,[27] circumcision is a sign of the people of God. God established the everlasting covenant (21:3): "I am God of your father Abraham and Isaac and Jacob." His distinctive feature is the second lineal generation of Israel.

עַם with Jacob is found twice in Gen. 27:27; 28:3. Isaac said to Jacob: "May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you" (27:29). Isaac used it in speaking with Jacob when he advised Jacob not to intermarry with Canaanites but with his kin: "May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you become a community of peoples." In these verses עַם is used in a gentilic sense.

Another feature of Jacob is found in chapter 32, verse 28. God changed his name from Jacob to Israel. His name became the title of his nation. This is important to note for עַם in Jacob's life since it indicates that עַם with the patriarchs is used in the gentilic and theological sense. Hummel says:

> Especially significant is the change of Jacob's name to "Israel" at the Jacob ford (32:22-32). Not totally unlike Gen. 2-3, this narrative is probably to be read both on the personal and on the corporate level, because "Israel" ever after remains the covenant people's major self-designation.[28]

Israel refers to both Jacob as his personal name, and also to all the Israelites as the

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[26]J. P. Hyatt, "Circumcision," IDB vol. 1:629. Circumcision was widely practiced in antiquity, and was by no means unique with the Hebrews. Among the Hebrews circumcision was performed as religious ceremony.

[27]C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament: The Pentateuch (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmanns Publishing Co., 1980), p. 89.

[28]H. Hummel, p. 69.

title of the people (cf. Gen. 32:32). God gave the name עַם as the designation of the covenant people. Israel became the designation of the covenant people. According to Delitzsch[29] Jacob's new name was transmitted to his descendants, who were called Israel as the covenant nation. עַם continued to have both gentilic and, with the title "Israel," covenantal characteristics. In this context עַם does not denote any sociological class, but a theological community.

The other aspect of Jacob is that his name denotes the Israelites: the house of Jacob (Ex. 19:3; Isa. 2:5; 8:17; 27:9; Amos 3:13; 9:8; Micah 2:7), or the son of Jacob (1 Kings 18:31; Mal. 3:6), or the seed of Jacob (Isa. 45:19; Jer. 33:26), or the community of Jacob (Deut. 3:4). The Israelites are also simply called Jacob (Isa. 9:8; Hos. 10:11).[30] עַם in the Jacob story is used in the gentilic and theological sense, for as the father of a multitude, Jacob became the designation of a nation and that of the covenant people.

Nine occurrences of עַם are found in Joseph's story[31] (Gen. 41:4, 40, 55; 42:6; 47:21, 23; 48:4, 19; 50:20). Seven times it refers to the Egyptians and twice to Joseph, especially to his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. Jacob relates God's promise (Gen. 35:10; cf. 28:13) to him and to Joseph's sons. They would be a

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[29]Keil and Delitzsch, p. 382.

[30]Micah 1:5 refers to the northern Kingdom alone, and in Nahum 2:2 to Judah alone.

[31]Joseph was called Hebrew by Egyptians. This theme was touched on in the previous chapter concluding that Hebrew was used in referring to foreigners.

community of peoples.

It is necessary to note verse five: "Now then, your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine." According to Delitzsch, this is the adoption of Joseph's sons, making them part of the twelve tribes. Delitzsch says:

> The promise which Jacob had received empowered the patriarch to adopt the sons of Joseph in the place of children. Since the Almighty God had promised him the increase of his seed into a multitude of peoples, . . . he could so incorporate into the number of his descendants the two sons of Joseph who were born in Egypt before his arrival, and therefore outside the range of his house, that they should receive an equal share in the promised inheritance with his own eldest sons.[32]

The writer of Genesis explains how the heads of tribes were formed. The tribes of Israel stemmed from Jacob's sons and Joseph's sons. According to the covenant with Abraham, his name was used of the descendants of Joseph many times afterward in Genesis (Num. 1:32; Josh. 14:4; Judg. 1:22; 2 Sam. 19:20; 1 Kings 11:28; 1 Chron. 7:29; Ps. 77:15; Ezek. 37:16; Amos 5:6; Obad. 1:8). In the Joseph story, עַם does not mean any sociological class but is used in the gentilic sense: עַם was the descendants of Joseph and came to be used of the members of the twelve tribes of Israel. The theological feature of עַם in this story can be found because of the members of the covenantal community.

Every patriarch has his own unique feature: Abraham is the origin of Israel

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[32]Keil and Delitzsch, p. 382.

and the beginning of the patriarchal history.[33] Isaac is the lineal second generation whom Abraham explicitly had through God's covenant. Jacob is one whose name God changed. The name became the title of his nation. Through Joseph God gave two sons to the tribes of the Israelites.

The Period of the Captivity in Egypt

This section will treat עַם during Israel's dwelling in Egypt (chapters 1-14) and the period of Exodus (chapters 15-40). First, עַם will be analyzed as follows: 1) The word עַם refers to the Egyptians fifteen times in the book of Exodus chapters 1-14 (1:9 [two], 22; 8:8; 9:11, 14, 21, 23, 29, 31; 9:14; 11:8; 14:6; 15:27). In this case, Egyptians used the term עַם to refer to themselves. 2) The word עַם is used for Israel thirty five times in the book of Exodus 1-14. There are two ways in which it is used for Israel: When the Egyptians referred to Israel (Ex. 1:20; 5:4, 6, 7, 10; 13:17 [twice]), when Israel referred to herself (Ex. 3:21; 4:16, 21, 30, 31; 5:5, 12, 16, 22, 23; 6:7; 7:14, 29, 32; 9:7; 11:2, 3; 12:27, 33, 34, 36; 13:3, 18, 22; 14:5 [two] 13;31;). 3) The word עַם is used in the cases in which God called Israel "my people" sixteen times in Exodus 1-14 (3:7, 10; 5:1; 7:4, 14; 8:18, 20, 22, 23; 9:1, 13,17;

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[33]Claus Westermann, The Promises to the Fathers trans. David E. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), p. 133. He holds that after the conclusion of the Abraham narrative, the motif (the promise of a son) does not appear again. It is the Abraham narrative that marks the beginning of the patriarchal history.

10:3, 4; 12:31).[34]

The results of the analysis of the usage of עַם in Exodus 1-14 show that עַם was a common word to denote a general people of a certain country. It refers equally both to Israel and to the Egyptians: "Pray to the Lord to take the frogs away from me and my people, and I will let your people go to offer sacrifices to the Lord" (8:8). Thus עַם did not denote any social status in Exodus. עַם, however, denoted the people of Israel or the Egyptians even though the Israelites were oppressed by the Egyptians. עַם is used in the theological sense. When Yahweh God called Israel "my people," the usage is noteworthy. a) When God used "my people," He recalled the covenant with their fathers: "I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob" (Ex. 3:7, 15,16). b) When God used "my people" He wanted to reveal Himself: "And the Egyptian will know that I am the Lord" (Ex. 7:4, 17). c) The purpose of God's deliverance of those He called "my people" is to let Israel worship Yahweh: "Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the desert" (7:15; 8:8; 9:1, 13; 10:3).

According to this analysis, the conclusion may be drawn that the deliverance of עַם understood as Israel is not only from the oppression of the Egyptians, which Minjung theologians accent, but also from the condition in which Israel could not worship Yahweh freely. The writer of Exodus repeatedly emphasizes this point:

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[34]The word "Hebrew" is used for Israel (Ex. 1:15; 2:11) and the God of the "Hebrews" (Ex. 3:13; 5:3; 7:16; 9:1; 13; 10:3). The previous chapter dealt with these subjects.

"Worship Yahweh in the desert." God rescued Israel not because of Israel's cry, but because of the covenant with Abraham. Paul Schrieber observes:

> The Bible does not present the exodus as a model for social reform or political revolution, nor did the exodus liberation emerge as the reaction of Israel in an oppressive situation, as they neither took the initiative nor sought the expungement of Pharaoh's regime. In short, the exodus was not essentially a political movement.
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> According to the Biblical account, the exodus has its roots not simply in the cries of an oppressed people but in the gracious covenant of Yahweh which He made long before with Abraham (Ex. 2:20) in a non-oppressive context. This was in line with God's gracious plan of restoring man who had rebelled against Him in circumstances of the highest form of social freedom, justice, and equality.[35]

The Period in the Exodus and Wilderness

This section will discuss the passages (Ex. 15:1-21; ch. 19) which Minjung theologians have ignored. This poem (15:1-18) is called by a variety names: "Song of Moses," "Song of the Sea," "Victory Hymn of Moses," "Song of the Reed Sea," and even "Song of Miriam."[36] עַם is found in it four times. Three times it refers to the Israelites (15:13, 16 [twice]), and once to Philistia (15:14).

There are several opinions about the date of this poem. The date of the poem can decide the context of עַם and the historical background of it. According to F. M. Cross and D. N. Freedman, the poem in its origin form dates from the twelfth century

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[35]Paul Schrieber, "Liberation Theology and the Old Testament: An Exegetical Critique," Concordia Journal, 13-1 (1987): 32.

[36]J. Philip Hyatt, Exodus (Paulton: Purnell & Sons, 1971), p. 162.

B.C.[37] and in its present form from the eleventh century.[38] At the other extreme, R. H. Pfeiffer dated it in the second half of the fifth century and considered it to be "a homiletic and devout paraphrase of Miriam's Song by "a pseudo-poet."[39] G. Fohrer considers it to be postexilic, influenced in verse 18 by Second Isaiah.[40] Hummel writes:

> The "Song of the Sea" in chap. 15 (the "Te Deum of the Old Testament") gives a poetic version of the same events. . . Once dated much later than the event itself (J or later), increased linguistic knowledge has generally forced much earlier dating, a few critics even conceding that it may actually stem from an eyewitness. Most reservations have lingered about verses 13ff., which have appeared to presuppose the later events of the conquest and even possession of Zion, but Ras Shamra parallels make actual mosaic authorship perfectly plausible for also this part of the poem.[41]

Brevard S. Childs denies the later date also, "the overall consistency of the linguistic phenomena would rather point to genuine archaic elements."[42] Thus, as the text indicates, this poem was composed right after the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. The usage of עַם needs to be interpreted in this historical background.

According to verse 13, Moses received confirmation that God would lead the

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[37]F. M. Cross, "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth," JTC 5 (1968): 1-25.

[38]D. N. Freedmann, "The Song of Miriam," JNES 14 (1955): 237-50.

[39]R. H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941), p. 281.

[40]G. Fohrer, Introduction to the Old Testament (Nashville: Abingdon, 1968), p. 117.

[41]H. Hummel, p. 73.

[42]Brevard S. Childs, Exodus (London: SCM Press, 1974), p. 246.

people whom He had redeemed and would guide them (i.e., the people). It was God who redeemed the people from Egypt and it was God who would lead and guide them. עַם is used in relation to God here.

In verse 16, Moses used "your people" which parallels "the people" in verse 16b. He meant that "your people" was God's people. This can be interpreted with respect to "my people," which was treated in the previous section. "The people" was the possession of God.

The phrase "The Lord will reign for ever and ever" signifies that the __ was ruled by God. It shows the relation between God, the King, and Israel, His people. It is the theocracy. Hyatt observes, "v. 18 is an affirmation of the eternal kingship of Yahweh. This is the only direct affirmation of the kingship of Yahweh in the song."[43] The poem now provides the response of faith by the people who have experienced their redemption from the hands of the Egyptians at the sea. The narrative account closed with the remark that the people "feared Yahweh," and "believed in Him" (v. 31).[44] In the poem, עַם is used in relationship to God, neither politically nor sociologically but theologically. The congregation of Israel commemorated the fact of its deliverance and its exaltation as the nation of God.[45]

In Ex. 19:1-25, עַם is found eighteen times. Seventeen times it is used of

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[43]J. P. Hyatt, p. 18.

[44]Childs, p. 248.

[45]Keil and Delitzsch, p. 49.

Israel. Once, in verse 5, it refers to all people. Chapter 19 begins with the sons of Israel's arrival at the Sinai desert. Then in verse 5, God calls Israel "you" (plural-here not Moses) and in verse 6 "you" parallels the son of Israel. עַם is used for the son of Israel from verse 7 through verse 25. "You" (vv. 5, 6) refers to both the sons of Israel and עַם (vv. 7-25). In chapter 19 עַם parallels the sons of Israel and עַם.

There can be several translations of verse 5. One accents the priest: "You will be a royal priesthood for me." In this translation mamlekah is rendered as an adjective. The second accents "A priestly royalty" concerning which J. Coppens asserts: "The passage should be translated not 'a kingdom (directed) by priests' but 'a priestly royalty': thus the passage does not refer to a universal priesthood of the people of God."[46] The third one is that one accents the kingdom and treats כֹּהֲנִים as an adjective: "You will be "a kingdom of priests" or "a kingdom by priests." Most protestant scholars accept this translation.[47] Hummel summarizes:

> At 19:5 (cf. the christian antitype of I Peter 2:9 etc) it bears notice that the "universal priesthood" is not a New Testament novelty. The idea is that the "special priesthood" was God's "consequent will" until that eschatological time when all believers could actually function as their redemption would signify.[48]

Here "you" refers to עַם. Thus עַם have the universal priesthood. עַם were priest for the rest of the nations of the world. In this context עַם parallels גּוֹי. Clements

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[46]J. Coppens, "Miscellanees Debliques 83. Exode 19:6: un rogaumeou une royaute de pretres:" ETL 53 (1977): 185-6.

[47]Childs, p. 367. Keil and Delitzsch, p. 96. J. Philip Hyatt, p. 178. W. H. Gispen Exodus (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), p. 180.

[48]Hummel, p. 74.

explains "holy nation" as follows:

> The unique formulation of Ex. 19:6, describing Israel as a goy qadhosh "holy nation" and a mamlekheth kohanim "kingdom of priests," affirms the religious structure of Israel as state.[49]

It is necessary to note that גּוֹי is modified by קָדוֹשׁ. As a holy nation עַם, they were set apart from other nations for the worship and service of Yahweh.

According to the context, Exodus 19 is the beginning of the Sinai covenant. The Lord appeared to Israel at Sinai, which was the prelude to the making of the covenant. Thus עַם needs to be understood in the light of the Sinai covenant.

Eichrodt explains concerning the covenant:

> The concept in which the Israelites thought gave definitive expression to the bending of the people to God and by means of which they established firmly from the start the particularity of their knowledge of him was the covenant.[50]

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[49]Clements, "Goy," TDOT 2:430. G. J. Botterweck, "Goy," TDOT 2:430. According to Botterweck's research, the relationship of goy qadhosh to mamlekheth kohanim may be explained variously: the advocates of an objective parallelism content interpret Israel as a community whose citizens are worshippers of Yahweh, (K. Galling, R. B. Y. Scott) or are all priests (H. L. Strack), or as priests drawing near to or approaching Yahweh (B. Baentsch, G. Beer) or standing closer to him than the other nations (P. Heinisch, J. B. Bauer) or acting as a priest or mediator among the heathen nations (H. Holzinger, H. Schneider, A. Clamer, M. North, G. Auzou). Still others interpret goy qadhosh and memlekheth kohanim as being more complementary of one another (W. Caspari, W. Beyerlin, W. L. Moran, H. Cazelles) Israel is a holy nation that is supposed to draw near to God in holiness, "because her national life is dependent upon priests . . . while the other nations have a king (H. Cazelles, DBS, 7 [1963]: 834). Fohrer rejects the concept of priestly rule over the holy nation: "As the goy (the constituted and governed nation) is holy, separate . . . , so the present rule is priestly, i.e holy in an advanced way (Fohrer, Thz, 19 (1963): 359-362). Ex. 19:5 does not speak of a general priesthood of the people of God. This understanding appears first in the NT in 1 Peter 2:9 (cf. Rev. 1:9; 5:10; 20:6). J. H. Elliot, "The Elect and the Holy," NTS 12 (1966): 50.

[50]Walther Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), p. 36.

Harrison explains the Sinai covenant as follows:

> It is important to notice further in this connection that there was an avowed social and political aspect to the Covenant relationship as well as a purely religious one. The concept of the Sinai agreement would be virtually meaningless were it not for the fact that the religious and ethical norms that it contained were designed to produce a reciprocal action in strictly social terms. Not merely were the adherents bound together in loyalty to the Deity, but they were linked by the Covenant relationship as the people of God. It was at this juncture that they received a unique identity. They became the specific medium of divine revelation in "saving history," and at the same time they received a missionary vacation as the divine witnesses to surrounding pagan nations.[51]

In the Sinai covenant עַם has both a social aspect as understood by Minjung theologians and a theological one. However Minjung theologians accent the social aspect of עַם and ignore a very important thing: עַם has a mission as the kingdom of priests and the holy nation. Minjung theologians accent only the status of עַם to be liberated by others. But עַם has a mission to serve others as priests and to worship Yahweh.

Deut. 7:6-9 will be studied in this section.[52] This passage is based on the exodus. Moses here explains why Israel had been chosen by God through an appeal to the exodus. עַם is found eight times in chapter 7. Five occurrences refer to all peoples, and three to Israel. Two out of the three are עַם קָדוֹשׁ and עַם סְגֻלָּה. The

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[51]R. K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1969), p. 478.

[52]There are several theories about the date of Deuteronomy: Wellhausen insisted upon 621 B.C. Gerhard Von Rad, Studies of Deuteronomy (London: SCM. Press, 1963), p. 66. Von Rad held 701 B.C., Hummel, p. 91. Hummel maintains Mosaic authorship. Peter C. Cragie, The Book of Deuteronomy (Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, 1976) p. 30., Cragie asserts that a final form of Deuteronomy developed after the ceremony at Shechem of Joshua.

latter, the key word in these verses, will be studied chiefly.

The Hebrew word סְגֻלָּה can be translated "treasured possession" (NIV) or "peculiar treasure" (KJV) or "prized possession." The basic meaning of the root is apparently "to set aside." The word seems to have meant originally "private possession" as opposed to the possessions of a family or larger community: hence "treasure" (cf. 1 Chron. 29:3; Eccl. 2:8).[53] The cognate Akkadian word (sikiltu) is used in a treaty seal from Alalah to describe the king as a "treasured possession" of his god.[54] When the word סְגֻלָּה applies to Israel it means the special property of Yahweh.[55] It appears in Ex. 19:5; Deut. 14:2; 26:18; Ps. 135:4; Mal. 3:17. Thus Israel was the treasured possession of Yahweh through the covenant.

The context in which God chose Israel as His סְגֻלָּה is important to the understanding of עַם. Chapter 7 belongs to the second part of Moses' farewell sermon. In chapter 6 there is a commentary on the first "commandment" which is the basic element of the Sinai Covenant and chapters 7-9. The commentary emphasizes the complementary necessity of exterminating Canaanite paganism. Moses asked Israel, the treasured possession of Yahweh, to destroy the altars and idols of the Canaanites (v. 5). This verse emphasizes that the reason Israel was chosen is because of her

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[53]W. H. Gispen, p. 180. William L. Holladay, A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1983), p. 253.

[54]Peter C. Craigie, The Book of Deuteronomy p. 179.

[55]A. D. Mayes, Deuteronomy (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1979), p. 185.

religious duty. Israel was the private treasured possession of Yahweh. Thus Yahweh commanded them not to join with the Canaanites in two activities: treaties (v. 2) and marriage (v. 3). J. Ridderbos observes:

> These verses present the underlying motivation of the preceding, Israel must not participate in any way in the Canaanite practices because Israel is a people "holy to the Lord," a people dedicated to Him. He has chosen Israel out of all the nations to be His "treasured possession" which expresses the same idea as "holy."[56]

According to the context, the reason God has chosen Israel as His treasured possession is first positively, that Israel should destroy Canaanite gods and idols, and second negatively, that Israel must not participate in Canaanite practices. These can be summarized as religious affairs.

Peter C. Craigie explains the purpose of God's election of Israel:

> The negative and positive dimension of Israel's election are expressed in vv. 7-8. Negatively, they were not chosen on the basis of their numerical strength, they were numerically a very small people in the context of other Near Eastern peoples and nations. Positively, they were chosen because the Lord loved them: the reason was God's special love, on the basis of that love, God had called Abraham and his descendants and had made the covenant promise to them.[57]

עַם is used not merely as a term designating political and sociological status, but especially denoting the covenantal entity. In both the first and second parts of the book of Exodus, God delivered Israel on the basis of Abraham's covenant and God chose Israel through the Sinai Covenant. God elected Israel as his treasured possession.

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[56]J. Ridderbos, Deuteronomy (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), p. 35.

[57]Peter Craigie, Deuteronomy, p. 179.

The Period of the Conquest

The covenant renewal in Joshua 24 will be used for understanding עַם in the final period of the conquest. The title "covenant renewal" has usually been used. The ceremony was held when Israel reached the land which God had promised to her. It was the final period of the exodus, that is, the time of arrival at the destination of the exodus. This point is necessary to understand עַם in Joshua 24.[58]

In this context, עַם is found ten times, eight for Israel and two (Josh. 24:17, 18) for other nations. When Joshua spoke of his people he used Israel or עַם alternatively. By examining the structure of the covenant renewal, its character will appear clearly. Trent C. Butler suggests its structure by comparing it with that of the Hittite treaties:[59] 1) Preamble introducing the king (cf. v. 2); 2) Antecedent history describing previous relationships between the two parties (cf. vv. 2 -13); 3) A basic stipulation governing future relationships (cf. vv 14, 15, 18b, 21, 23, 24); 4) Specific stipulations; 5) The invocation of the gods as witnesses (cf. vv. 22, 27); 6) Blessings and curses (cf. vv. 19-22). Butler writes:

> Such a structure cannot be found in its entirety; we do not have a treaty between Yahweh and His people. Rather we have a report of the making of an agreement.

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[58]Critics advocate a late date for the composition of Joshua. Hummel, p. 108. He maintains that the united monarchy was the time of the composition of the book of Joshua. J. Alberto Soggin, Joshua (London: SCM Press, 1972), p. 241., Soggin held that a large stone in 24:26 has been identified by archaeological excavation. Thus the covenant cult ritual was held when Israel conquered Canaan under Joshua, at the time of arrival at the destination of the exodus.

[59]Trent C. Butler, Joshua (Waco: Word Books Publisher, 1983), p. 268.

> Such a report is based on political models which would be available in Israel's environment throughout her history.[60]

This indicates that the covenant is not only a political treaty but also a theological agreement between God and His people.

Shechem shows us one of the characteristics of עַם within the context of covenant renewal. Shechem was the place where Abraham received the first promise from God after his migration into Canaan. They built an altar at that time (Gen. 12:6; 7). Jacob settled there on his return from Mesopotamia. It was there that Jacob purified his house from the strange gods, burning all their idols under the oak (Gen. 33:19; 35:2, 4). Joshua perhaps therefore chose the same place for the renewal of the covenant.

At the beginning of the covenant renewal, Joshua mentioned the fathers of the Israelites (vv. 2-4). This means that Joshua accented the covenant with Abraham and recalled them to being the people of God. Delitzsch maintains that by mentioning the fathers, Joshua wanted to let them know that they continued to be the covenant people.[61] C. J. Goslinga states that Joshua's statements about Israel's origins show that her history was really a history of God's gracious acts.[62]

By mentioning the exodus (vv. 5-13), Joshua emphasized that the people were

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[60]Ibid.

[61]F. Delitzsch, Joshua, Judge, Ruth, I & II Samuel (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), p. 226.

[62]C. J. Goslinga, Joshua, Judges, Ruth trans. Ray Togtman (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), p. 172.

able to escape from Egypt and possess the land not by their deed but by the grace of God.[63] It was Yahweh who delivered Israel from the land of slavery. It, therefore, was Israel who received the gift of being the people of God.

The main point of the covenant renewal at Shechem was to renounce the gods of the land and to worship only Yahweh who made the covenant with their fathers and delivered them from the land of slavery and led them to the promised land (vv. 14-18). The theme of the extension of the covenant at Shechem shows us not a political treaty or the sociological status of a people, but the theological relationship between God and the people at the destination of the exodus.

The Settlement of Canaan

After the Israelites' settlement in Canaan, the Israelite עַם were led by the judges from time to time. Whenever the Israelites turned aside from God they were invaded. When they cried to God for help He elected judges to deliver them. By studying the judges the character of עַם will appear.

The root of the term "judge" stems from שׁפט. שׁפט denotes to "decide," (Gen. 16:5) or to "help," (Isa. 1:17) or to "judge" (Lev. 19:15). In the niphal case, it means to "go to court," or "plead."[64] According to A. D. H. Mayes, the root שׁפט has the general sense of "deliver," as well as the specific legal sense of "pronounce

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[63]J. Alberto Soggin, Joshua, p. 241.

[64]William L. Holladay, p. 380.

judgement." He points to 1 Sam. 24:16 and 2 Samuel 18 as evidence.[65]

Judges are attested in the ancient Near East. Their role is connected with the exercise of some form of government, political or sociological. These meanings are attested in Ugarit (Aistleitner no. 2921, VT no. 2027) and in the West semitic culture of Mari (AHw III, p. 1172).[66] In sociological terms, the judges of Israel were "charismatic" leaders. There is, however, a difference between the Israelites' judges and the ancient Near Eastern judges.[67] According to Arthur Lewis, the שֹׁפְטִים of the Bible were not recognized primarily for their nobility or class, but for their call and power from God.[68] The judges were divinely appointed men (and women) of the people, called out for a particular crisis and endowed with gifts of leadership and dedication.

Bright holds that charisma was the primary characteristic of the Judges of the primitive theocracy of Israel: it was the direct leadership of God over his people through his designated representative.[69] The Judges were mediators between God and His people in the theocracy. One example, which shows that the Judges did not rule over Israel as political governors, can be taken from the story of Gideon. Gideon

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[65]A. D. H. Mayer Israel in the Period of the Judges (London: SCM Press, 1974), pp. 56-7.

[66]J. Alberto Soggin, Judges. (London: SCM Press, 1981), p. 2.

[67]Hummel, p. 113.

[68]Arthur Lewis, Judges, Ruth (Chicago: Moody Press, 1979), p. 11.

[69]John Bright, The Kingdom of God (New York: Abingdon Press, 1952), p. 32.

rejected the people's suggestion: "I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you. The Lord will rule over you" (8:23). Walther Eichrodt summarizes:

> That such a stylizing of the figures of the Judges was, generally speaking, possible presupposes that these men were early regarded as instruments of Yahweh's dominion; and thus, despite the limited significance of their actual historical role, they became genuine mediators of the conception of Yahweh.[70]

In accord with this introductory explanation, there appears at the beginning of the account of each major judge, at least in some form, this characteristic formula: The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, forgetting the Lord their God, and serving, the Baals and the Asheroths. Therefore the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel and He sold them into the hand of . . . ; and the people of Israel served . . . (so many years). The Lord raised up a deliverer (3:7-9, 12, 14-15; 4:1-3; 6:1, 9; 13:1). The people of Israel were in crises not because of sociologically evil behaviors but because of her apostasy.

Another aspect of the theological elements in the Song of Deborah is that the enemies of Israel were the same as those of Yahweh. The people of Yahweh parallels Israel in verse 11. The enemy of Israel was the Canaanites. Deborah identified the enemy of Israel as that of Yahweh in verse 31: "So may all your enemies perish O Lord!" During the period of the judges, Israel was both a theological entity and a social one even though Israel was under a loose federation of the twelve tribes.

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[70]Walther Eichrodt, p. 309.

Summary

Scholars such as John Bright, Julius Lewey, and Neils Peter Lemche deny that the origin of Israel was Habiru. Mendenhall's peasant revolt is rejected. "Hebrew" could not be equated with Israel because the Israelites could not own other Israelites as their slaves according to their own slavery laws. The origin of Israel is neither Habiru nor Hebrew. The Bible tells us that the origin of Israel is the patriarch, Abraham. God made a nation through Abraham. Abraham was not poor or "Hebrew" as understood by Minjung theologians.

Through every patriarch עַם is understood not as a certain sociological class but as a gentilic and theological entity. עַם is the covenant partner of God, not a sociologically lower class such as the Habiru. God raised His people as a nation through the patriarchs. This contrasts with the Minjung theologians' assertions in which עַם was the object of sociological liberation, that is, God saved only the poor and the oppressed. God made עַם multiply as He promised to Abraham in order to fulfill the role of עַם for other nations through the patriarchs. עַם has this theological purpose.

During Israel's dwelling in Egypt, עַם was a common word to denote a general people of a certain country. It refers equally both to Israel and the Egyptians. Thus, עַם did not denote any social status in the Exodus. עַם is used in the theological sense. God used "my people" for Israel. The purpose of God's deliverance of those whom He called "my people" is to let Israel worship Yahweh. Minjung theologians

have put emphasis on Israel's suffering under the Egyptians. The Bible also is concerned about Israel's hardships, but there are differences between them. Minjung theologians assert that the cry of Israel moved God to liberate them from their suffering and that God liberated them only from physical hardship under the Egyptians. However, the Bible tells us that God rescued them not only from physical suffering, but also in order to allow them to worship God freely.

In the "Song of Sea," עַם is used theologically, that is, the poem speaks theocratically. The prelude of the Sinai covenant, Exodus 19 shows that עַם is the holy nation and the universal priesthood. During this period עַם is found with קָדוֹשׁ and סְגֻלָּה. עַם is the treasured possession of God. Minjung theologians have ignored the important role of Israel for other nations. They have treated עַם as being saved from others, not as contributing something to others. Minjung theologians' concept of people is only passive and negative, in contrast to what Exodus 19 tells us, namely, that Israel has a great positive mission.

The covenant renewal at Shechem shows us not only a political treaty but also the theological relationship between God and His "people" as the latter arrive at the destination of the exodus. The characteristics of the judges denote theocracy. Thus עַם was people ruled by God. The people of Israel were in crises not because of sociologically evil behaviors but because of their apostasy. Minjung Theologians have missed the point that God rules over עַם. They accent God as a liberator and ignore that עַם belonged to God and were the possession of God.

CHAPTER V

THE PERIOD OF MONARCHY

This chapter will discuss the people in the period of the monarchy by studying עַם in the book of Samuel, the kingship of Israel as relating to the people, and the people in the books of prophets. The Israelites became the people of a country and a sociological entity under human kings. Minjung theologians deal with what some of the people suffered at the hands of their own people, rather than with what Israel suffered at the hands of another people, the Egyptians. In this context, Minjung theologians concentrate strictly on the sociological aspect of עַם without paying attention to the theological aspect of the people. It will be examined whether or not Israel was a merely sociological entity under the human kings, as is assumed by the Minjung theologians. Minjung theologians assert that every prophet followed a liberation trajectory rather than a royal trajectory. Thus they interpret the people in the eighth century B.C. prophets only sociologically. The prophets are seen as having brought accusations only against the sociological wrong doing of the rulers, the oppressors and the leaders. The characteristics which the people have in the prophets will be studied here.

Samuel

In Israel's history, the time of Samuel included a great change in the political structure, namely, from theocracy to monarchy.[1] The monarchy was permitted by God for national security concerns. The Philistine attacked the Israelites, still under a loose federation, and took away the ark. Eli and his sons died (1 Samuel 4). After those humiliations, the Israelites demanded a king (chap. 8). There was a conflict between Samuel and those who wanted a human king. The idea of a monarch had been consciously rejected. This is illustrated in the words with which Gideon spurned a crown: "I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the Lord will rule over you" (Judg. 8:23). The reason why Samuel rejected the request for a king is that the desire for a monarchy reflected a craven imitation of pagan ways (1 Sam. 8:5) and a flagrant rejection of Yahweh (1 Sam. 8:7).

At last Samuel accepted the people's demand and anointed Saul, not as a king (מֶלֶךְ), but as a prince (נָגִיד) in 1 Samuel 9. It is necessary to interpret עַם in this historical context of the Israelites. There are eight occurrences of עַם in chapter 9; all refer to Israel. It is necessary to note that four (v. 10, 16 [two], 17) out of nine times it refers to "my people." When Samuel was about to anoint Saul as a prince we read the command: "Anoint him prince over my people" (9:16).

It is necessary to study the character of נָגִיד in order to understand עַם. נָגִיד has an archaic passive form, shared by a sizable group of Hebrew nouns of office

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[1]Horace D. Hummel, The Word Becoming Flesh. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1979), p. 125.

including, among others, נָבִיא (prophet). Most instructive is the common noun nasi, "chieftain," with the original meaning "one who is raised up." Similarly נָגִיד can be interpreted as "one who is made known, singled out, designated for office, that is, designee." It seems to have referred to (1) someone designated for a particular office who has assumed its duties (i.e., the incumbent in an office) as well as (2) someone who though designated for an office has not yet begun to serve. In the first sense it occurs as the title of officials, both priestly (Jer. 20:1; Neh. 11:11; 1 Chron. 9:11, 20; 2 Chron. 31:12, 13; 35:8) and military (1 Chron. 12:28). In every case the נָגִיד is an individual singled out from among others as leader.

Saul was anointed as a נָגִיד. [2] According to Shemuel Shaviv[3] the term נָגִיד originated not in "secular" usage ("designated by the ruling king") but in the "theological" one ("announced by God"), the "secular" usage being later. Horace D. Hummel agrees with the religious interpretation of נָגִיד:

> Much is often made of the fact, and apparently so, that Samuel does not anoint Saul (or David) as melek ("king," in the proper sense), but only as nagid, usually translated "prince." (9:16; 10:1; 13:14) Apparently, Samuel thus hoped to satisfy

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[2]P. Kyle MacCarter., Jr. I Samuel (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1980), pp. 178-9. It was apparently J. Barth who first listed nagid as active: "Sager"; a linguistically suitable equivalent in Latin would be "dictator." A. Alt, in an important essay suggested that nagid was a passive participle, the ruler "made known," "announced" or "designated" by Yahweh Himself.

[3]Shemuel Shaviv, "nabi and nagid in I Samuel IX:1-X 16," VT 34 (1984): 110.

> the people's demand for centralized authority, without opening the flood gates to the pagan, Canaanite ideology, that almost necessarily came with melek.[4]

In this context עַם can be understood in sense of theological entity even though Saul ruled over the Israelites. Saul ruled not over a political entity but a theological entity: the people of God (my people). Basically, Israel continued to have the character of the people of God even though Saul had the centralized authority and exercised the role of political king. This is evidenced in that Samuel as a prophet had anointed Saul as prince, and God commissioned him to rule over His people. It is also significant that Saul was later rejected as king because of a theological concern.

After Saul, Yahweh said to David: "You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler" (1 Sam. 5:2). Before Yahweh all the elders of Israel anointed David king over Israel (1 Sam. 5:3). In 1 Samuel 7 God made the everlasting covenant with David. There are ten occurrences (two in chap. 5, eight in chap. 7) of עַם in these two chapters. In nine of the ten occurrences, it refers to the people of God ("my people" [5:2; 7:8, 9, 10, 11], "His people" [5:12], and "your people" [7:23 (two)], 24). It is necessary to note that the writer of the book of Samuel called Israel not "King David's people" but the "people of God" even though David was anointed as king.

In this context it is necessary to study the Israelite kingship relating to עַם. Ancient Israel was one of the ancient Near Eastern countries. According to S.

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[4]Hummel, p. 127.

Szikszai[5], the kings were believed to be superhuman in the ancient Near East. In the Amarna Letters, the Canaanite vassals address their Egyptian sovereign as "my god," "my sun," "sun of land," and "my breath." The Egyptian Pharaoh was regarded as the earthly manifestation of the gods Horus, Seth, and Osiris. The Egyptian kings, being divine, were worshiped in their life and death. The early Babylonian kings freely claimed the title "god." Their divinity largely differed from that of the Pharaoh. The Babylonian king was a divine servant of the gods, chosen to maintain the reign of the gods. The relationship of the Babylonian king to the gods and goddesses was conceived as sonship by adoption and not by nature. The Hittites never recognized the living king as a god. Nevertheless, the divinity of dead kings was an established belief. In Canaan, as the Ugaritic documents indicate, kings of the legendary past like Keret were recognized as semi-gods. Keret's son was suckled by the goddess Ashera. King Keret himself was the "Son" and "Servant" of the highest god, El, and received immortality.

The theme of sonship can be found in the Israelite kingship, limited to the Davidic line. The kings of Judah were heirs of the divine promise given in the dynastic oracle (2 Sam. 7:5-16) that the Davidic king would be the "son" of God (v. 14). This "divine sonship" of the king did not rest on divine procreation as in Egypt; the king of Judah remained David's descendant by nature (2 Sam. 7:12). But his election to sonship was by grace, expressed in terms of adoption in the adoption formula "You are my son, today I have begotten you" (Ps. 2:7; cf. 2 Sam. 7:14; Ps.

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[5]S. Szikszai, "King, Kingship," IDB 3:14.

89:27). C. R. North holds that "the relation between Yahweh and the king is analogous to that between father and son. It is the heritage of all the members of David's house or dynasty."[6] According to Tryggve N. D. Mettinger,[7] as "son" of God, the king belongs to the sphere in which God in a specific manner manifests his fatherly concern and exercises fatherly authority. Both a privilege and an obligation are thus involved. As "son," the king enjoys divine protection and help (2 Sam. 7:14-5). Just as the political vassal is the "son" of the suzerain (2 Chron. 16:7), so the king is in a position of dependency on and subordination to his heavenly Overlord. S. Mowinckel advocates the divine kingship in contrast to Mettinger: The king is the representative and incorporation of the community life on the one hand, and the incarnation of the national god on the other.[8]

However, the kings did not assume their own divinity, as the words of the king of Israel reveal: "Am I God, to kill and to make alive?" (2 Kings 5:7; cf. 6:26-27). The king stood under the term of the covenant relationship, between Yahweh and His people (Deut. 17:18, 1 Sam. 10:25; 2 Sam. 3:21). The king of Israel was close to God, but his proximity to the deity must not be interpreted as identity,

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[6]C. R. North, "The Religious Aspects of Hebrew Kingship." ZAW (1932): 25.

[7]Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, King and Messiah (Lund: CWK GLEERUP, 1976), pp. 291ff.

[8]S. Mowinckel, Psalmen Studien II pp. 301ff, cited by North, p. 35.

metaphysical or functional. His intimacy with God qualified him as the Lord's viceregent in Israel and in the world.[9]

Israel had both political and theological characteristics during the monarchy. The kings, however, were the vassal of Yahweh so that Israel was not the king's people but the people of God, the real King. The kings ruled over Israel as vassals rather than as overlords. In this respect עַם can be understood as a theological entity during the monarchy.

Hosea

Prophets like Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Micah, and Jeremiah during the monarchy deal with עַם. In Hosea 1 and 2, five occurrences of עַם are found. Four of them are in the phrase, "not my people" (1:9 [twice], 10; 2:23). One occurs in the phrase, "my people" (2:23). In 1:9 לֹא עַמִּי is the name of Hosea's second son. עַם refers to the whole of Israel (Northern and Southern Kingdom) because the phrase "the sons of Israel" alone is mentioned in 1:10, but in 1:11 the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel are mentioned.

In the context of these chapters covenant expressions are also found. "My people," is an expression drawn from the vocabulary of Yahweh's covenant with Israel. The basic relational formula which describes the covenant founded at Sinai is: 'You are my people, and I am your God' (cf. Ex. 6:7; Lev. 26:12; Deut. 26:17; 2 Sam. 7:24; Jer. 7:23). 2:23 reads: "You are my people," and they shall say, "You

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[9]Szikszai, p. 16.

are my God." The other expression is the metaphor, 'Yahweh and His wife" (2:2-15). Hosea would have declared there his counter messages: "not my people."[10] עַם is the covenant partner of God in its context.

The important thing of these chapters is why the covenant was broken by God, saying "You are not my people." Hosea 1:2 tells us the reason: "the land has committed great harlotry by departing from the Lord." "The land," might refer to "my people." Some Bible versions such as NIV and The Living Bible translated "the land" into "my people." According to Andersen, "the land is the comprehensive word that covers everything: kings, priests, and people . . . In other places in Hosea, the land parallels all its inhabitants, pointing to the people."[11]

"The land" denotes "my people." God denied that Israel was His people because of her harlotry. The verb זָנָה describes every aspect of sexual misconduct. The verb is rarely used in masculine forms, and then only figuratively to describe Israel's infidelity (Num. 25:1; Deut. 31:16; Judg. 2:17; Hos. 9:1). James Luther Mays explains:

> The foil for Hosea's use of marriage as a model of Yahweh's relation to Israel, and of sexual promiscuity as the leit-motif of his portrayal of Israel's sin, is to be found in the fertility cult of Canaanite religion.[12]

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[10]Frances I. Andersen and David Noel Freedman, Hosea (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1980), p. 203.

[11]Ibid., p. 169.

[12]James Luther Mays, Hosea (London: SCM Press, 1975), p. 25.

Yahweh denied that Israel was His people because of her apostasy, that is, her theological sin, not merely sociological wrongdoing. Thus the covenant was broken.

In contrast to the negative content of, "You are not my people," עַם is found in its positive content, namely the restoration of the people. In other words, עַם is an eschatological figure in this context (2:16-23). The eschatological elements are found in verses 16, 18, 23. Hosea 2:16 reads: "'And it shall be, in that day', says the Lord, 'That you will call Me, My Husband,'" 'And no longer call Me 'My Baal.'" Verse 18 reads: "In that day I will make a covenant for them." בַּיּוֹם־הַהוּא is also found in other prophets as denoting eschatological time (Isa. 2:17; 3:4; Joel 3:4; Amos 5:18-29). The phrase refers to an eschatological formula. Andersen explains as follows:

> The eschatological formula, "and it will happen on that day," and the title, "Oracle of Yahweh," introduce further predictions. . . The vision of the transformation of nature and achievement of universal harmony is unified by the eschatological frame of reference.[13]

The final eschatological element is found. In verse 23 God completely changes things: "have mercy" cancels "Lo Ruhamah" of 1:6, and "I will not have mercy on her children" of 2:4. The phrase, "You are my people," cancels "not my people" of 1:9, fulfilling the promise of 2:3. In the reversal of the names at 2:1, "not my-people" was changed to "Children of the Living God."

עַם can be understood as the covenant partner of God when the people turned from Yahweh to Baal. Yahweh denied that they were His people. This means that

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[13]Andersen, p. 277.

they had been His people before they turned aside. So in the eschatological day, עַם becomes the covenant partner of God again (v. 23). Yahweh will make the covenant with עַם "in that day." עַם is the object of salvation in the eschatological time. Therefore, those who do not have a covenant relationship with Yahweh cannot be members of "my People." Only those who believe in God can be the objects of the salvation of God. Minjung theologians do not accept this point. They assert that Minjung are a certain sociological class, including non Christians, who can be saved.

In Hosea 4, six occurrences of עַם are found. All of them refer to the Northern Kingdom in which Hosea was born and prophesied. Three of the occurrences appear as עַמִּי (4:6, 8, 12) two עַם (4:9, 14), and one is עַמְּךָ (4:4). Hosea 4 is known as a "covenant lawsuit."[14] Hummel explains the role of prophets in the "covenant lawsuit" as follows:

> The prophet is a herald of the case which the heavenly court has filed against Israel for breach of covenant (e.g., Is. 1; Micah 6; Hos. 4; Jer. 2; Deut. 32) Here, as elsewhere, the lines between God and His spokesman, the prophet, often become very indistinct . . . God Himself often plays almost simultaneously the role of judge, plaintiff, and prosecuting attorney.[15]

Chapter 4 is composed of four sections, each with a degree of unity and individuality, and all functioning under the general form of the prophetic lawsuit and

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[14]Ewald, Die Propheten des Alten Bundes, 1867. He first coined the concept "covenant lawsuit." Douglas Stuart, Hosea-Jonah (Waco: Words Books, 1987), p. 69. Stuart calls it "Yahweh's case against Israel.

[15]Hummel, p. 170.

one of its sub-categories, the "court speech."[16] The structure may be schematized as follows: accusation against the land (vv. 1-3); accusation against the priesthood (vv. 4-10); accusation against the false cult (vv. 11-14); and the fall of the false cult (vv. 15-19). In this context עַם can be understood as the covenant partner. God brought accusations against Israel as עַם because of their breaking of the covenant. Douglas Stuart explains their breaking the concrete content of covenant:

> In support of the accusation that Israel has broken the covenant, Hosea now cites six crimes from the apodictic decalogue list (Ex. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:6-21), the very heart of the covenant stipulations. The six laws are cited in summary fashion, not in their decalogue order, the first five each via a single word, in the infinitive absolute ("cursing," "lying," etc.) and the last of the six in a clause of its own ("idols crowd against one another").[17]

Another reason why God brings accusations against the עַם is their lack of knowledge of God. This is one of the key themes of Hosea. The "knowledge of God" is particularly significant here, standing in parallelism with and summarizing the two sins: no faithfulness and no love. The use of "knowledge of God" elsewhere in Hosea (6:6), alone with other expressions of knowing God based upon the root עַם (2:22; 4:6; 5:4; 8:2; 13:4) demonstrates how in Hosea the term represents the essence of the covenant relationship between God and His people.[18] According to Herbert

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[16]Claus Westermann, Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), pp. 199ff.

[17]Stuart, Hosea-Jonah, p. 73.

[18]Ibid., p. 75.

B. Huffmon,[19] the term derives in part from the language of ancient Near Eastern treaties, where עַם represents the acknowledgement of the binding relationship between the parties, especially the loyalty of the vassal to the suzerain. Hosea thus accuses the Israelites of a contempt for God. This is central to the evidence against them.

The object of the knowledge of God is different according to different scholars. James Limburg asserts that "additionally there is a dimension of commitment in this notion, meaning the acknowledgement of God as the only God. This commitment is a sturdy loyalty to God which is synonymous with the notion of steadfast love (חֶסֶד) toward God (6:6). [20] Other scholars maintain that the object of knowledge is God's saving knowledge (4:1).[21] Hummel summarizes it as follows:

> Hosea's stress on "knowledge" is paralleled by another motif which informs much of the book, namely "remember," although the vocable itself is not prominent. Perhaps more than any other prophet, Hosea is the prophet of "Heilsgeschichte." Israel's basic failure is that she does not "remember," but pursues other lovers instead.[22]

Hosea used עַם as the covenant partner in a lawsuit. The עַם were accused because of religious failure: no faithfulness, no love and no knowledge of God, not merely because of their socially wrong behavior.

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[19]Herbert B. Huffmon, "The Treaty Background of Hebrew yada," BASOR 181 (1966): 34.

[20]James Limburg, Hosea-Micah (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988), p. 16.

[21]Theo. Laetsch, The Minor Prophets (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), p. 57.

[22]Hummel, p. 297.

Amos

In the book of Amos, עַם is mentioned four times (7:8; 8:2; 9:10, 14). Three of them are in the five visions (7:1-9:6). One is in the epilogue of the book, (9:7-15). The characteristic feature of them is "my people" (Yahweh's people).

Hee Suk Moon interprets "my people" in Amos sociologically.[23] It is necessary to examine whether "my people" is a social entity. Moon asserts that "my people" in 7:8 refers to the "haves." According to the context, "my people" parallels Jacob (7:2, 5) and the high places of Isaac (7:9). The context suggests that here Isaac is a surrogate for the Northern Kingdom, for the following reasons:[24] 1) The parallel "Israel" usually refers to the Northern Kingdom in Amos; 2) King Jeroboam is named; 3) The setting is the Bethel shrine. It is noteworthy that from the outset, although a native of Judah, nearly all of Amos' preaching is directed against the North.[25]

"My people" in 7:8 does not refer to any social class but to the whole people of the northern kingdom. Amos indicated that the northern kingdom was also the covenantal people by mentioning Jacob. Theo. Laetsch states:

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[23]Hee Suk Moon, "The Minjung Concept in the Book of Amos," in The Consciousness of Moses Liberation, pp. 228ff.

[24]Francis I. Anderson and David Noel Freedman, Amos (New York: Doubleday, 1989), p. 761. Elsewhere in the Bible all of Isaac's connections are with the south, and especially with Beer-Sheba. In v. 16 the LXX replaces Isaac with Jacob, an easier reading.

[25]Hummel, p. 309.

> The plumb line of God's revelation applied to Israel shows that God's people are no longer true to their covenant promise of loyal obedience.[26]

Moon maintains that "my people" in the vision of the basket of summer fruit is a group of aristocrats in the palace of the northern kingdom. God put judgment on the aristocrats because of their economic deprivation.[27] In chapter 8 there are unfair economic practices, but the text does not indicate who the deprivers were. In verse 3, where it states "The songs in temple (palace) will turn to wailing," הֵיכָל can be translated either "palace" or "temple."

The point is why the song in the temple (palace) will turn to wailing. Moon insists that Yahweh's judgment was put on a certain class, the aristocrats. Yahweh put His judgment on the whole people of the Northern Kingdom. Yahweh seldom called a certain social class my "people" in the Bible. In the context, "my people" is the covenantal people. This can be proved by the reference in verse 7 to the "pride of Jacob:" the covenant of Jacob. Hummel writes:

> As one would expect, Amos condemns other nations only for the violations of "natural law" for which they could be held responsible, while the particularities of covenant and election became the basis for the indictments of Israel and Judah- a point of departure which continues throughout the book.[28]

There was a theological dimension to Yahweh's judgement of "my people." As in verse 4, the apostates' own words are cited in the condemnation of them. Amos mentions three oaths by three kinds of religious symbols in verse 14: "shame of

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[26]Laetsch, p. 177.

[27]Moon, p. 230.

[28]Hummel, p. 313.

Samaria," "Dan," and "Beersheba." Douglas Stuart explains verse 14 as follows: "The hypocrisy of these people deeply religious and yet disgustingly selfish-violates the covenant. . . Their various idols and worship systems could not save them and indeed were a cause of their demise."[29]

In 9:10 "All the sinners among my people" is found. Moon interprets "my people" to refer to the class of leaders, not the oppressed people.[30] "My people," however, in verse 10 refers to the people of the northern kingdom, for in verse 8 the sinful kingdom parallels the house of Jacob and the house of Jacob parallels the house of Israel (v. 9). Thus "my people" does not refer to a part of the people of the northern kingdom; that is, the class of the leaders. This will become clear by distinguishing "all sinners" and "my people." First, Yahweh said: "I will shake the house of Israel (my people) among all the nations." Yahweh did not mean that all of the house of Israel would die. The qualification suggests that not the whole people, but only the sinners "of" (among) the people will be killed. According to Anderson, "In Amos 'my people' is always an object of positive regard, usually "my people Israel"[31] (7:8, 15; 8:3; 9:14). Thus "my people" does not refer strictly to the class of the leaders of the northern kingdom.

Moon treats the fourth use of "my people" (9:14) as a later addition and is therefore not dealt with by him. Many scholars maintain that this oracle is genuinely

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[29]Douglas Stuart, pp. 387-8.

[30]Moon, p. 231.

[31]Anderson, p. 871.

from Amos. According to Stuart, "It reflects standard covenantal eschatology long held prior to his day by orthodox Israelites."[32] In the light of prophets' principle, it has a simple tripartite form: 1) Oracles against Judah (and/or Israel), 2) Oracles against Gentile or foreign nations, 3) Promise of salvation to all, both Jew and Gentile who repent. It is "Law and Gospel" or "Judgment-salvation."[33] It is typical in prophecy that restoration follows after judgment. An example can be found in the book of Isaiah. The book of Isaiah has a tripartite form: chapters 1-12 are oracles against Judah. Chapters 13-23 are Gentile oracles. Chapters 24-27 pronounce salvation for all the redeemed. Another example can be seen in Joel. Chapter 1 through chapter 2, verse 27 pronounces judgment, while chapter 2, verses 28-32 pronounces salvation. The book of Amos has Gentile oracles (chapter 1-2), oracles against Israel (3-6), and a Messianic oracle (9:11-15).

Amos followed both the Mosaic and Davidic covenant. Especially Amos' Judaic citizenship makes the Davidic expression of eschatology even more credible. In this context, "my people" refers to the covenantal people, not merely to a certain social class nor exclusively to the aristocrats of the Northern kingdom. The four occurrences of "my people" refer to the people of the northern kingdom with respect to the Sinai covenant.

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[32]Stuart suggests that Watts (Vision and Prophecy in Amos 25-26), Reventlow (Das Amt des Propheten die Amos, 90-94), and Maag (Text, Wortschatz und Begriffswelt des Buches Amos, 247-51) are among recent commentators supporting the oracles authenticity. cf. Stuart, p. 397.

[33]Hummel, p. 169.

Isaiah

Isaiah, chapters 1 and 6 are here selected for the purpose of understanding עַם in Isaiah. Chapter 1 is very significant to understanding the book of Isaiah. It is the introduction to the book.[34] Chapter 1 has עַם three times. Two of them refer to Israel, one to Gomorrah (1:10). Recent scholars maintain that this chapter is a "covenant lawsuit."[35] Georg Ewald suggested first that Isaiah 1 is the "Great Arraign- ment."[36] Chapter 1 has the same structure as a suzerain treaty: Heaven and earth are summoned for witnesses, in the same way they were when a suzerainty treaty was made. Thus Isa. 1:2a: "Hear, O heavens and give ear, O earth." Another indication appears in Isaiah's use of the term "son." The superior power used that term to address the subordinate power with whom it had a treaty.[37] Isa. 1:2b reads, "Sons have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me." In the context, עַם can be understood as one part of the covenant between God and Israel.

Chapter 6 is the account of Isaiah's call.[38] עַם is used three times in

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[34]John N. Oswalt, The Book of Isaiah chapters 1-39 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), p. 81.

[35]Hummel, p. 199.

[36]See footnote #14 in Chapter V.

[37]Robert Marshall, "The Structure of Isaiah 1-12," BR 7 (1962): 26. Herbert Huffmon, "The Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets," JBL 28 (1959): 285-295. Huffmon has shown that a trial for breach of covenant must be intended.

[38]Edward J. Young, The Book of Isaiah vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), pp. 233-4. Calvin has maintained that this chapter is the account of an inauguration in preparation for a particular ministry. On

chapter 6, all of which refer to Israel. It is necessary to study the word in the context of chapter 6. Chapter 6 verse 1 reads, "In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on the throne." This means that there was a human king of Judah but Yahweh was the real king. According to Edward J. Young, "God is king and judge."[39] The God of creation was attended by His heavenly court long before there were earthly monarchs. There are many passages in the Old Testament which show Yahweh's kingship. God is regarded as sitting upon a throne (Ps. 103:19a; Ezek. 1:26-28) from where He watches over the whole earth (Ps. 33:13). In the praise offered to Him by Israel He was regarded as the King. Although the whole world is the sphere of God's rule, He is pre-eminently the King of Israel, the people whom He created and chose to be His special possession.[40] He is the true King of Israel (Deut. 33:5; 1 Sam. 12:12) and Israel was the kingdom of Yahweh (1 Chron. 17:14; 28:5; 2 Chron. 13:8; cf. Ex. 19:6). In 6:5, Isaiah regarded Yahweh as King: "and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty." This means that עַם in chapter 6 did not belong to a human king but to the true king Yahweh.

Chapter 6 verse 5b reads, "And I live among a people of unclean lips." When "unclean" (טָמֵא) is defined the character of עַם will appear. In the Old Testament, one of the duties of a priest is to distinguish (e.g., Lev. 10:10; Ezek. 22:26; 44:23)

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the other hand, the view is now more generally held that the chapter presents Isaiah's original call to his prophetic ministry.

[39]Ibid., p. 238.

[40]Marshall, p. 812.

the unclean from the clean, the sacred from the profane. What matters is ritual uncleanness, which cannot be reconciled with the holiness of Yahweh. Things that are unclean include certain animals and groups of animals, serious diseases, sexual discharges and aberrations, death and certain activities, especially all those associated with the alien cult.[41] According to Helmer Ringgren, the metaphorical usage of uncleanness is Idolatry and sin. Metaphorically טָמֵא is used of unclean conditions and actions. Often apostasy from Yahweh is involved including pagan practices and the cult of other gods.[42]

The uncleanness of Isaiah and the people stands in sharp contrast with the holiness of Yahweh. When Isaiah's lips are purified, his sin is forgiven (6:7) so that he can proclaim the word of the Holy One. The purification of the prophet also symbolized Yahweh's purification of his people (6:7-13). In chapter 6 the people of the unclean lips means the sinful people.

In the account of Isaiah's call, the character of עַם is: 1) the people of the true King Yahweh, that is, primarily not a political entity, and 2) the people of unclean lips are the religiously sinful people of Israel. On the basis of these characteristics of עַם in the introduction of the book and the prophet's call, the whole book of Isaiah was written.

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[41]Anre, "tame," TDOT, 5:336.

[42]Helmer Ringgren, "tame," TDOT, 5:337.

Micah

Six occurrences of עַם are found in Micah chapters 2 and 3. Five of them are in the form of עַמִּי and one is הָעָם (2:11). The former refers to the people of God and the latter to Israel. Thus all six refer to the people of Judah, to which Micah ministered as a prophet. According to the content of both chapters, socially and morally Judah presented a dark picture during the latter part of the eighth century. The wealthy coveted the lands (2:1-2) and robbed the poor (2:8), casting women out of their possessions (2:9). The people were under the powerful control of false prophets (2:11) who prophesied for reward (3:6,11) and priests who taught for money (3:11). The corrupt concept of Yahweh held by the people was little different from the heathen concept of their gods (3:11b).

"My people" lived in the previously mentioned social condition. Moon suggests that those upon whom the woe is pronounced were the military and government officials who populated the small defensive cities like Moresheth.[43] Moon holds that my people were economic victims and people from countryside.[44] It is necessary to examine the context. Micah used the covenantal term Jacob (2:12; 3:1, 8, 9) and Israel (3:1, 9). Micah refers to "my people" as members of the house of Israel: the covenant community. Leslie C. Allen explains as follows:

> The God of Micah is supremely the covenant God. He bears the covenant name of Yahweh. The Judean community among whom Micah ministered in Jerusalem

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[43]Moon, "The Concept of Micah's my People," p. 112.

[44]Ibid., p. 108.

> is described by the traditional covenant terms, (house of) Israel and Jacob. They are "his people" and "my people" to Yahweh, which is exemplified in the series of saving acts that commenced at the Exodus and culminated in the their arrival in Canaan (6:4f).[45]

"My people" in Micah should be interpreted in the light of the covenant, not of sociology. Micah did not indicate where "my people" came from, either city or countryside. "My people" refers to the members of the covenant community. The reason why Yahweh put His judgment upon them was not only their unjust economic affairs but also their religiously wrong activities (2:11; 3:6, 11).

Jeremiah

The superscription (Jer. 1:2) indicates that the date of Jeremiah's call was in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, that is, about 627 B.C.[46] His last recorded words (chap. 44) were spoken in Egypt, sometime after 587 B.C. Jeremiah ministered for about 40 years, from the last period of the Southern kingdom to after the fall of that kingdom. This means that Jeremiah's era was a turning point in the history of Israel from the monarchy to the Exile.

It is significant to study עַם in the book of Jeremiah. One of Jeremiah's theological themes is the covenant, that is, the covenant between Yahweh and Israel.

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[45]Leslie C. Allen, The Book of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah and Micah (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), p. 254.

[46]H. H. Rowley, "The Early Prophecies of Jeremiah in Their Setting, in "A Prophet to the Nations, ed. L. G. Perdue and B. W. Kovacs (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1984), p. 33. Hummel, p. 229. But C. F. Whitley, "The Date of Jeremiah's Call," in A Prophet to the Nations, p. 73, and other scholars assert that Jeremiah's call was in 605 B.C., after Josiah's death.

The word "covenant" occurs twenty three times, most of these in reference to Yahweh's covenant with his people,[47] but five times in connection with the covenant that Zedekiah made with the people to liberate their slaves.[48] There are many words which reflect covenant thought in Jeremiah without mentioning the words "covenant," for example "listen," and "not to listen."[49]

The many references in Jeremiah to the Exodus show that he was fully aware of the tradition of Israel's election at the time of the Exodus.[50] Jeremiah was also aware of Yahweh's covenant with the house of David.[51] It is necessary to examine עַם in Jeremiah's new covenant (31:31-34). Moon interprets the new covenant sociologically in his article, "God's Saving Work through the Poor: the Poor Minjung at the Time of Jeremiah."[52] He maintains that the new covenant would give material liberation to the Minjung.

In the text (31:31-34) עַם occurs once. עַם was the covenant partner of Yahweh: "I will be their God, and they will be my people." עַם parallels the house

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[47]Jer. 11:2, 3, 9, 10; 14:21; 22:9; 31:31, 32, 33: 32:40; 33:20, 21; 50:5.

[48]34:8, 10, 13, 15, 18.

[49]J. A. Thompson, The Book of Jeremiah (Grand Rapids: Wm .B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), p. 60.

[50]Jer. 2:2-7; 7:21-22; 16:14-14; 23:7-8; 31:31-34.

[51]23:5-6; cf. 22:30.

[52]Hee Suk Moon, "The Prophet of the Idealistic World and the Realistic World," The Consciousness of Moses' Liberation (Seoul: Yang Sea Press, 1985), p. 243.

of Israel and the house of Judah (31:31). Yahweh made the new covenant with עַמִּי. By studying the character of the new covenant with עַם, the character of עַם can be understood. According to Thompson[53] the structure of the new covenant was formulated in accordance with the pattern of ancient Near Eastern treaties. The suzerian treaty accented the relationship between overlord and vassal. The continued existence of the covenant depended on the continuing recognition of Yahweh as Lord, and continuing obedience to the terms of the covenant (Jer. 11:1-8). The character of עַם is the covenant partner as vassal. It does not imply that the partner is socially low class or poor. Rather Yahweh would undertake a new act of divine grace and restore the ancient covenant relationship by writing His law in the people's hearts, forgiving their sin, and restoring the basic personal relationship "their God-my people."[54]

Jeremiah used the words "the time is coming." The words are an eschatological formula that places the prophecy in messianic times in the Day of the Lord.[55] Hummel states:

> "New" here, as often, is semitechnical for "eschatological fulfillment of prophecy" or the like. . . Rather we have a prophecy of the full, eschatological triumph of the Gospel when even the faithful will no longer be simul peccator.[56]

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[53]Thompson, p. 60.

[54]Ibid., p. 116.

[55]Charles L. Feinberg, Jeremiah (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1982), pp. 218-9.

[56]Hummel, pp. 251-2.

The new covenant does not refer to material liberation as Moon insists, but to the forgiveness of the sin (v. 34) of the covenantal people (עַם). Jeremiah foretold the coming of the new covenant in the messianic era. עַם is the antitype of the chosen people, the believers. The era of Jeremiah was a turning point in the Israelites' history from the monarchy to the Exile. This means that their political system was broken and their king was captured by Babylon. The people of Israel were only under the rule of God, just as they had been before the monarchy. Jeremiah shows that the people of Israel continued to be the people of God, even though the political structure was broken.

Summary

The reason Samuel rejected the people's desire for a human king is that he was afraid of a craven imitation of pagan ways and of a flagrant rejection of Yahweh. This reflected the theological understanding of the people at the beginning of the monarchy. Saul, the prince, ruled over the people of God even though the people were a political entity under a centralized authority. David was called the shepherd, entrusted with taking care of the people of God although he was a king. The Israelite kings were not gods but Yahweh's vassals. The kings ruled over Israel as vassal rather than as overlords. In this respect the people can be understood as a theological entity during the monarchy. The people were not only a sociological entity but also a theological one as covenantal community members. Minjung theologians have treated only one aspect of the people. Israelite kings were also covenant members.

Therefore, God put a judgment both upon the kings and the people. In the Bible the people were not treated separately in terms of the oppressors and the oppressed among the people.

In contrast to the Minjung theologians' narrowly sociological interpretation of the "people," every prophet deals with the people as both a sociological and a theological entity. Hosea, whom Minjung theologians ignore, treats the people as the covenant partner of God. Hosea brought accusation against the people because of religious failure, not merely because of their social wrong doing. In Amos, the people does not refer to only "haves" as with Moon's interpretation. Amos treats the people as members of one covenant community. Amos follows both the Mosaic and Davidic covenants. Isaiah also refers to the people in the covenant lawsuit (chapter 1). At Isaiah's call the "people" were under God's reign and were a theologically sinful people. Moon interprets "my people" in Micah as economic victims and the people from countryside. Micah, however, classifies the people neither politically (government officers and citizens) nor geographically (urban dwellers and country dwellers) but as one covenant people. Moon insists that the new covenant of Jeremiah could give material liberation to the Minjung. The new covenant does not refer to material liberation but to the forgiveness of the sin of the covenantal people. Jeremiah shows that the people continued to be the people of God although the political structure was broken.

The people in the monarchial period and the prophets have the same characteristics of "the people" as that of "people" in the pre-monarchial period: the

people continued to be a theological entity under the human kings. Consideration will now be given to what characteristics the people have in the exilic and postexilic period without the human kings.

CHAPTER VI

THE EXILIC AND POSTEXILIC PERIOD

This chapter will discuss the people in the last period of the Old Testament and the interpretation of עַם הָאָרֶץ. Minjung theologians seldom treat the "people" in Ezekiel and in the postexilic period, because it seems that there was no sociological conflict among the people. This supports the conclusion that they have concentrated on only the sociological aspect of the people. The Book of Ezekiel will be used to examine the people in the exilic period and to discuss what characteristics the people had in the Babylonian captivity. The chronicler's works will be studied such as: Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. By studying the people in the last part of the Old Testament, the characteristics of the people throughout the history of the Old Testament can be fully understood.

The עַם הָאָרֶץ is one of the hottest issues for Minjung theologians in understanding the "people" in the Old Testament. Minjung theologians interpret it as follows: the עַם הָאָרֶץ referred to a high sociological class and economical upper class in the pre-exilic period. In the postexilic period the term referred to an ignored and lower sociological class. The term will be examined throughout the Old

Testament according to its contexts. Minjung theologians sometimes ignore the context of the term.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel, who spent his entire ministry in Babylon,[1] also uses covenant terms (Ezek. 11:20): "Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God." Besides the covenant terms, Ezekiel has his favorite phrase: "I am Yahweh" (אֲנִי יהוה),[2] "I am Yahweh your God" (אֲנִי יהוה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם),[3] and "I am Yahweh their God" (אֲנִי יהוה אֶהְיֶה לָהֶם).[4] This phrase occurs 84 times in Ezekiel. Those phrases express Ezekiel's theology concerning עַם.

Chapter 20 with its phrases is taken as an example to be studied concerning עַם: The phrase, "I am Yahweh" occurs six times, and "I am Yahweh your God," three times in the chapter. עַם occurs three times in the chapter; it does not, however,

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[1]H. Hummel, The World Becoming Flesh. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1979), p. 262.

[2]Ezek. 5:15, 17; 6:7,10, 13, 14; 7:49, 27; 11:10, 12; 12:15, 16, 20, 25; 13:9, 14, 21, 23; 14:4, 7, 8, 9; 15:7; 16:62; 17:21, 24, (two) 20:12, 26, 38, 42, 44; 22:22; 23:49; 24:24, 27; 25:5, 7, 11, 17; 26:6, 14; 28:22, 23, 24, 26; 29:6, 9, 21; 30:8, 19, 25, 26; 32:29; 34:24, 17; 35:9, 15; 36:11, 23, 36 (twice), 38; 37:6, 13, 28; 38:23; 39:6, 7, 22.

[3]Ezek. 20:5, 7, 19, 20. אֲנִי יהוה אֶהְיֶהלָהֶם can be translated in two ways: 1. "I am Yahweh your God," which the Septuagint translated. 2. "I, Yahweh, am your God." Yahweh is taken to be a mere apposition. This thesis follows the translation of the Septuagint.

[4]Ezek. 34:24, 30; 39:28.

refer to Israel, but to other nations (20:34, 35, 41). עַם actually denotes Israel thirteen times in the chapter: "Israel"[5] and "the elders of Israel"[6] and "the land of Israel."[7] Therefore this writer regards Israel to be עַם in this section. It was to Israel that God spoke the words "I am Yahweh" or "I am Yahweh, your God" in this context.

This phrase can be found in Ex. 20:2 as a statement of self-introduction. According to Walther Zimmerli, it is the disclosure of Yahweh's personal name, a name containing the full richness and honor of the One naming himself.[8] This phrase indicates that the statement of the One introducing Himself under the name Yahweh also stands in a divine and lordly relationship to the group of people designated in the suffix (that is, to Israel, the people of Yahweh).

In Ezekiel 20 the preambular pronouncement of Yahweh's name is explicated by two categories of interpretation: "I swore to the seed of the house of Jacob and revealed myself to them" (20:5), and the passage repeats: "I swore to them, saying, I am Yahweh, your God" (20:5). The self-introduction is a self-revelation. The goal of revelation can only be described with the formula of the initial revelation: "They shall

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[5]Israel: 20:5, 13, 27, 30, 31, 39, 40, 44.

[6]20:1, 3.

[7]20:38, 42.

[8]Walther Zimmerli, I am Yahweh (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), p. 1.

know that I am Yahweh."[9] Its goal is not some objective, historical state of affairs, but rather it is the recognition of Yahweh's self-introduction precisely in His name.

It is necessary to turn to the often repeated phrase; "I swore to them, saying, I am Yahweh, your God." Yahweh's self-introduction is qualified as an oath.[10] An oath is a promise of loyalty that is verified by witnesses. The אֲנִי יהוה, Yahweh's self-introduction, is thus qualified as an event of loyalty. Zimmerli states:

> This revelation of Yahweh's name is a revealing of Yahweh himself; it comes to certain people, bind itself to them, and for the sake of its oath remains loyal to them. . . "I am Yahweh, your God." This express explicit the transitive nature of Yahweh's fundamental revelation to Israel.[11]

It is necessary to pay attention to the context in which the phrase is used. First, in 20:5, "On the day I chose Israel . . . 'I am Yahweh your God.'" בחר is used only one time in the book of Ezekiel. Zimmerli interprets it as follows:

> Ezekiel 20 recounts the history of Israel's election not simply as a sacred story. Rather, in a thoroughgoing theological reflection the divine call that is evident in it is made plain, . . . Yahweh's election encounter with Israel means both his self-revelation and his entering into a binding relationship with the people.[12]

Second, in 20:7, "And I said to them, Cast away the detestable things your eyes feast on, every one of you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt: I am Yahweh, your God." Here Yahweh's self-revelation contains Yahweh's direct

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[9]Andrew W. Blackwood, Ezekiel: Prophecy of Hope (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1965), p. 138.

[10]Walther Eichrodt, Ezekiel (London: SCM Press, 1970), p. 166.

[11]Zimmerli, p. 11.

[12]Ibid., p. 407.

command to his people to extricate themselves from every connection with other gods. Third, in 20:12: "Also I gave them my sabbaths as a sign between us, so they would know that I the Lord made them holy." When God gave laws to Israel the phrase "I am Yahweh your God" is used (cf. 20:19, 20). Fourth, 20:42 reads, "Then you will know that I am the Lord, when I bring you into the land of Israel, the land I had sworn with uplifted hand to give to your fathers." The phrase is used in the time of the Exodus. Fifth, in 20:44, "you will know that I am Yahweh, when I deal with you for my name's sake and not according to your evil ways." The phrase, "That God has acted for the sake of His name" occurs eight times in Ezekiel (20:14, 22, 44; 36:21, 22, 23; 39:35). Blackwood interprets it as the grace of God.[13]

The self-introduction or self revelation to Israel (עַם) is used as an oath between Yahweh and His people. It is also used in the context of election, casting off idols, the giving of laws and the sabbath, and for Yahweh's name sake. When Ezekiel interpreted Israel's history in the Babylonian exile, he dealt with Israel (עַם) as a religious entity.

Chronicles

Three books namely Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah have the same historical background, the late fifth century B.C., and they are the last books of the Masoretic text. Many scholars agree with the theory of their common authorship, the

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[13]Blackwood, p. 132.

Chronicler.[14] These books will be discussed chronologically. According to the Masoretic text order, Chronicles is placed after Ezra-Nehemiah. However, the Septuagint rearranged the order: Chronicles was followed by Ezra-Nehemiah because Ezra-Nehemiah is the chronological sequel to Chronicles. The text may prove the order: The conclusion of 2 Chronicle 36 (vv. 22-23) is identical with the beginning of Ezra (1:1-3a) that is, Cyrus' decree. Horace D. Hummel explains the order of those books in the Masoretic text:

> The apparent answer seems to be that it was felt appropriate to conclude the canon with a survey or "Chronicle" of the entire canonical history. Conclusion with Cyrus' decree would have been preferred in spite of its overlap with Ezra, in order to close both book and canon on a promissory, even eschatological note (cf. similarly the conclusion of Kings).[15]

The historical background of all three books is the late fifth century B.C. Ezra returned from Babylon in 458 B.C. and Nehemiah in 445 B.C.[16] One of the characteristics of the third quarter of the fifth century was theocracy. Schultz summarizes the situation:

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[14]Hummel agrees that Chronicles and Ezra-Nehemiah share a common author, but not necessarily Ezra. Peter R. Ackroyd, I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah (London: SCM Press, 1973), pp. 19-23. Ackroyd accepts as the Chronicler's works, Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah and also the order of books as given above. H. G. M. Williamson, Israel in the Books of Chronicles (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 5-70. Williamson rejects the common authorship of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Hummel, p. 605.

[15]Hummel, p. 617.

[16]Most conservatives accept this theory. Disagreeing on this point is John Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1981), pp. 376-386. This can be summarized: Ezra returned under Artaxerxes II (404-358), there is a scribal error in the date given in Ezra 7:7, where the original record had "thirty-seven" instead of "seventh." He accepts the later date: Ezra arrived in about 428 B.C.

> Although the exiles, who had returned after the exile and the great judgment upon Judah and Jerusalem had taken its course, were unable to establish the kingdom as it had existed under David, they were permitted under the governorship of Nehemiah and the leadership of Ezra to achieve the purpose of wholehearted religious devotion to God as explained by the emphasis of the Book of Chronicles.[17]

The Chronicler wrote his book to express the theocracy: the rule of God over his people even under foreign domination. Bright explains the postexilic community as such: "Their ideal was a community whose major business would be to become the holy people of God."[18]

It is necessary to touch on the historical background of the Israelite community in the postexilic period in order to understand the Chronicler's theocracy. While the Israelites were under the Babylonian kingdom, they hoped to rebuild the Davidic kingdom in Palestine. After the Babylonian captivity, Zerubbabel was appointed as a governor by the Persian kingdom. Haggai applied Messianic language to Zerubbabel (2:20-23).[19] However, Zerubbabel suddenly disappeared. David's throne was not re-established. According to Bright, "It is likely that the Persians did strip the Davidic house of its political prerogative. Judah seems to have continued as a sort of theocratic community under the authority of the high priest Joshua and his successors."[20]

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[17]S. J. Schultz, "Chronicles," Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia vol. A-C, p. 812.

[18]John Bright, The Kingdom of God (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1952), p. 170.

[19]Hummel, p. 359.

[20]John Bright, A History of Israel, p. 355.

On March 5, 15 B.C. the second temple was completed. Completion of the Temple had given them status as a worshiping community. The Israelites could worship again at the Temple. The Chronicler began to work at this time. Hummel explains the Chronicler's theocracy as follows:

> The Chronicler's effort to stimulate the rebuilding of the theocracy may be pictured as an ellipse focusing on two interrelated divine institutions, temple (with priesthood) and Davidic monarch (in the holy city, Zion). David is the key figure throughout, but let us first explore Chronicles' overriding accent on liturgy or cultus. . . Now that Israel's political glory was a thing of the past, it must be underscored anew that the true vocation of the chosen people was to offer God the homage of an undefiled cult in the Jerusalem temple.[21]

When Israel was under foreign authority she concentrated on cult. S. Szikszai states, "The absence of a Jewish monarch during the Persian occupation contributed to the increasing of the priest's authority. The title "high priest" appears for the first time in reference to the postexilic Joshua."[22]

It is known that the postexilic Israelite community was the "law community" established by Ezra. The "law community" contained the theocratic characteristics. Bright observes it as follows:

> The Holy Commonwealth of Judaism was an expression of that dominant note in Old Testament theology: The rule of God over his people. Indeed Apocalypse and Law point to an inescapable paradox in the notion of the kingdom of God. . . . It (law) expresses the deep conviction that God will rule only over an obedient and righteous people.[23]

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[21]Hummel, p. 629.

[22]S. Szikszai, "Theocracy" IDB 4:618.

[23]John Bright, The Kingdom of God, p. 117.

The postexilic Israelite community under foreign authority concentrated on observing the cult and keeping the law. During this period the Chronicler expressed theocratic characteristics.

It is necessary to examine עַם in the book of Chronicles.[24] In order to understand עַם it is helpful to study the purpose of Chronicles. Scholars agree that Chronicles was written with a religious purpose.[25] Hummel summarizes the purpose:

> To establish the self-understanding of the postexilic community as essentially a religious entity, revolving around the two divine institutions of the temple and the Davidic dynasty.[26]

The Chronicler wrote that in the history of Israel everything is the result of direct divine intervention: for example, Jehoshaphat's battle against Moab and Ammon (2 Chronicles 20). God usually won the victory for Israel against all odds (2 Chron. 13:8-15; 14:9-13; 15:14; 16:7-9, etc.). R. H. Pfeiffer interprets it as such:

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[24]Mark A. Throntveit, When Kings Speak (Atlanta: Scholar Press, 1987), p. 97. The result of his survey about the date of Chronicles are as follows: 515 B.C.: Freedman, Cross, Newsome, Porter, Petersen. 420 B.C.: Young, Elmslie. 400 B.C.: Albright, Rothstein-Haenel, van Selms, Eissfeldt, Myers. 390 B.C.: Rudolph. 360 B.C.: Bowman, Bentzen. 350 B.C.: Ackroyd. 325 B.C.: Gelin, Kuhl. 310 B.C.: Robert. 300 B.C.: Benzinger, Curtis-Madsen, Galling, Kittel, DeVaux, Welten. 280 B.C.: Noordtzij, Haller. 250 B.C.: Pfeiffer, Torrey, Goettsberger, Noth, Cazelles. 160 B.C.: Lods, Bousett, Kennett.

[25]S. J. Schultz, p. 812. E. J. Young, An Introduction to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1952), p. 393.

[26]Hummel, p. 619.

> Such reports of miraculous interventions of God in the course of history were freely invented by P and the Chronicler, in order to illustrate God's omnipotence and his requirements and complete trust in Him.[27]

The Chronicler accents the covenant with God: For when Israel was as yet unborn God made a covenant with Abraham, and then later revealed His law to Moses on Sinai. Especially the Davidic covenant is notable (1 Chronicles 17; 2 Chron. 21:7). The Chronicler substituted the Davidic covenant for the Mosaic but kept the latter's stipulations simply as laws by themselves.[28] This means that the Chronicler does emphasize the Davidic covenant and its powers. Schultz writes about the Chronicler's covenant as follows:

> As God's people they had a covenant relationship with Him. Defection from their commitment as God's people and disobedience to the prophets who were God's spokesman often brought God's judgment which is indicated concerning several kings.[29]

The Chronicler expresses the theological character of the books through theocratic language.[30] Several expressions of theocracy can be found in 1 Chron. 29:11: "For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours, Yours is the kingdom, O Lord," and in verse 23: "Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord (cf. 1 Chron. 28:5) and God made kings (1 Chron. 14:2; 29:23; 28:5). The expression of theocracy

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[27]R. H. Pfeiffer, "Chronicles," IDB 1:574.

[28]Dennis J. McCarthy, "Covenant and Laws in Chronicles-Nehemiah," CBQ 44 (1982): 26.

[29]Schultz, p. 812.

[30]Hummel, p. 629. Pfeiffer, p. 574. Young, p. 393.

is found in the sacrifices (1 Chron. 21:26; 2 Chron. 7:12b-15), and in the temple (2 Chron. 7:1-3).[31]

The other aspect of theocracy in Chronicles is the Davidic kingdom (1 Chron. 17:14; 2 Chron. 9:8). The Chronicler expresses God's rule over Israel through the Davidic kingdom. Hummel summarizes as follows:

> The Chronicler's effort to stimulate the rebuilding of the theocracy may be pictured as an ellipse focusing on two interrelated divine institutions, temple (with priesthood) and Davidic monarchy (in the holy city, Zion).[32]

In the progressive revelation of Biblical eschatology the theocratic conception of the Davidic kingdom supplied the pattern of the ideas concerning the coming of the Kingdom of God.[33]

Chapter 17 of 1 Chronicles is here selected for the purpose of examining its use of the term עַם. Chapter 17 has seven occurrences of עַם. All of them refer to Israel as Yahweh's people: "My People" (17:6, 7, 9, 10) and "Your people" (17:21 [two], 22). In this chapter God made the everlasting covenant with David's house (vv. 11-14). God commended David to shepherd His people (v. 6: "My People"). God adopted David's descendant as God's sons (v. 13). God selected David and his sons as representative of God's rule over His people Israel: "You say to My servant

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[31]Mark A. Throntveit, p. 78. He hold that following passages express the theocratic ideal: 1 Chron. 17:14; 21:26; 2 Chron. 6:39-42; 7:1-3, 12b-15; 9:8; 21:7a.

[32]Hummel, p. 629.

[33]Schultz, "Theocracy," Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia vol. Q-Z. p. 70. Bright, The Kingdom of God p. 168.

David . . . I took you from the sheepfold and from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel" (v. 6). God used the word "My people" throughout the chapter. Even David, the king of Israel, used Israel not as my people- in the secular sense of actually being David's people - but Your people, God's people. God was the real King and David's descendants were shepherds of the people. __ was the people of God. Chronicles in the postexilic period continued to use the idea of theocracy. The Chronicler held that the theocracy began at and continued from creation.[34]

Ezra

The date of the composition of the book of Ezra is the fifth century. The fifth century date of the Aramaic sections in Ezra are supported by the Elephantine materials, and the large number of Persian words throughout adds to the case.[35] The book of Ezra and the book of Nehemiah were probably not originally one composition. Evidence that the two books were originally distinct compositions is provided by the appearance of a superscription in Neh. 1:1.[36] Therefore each of books will be treated separately.

Ezra chapter 10 has five occurrences of עַם: Three of them refer to Israel, and two, עַם הָאָרֶץ, refer to the inhabitants of the pagan countries (vv. 2, 11. cf. 9:1). A report about intermarriage is given to Ezra (9:1-15). Verse 11 expresses the reason

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[34]Peter R. Ackroyd, I & II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, p. 31.

[35]Hummel, p. 597. Young, p. 370.

[36]Ibid., p. 597.

that Israel should not intermarry with the people of land: "Which You commanded by Your servants the prophets, saying, 'The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land, with their abominations which have filled it from one end to another with their impurity.'"

Ezra cited many passages from other books in the Old Testament. The book is a mosaic of biblical phrases: "the land which you are entering, take possession of it," echoes Deut. 7:1; "A land unclean with the pollution of the peoples of the lands," recalls Lev. 18:24-30. These citations show that עַם sinned against the theological law not against social laws. The intermarriage of עַם was an abomination to God. Ezra said to Israel: "You have transgressed and have taken pagan wives, adding to the guilt of Israel" (10:10). Therefore, עַם wept very bitterly (10:1) and עַם sat in the open square of the house of God (10:9) in order to repent of their sin.

Ezra asked those who had intermarried to divorce, because they committed sin against the law, not because of a social problem, and for the sake of the community of the people of God. Fredrick Carlson Holmgren observes:

> These marriages were undercutting the foundations of the community. For this reason, Ezra and the Jewish leadership chose the drastic action of divorce; it was a decision for the community. . . Those who participate in intermarriage are involving themselves not merely with the other person but with the interplay of primal forces and beliefs that may be in conflict with each other.[37]

According to J. G. McConville, the returned exiles had no political power, no armies, and as yet no walls. Further, they were subject all the time to the lure of the softer

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[37]Fredrick Carlson Holmgren, Ezra, Nehemiah: Israel Alive Again (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987), pp. 84-5.

option of being swallowed up by their stronger neighbors, who offered gods enough to satisfy their unfastidious consciences.[38]

In verse 3 a covenant renewal is reflected:[39] "Now therefore, let us make a covenant with our God to put away all these wives and those who have been born to them." The covenant was broken by the sin of intermarriage, and also by all the sins committed by the Jews before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. In the situation sketched here the immediate recognition of the sin of intermarriage was most important. There was also an admission of guilt.[40]

It is necessary to note that Ezra asked all of those who were intermarried to divorce: Priests, the sons of Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brethren (vv. 18-22), Levites, Kelita (vv. 23-24), also the Pharatries, the sons of Parosh (vv. 25-43). No one was excluded, from high priests to laity. עַם in Ezra refers to the whole of Israel, not to a certain sociological class. עַם committed sin against the theological law not against social laws. Ezra did not allow the community of עַם to intermarry for the sake of the community, to keep their religious purity. Intermarriage meant the breaking of the covenant. Ezra dealt with עַם as a theological entity.

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[38]J. G. MacConville, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1985), p. 71.

[39]Dennis J. McCarthy, "Covenant and law in Chronicles-Nehemiah," CBQ 44 (1982): 33.

[40]F. Charles Fensham, The Book of Ezra and Nehemiah (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982), p. 134.

Nehemiah

The book of Nehemiah is one of the latest books and shows us the postexilic situation, especially the reformation after the building of the second Temple. The book of Nehemiah continues Ezra's reformation. One aspect of the reformation is reflected in chapter 9. The structure of the chapter is a covenant renewal. Hummel observes as follows:

> The context of Ezra 9 is the confrontation with the problem of mixed marriage, while Neh. 9 forms a major part of the great ceremony of covenant renewal, the climax of Ezra's labors. From a theological viewpoint, it is one of the Bible's classical statements of Heilsgeschichte, of the "theology of recital," of the prevenience of the Gospel of the "mighty acts of God" to man's responding covenant renewal.[41]

According to McCarthy's analysis,[42] the covenant renewal actually begins with Ezra's reading of the law, and the people being told not to grieve at hearing God's word (Nehemiah 8:8-11). Later and bitter experience inhibits the joy of the days of Asa and Hezekiel. Then there is a review of Israel's history with a confessional flavor (9:6-31) which turns with וְאַתָּה again into a penitential prayer. Then the people, not the leader, "make a covenant written on a sealed document." The names of the signers of the document follow and then the common people enter into the covenant. Here the leader never really reassumes the initiative, though Nehemiah does sign first (10:1). The objects of the renewal of the covenant are avoidance of mixed marriages (cf. 10:28), observance of the sabbath, and support of worship.

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[41]Hummel, p. 616.

[42]McCarthy, p. 34.

In this context עַם is found five times: twice it refers to Israel (10: 24, 32), twice to the peoples of the lands, and once to the Egyptians. Israel (עַם) is the partner in God's covenant. All Israel, from governor, Nehemiah, and priest, to the common people (10:1-27), signed the document. The writer of Nehemiah mentions the covenant with Abraham (9:7) and the Sinai covenant (9:13) in order to show that Israel was the covenantal partner.

It is worth while to pay attention to the fact that the writer of Nehemiah accents God's mercy repeatedly: "When they cried to You, You heard from heaven; and according to Your abundant mercies you gave them deliverers who saved them from the hand of their enemies" (cf. 9:28, 31, 32). In Nehemiah, one of the last books, עַם can be understood as the object of God's deliverance in His gracious salvation history, not because of their cry, but because of God's abundant mercy.

עַם הָאָרֶץ

There are many occurrences of עַם הָאָרֶץ (hereafter "the people of the land") in the Old Testament.[43] This is one of the crucial issues in the interpretation of עַם. Byung Moo Ahn, one of the Korean New Testament scholars, interprets "the people

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[43]E. W. Nicholson, "The Meaning of the Expression am haarez in the Old Testament," JSS 10(1965): 59. Nicholson numbers the occurrences of the phrase at somewhere between sixty and seventy. M. Sulzberger, The Am Haarez: The Ancient Hebrew Parliament (Philadelphia: Julius H. Greenstone, 1910), p. 16. Sulzberger asserts 49 times. Jung Choon Kim, "Old Testament Reference for Minjung," in History and Faith (Seoul: Korea Theological Study Institute, 1987), p. 31, maintains it 40 times.

of the land" sociologically. According to Ahn, there were two characteristics of "the people of the land": the preexilic "people of the land" were the upper social class and rulers, the postexilic "people of the land" were the low social class and ignored people.[44] This section will discuss whether or not "the people of the land" were high class in the preexilic society and low class in the postexilic society. This will be studied according to the context.

In Gen. 23:7, 12-13, the writer of Genesis says, "Then Abraham rose and bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites (בְּנֵי-חֵת, vv. 10, 11, 16, 18, 20). Both expressions are used of the inhabitants of Hebron in contra-distinction to the foreigner Abraham. According to E. W. Nicholson, "the group of men involved in the business with Abraham are referred to representatively as the "the people of the land" or בְּנֵי-חֵת.[45] In Gen. 27:6, it is found that Joseph sold corn to "all the people of the land." The plain meaning of this text is surely that Joseph was responsible for supplying corn to any Egyptian ("the people of the land") who might wish to buy it. The expression cannot here be referring to a specific class, social or otherwise, within the population of Egypt.

The use of the phrase in Ex. 5:5 has a textual problem. The Maseretic Text reads: "numerous people of the land," Taken as it stands, this would mean that the Israelites were the people of land as distinct from the Egyptian population. The

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[44]Byung Moo Ahn, "Jesus and Ochlos," in Minjung and Korean Theology (Seoul: Korea Theological Study institute, 1982), pp. 101-102. Ahn asserts that the postexilic am haarez denotes the Minjung.

[45]Nicholson, p. 61.

Samaritan text probably has preserved the correct reading in מִעַם הָאָרֶץ: "They (the Israelites) are more numerous than the people of the land." There is a parallel statement in 1:9: "the Israelites have become much too numerous for us." In this case "the people of the land" would refer to the Egyptian population as a whole.[46] W. T. Dayton summarizes as follows:

> Originally the term referred to native dwellers of the land, such as the Hittites from whom Abraham purchased the cave of Mach-pelah (Gen. 23:9). Each land had its own people (עַם): Egyptians (42:6), Canaanites (Num. 13:28), and Hittites (Gen. 23:7).[47]

Leviticus 4 sets out the rules for sin offering. First the priest is mentioned (v. 3). Then the religious community is referred to in verse 13. A civic ruler (v. 22) and "the people of the land" (v. 27) are mentioned. They can all afford to bring animal sacrifices.[48] They are not the poorest member of the community.[49] They are the ordinary members of the community, as distinct from the priesthood and the civic rulers who are already cared for.[50]

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[46]Ibid., p. 61. S. Daiches, "The Meaning of am haarez in the Old Testament," JTS 30 (1928-1929): 246. Daiches maintains that the term in Ex. 5:5 refers to the representatives of the people.

[47]W. T. Dayton, "Am Haarez," ZPE vol. A-G, p. 128.

[48]E. Wuerthwein, "Der am haarez im Alten Testament," B.W.A.N.T. IV, 17 (1936) p. 48, cited from Nicholson p. 61. Wuerthwein maintains that the term denotes the poor in v. 7.

[49]S. Daiches, "The Meaning of am haarez in the Old Testament," JTS 30 (1928-29), p. 246.

[50]N. Micklem, "Leviticus," in Interpreter's Bible, 12 vols., ed. G. A. Buttrick (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1953), 2:24. Hereafter cited IB.

In Num. 14:9, Joshua and Caleb, having just returned from the land of Canaan, exhorted the Israelites not to fear the "the people of the land." Here the term means the indigenous population of the promised land and is parallel to the "people who dwell in the land" in 13:28. The term is also parallel to the יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ in such texts as Josh. 2:9, 24; 7:9; 8:24; 9:24.

The phrase "the people of the land" has now been dealt with as it applies to Israel's neighboring countries. The expression will now be considered as it is applied to Judah. Some of the "the people of the land" expressions in 2 Kings can be found in the context of the enthronement of several kings: the overthrow of Athaliah and the enthronement of Joash (2 Kings 11), the enthronement of Josiah (2 Kings 21:24) and of his successor Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:30) and of Azariah to the throne (2 Kings 14:21). Some scholars interpret "the people of the land" as a political power in these contexts. Gerhard Von Rad calls the "the people of the land" peasant proprietors and credits them with the achievement of partial reform under Joash and fuller restoration under Josiah. They seem to have been the chief supporters of national independence with all its religious implications.[51] According to M. H. Pope, they appear in connection with the coronation of Joash. In 21:24 it is they who avenge the murder of Amon and make his son Joash king. Similarly in 23:30, after the death of Josiah, they anoint Jehoahaz king.[52] Mayes Sulzberger interprets the whole of "the people of

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[51]Gerhard Von Rad, Studies in Deuteronomy (London: SCM Press, 1963), pp. 63-66.

[52]M. H. Pope, "am haarez," IDB 1:106.

the land" as a political power. He pursues the original constitution of the ancient Israel. The elementary power of its constitution was the people of the land. He interprets those expressions in 2 Kings in the light of political power.[53]

According to Nicholson, however, the use of the term "the people of the land" in these instances can be interpreted along quite different lines. He asserts that the overthrow of Athaliah and the enthronement of the legitimate Davidic king Joash must be seen as a national revolution. The coup was organized by the high priest Jehoiada. In the case of Azariah, Josiah and Jehoahaz the expression "the people of the land" is to be interpreted in a similar manner. That is to say, these kings were raised to power by popular acclamation.[54] From a theological standpoint, God anointed kings, not the people. "The people of the land" did not elect kings but were just audiences.

Chapter 25, verse 19 of 2 Kings reads: "And he took from the city an officer who was in command of the men of war; and five men of those who saw the king's face, who were found in the city; and the secretary of the commander of the host, who mustered the people of the land; and sixty men of the people of the land who were found in the city." Some scholars,[55] among them Dayton, maintain that the sixty of "the people of the land" were taken along with priests and rulers to be executed. This followed well-known imperial policy which bypassed the weak and

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[53]Mayes Sulzberger, pp. 27-35.

[54]Nicholson, p. 62.

[55]A. H. J. Gunnewerg, "am haarez - A Semantic Revolution," ZAW 95 (1983): 438. Pope, p. 106.

common people to transplant or kill only the potential leaders. Apparently the "the people of the land" were considered powerful and dangerous.[56]

However, the writer of the book of Kings mentioned duties or roles of all of the captured people in this chapter except that of "the people of the land." If "the people of the land" had been a high social class the writer would have mentioned their status. The Korean Bible translated the "the people of the land" as "members of a nation" or "citizens." Nicholson asserts that "the people of the land" were not a specific class of men within Judah who played a military role in the country's affairs and observes:

> We may compare the use of the term here with the analogous use of Judah in such texts as Judg. 1:10, II Sam 5:2. . . . In these instances both "Judah" and "Israel" refer to the fighting men but it would be absurd to imagine that only the militia bore the name Judah or Israel.[57]

In four texts in Jeremiah (1:18; 34:19; 37:2; 44:21) the "the people of the land" are mentioned together with the king, the nobility and the priesthood. According to Pope, the "the people of the land" played an important role in the political economical, and sociological life of Judah, and they must have occupied a position just below that of the priests on the social ladder.[58] In Jer. 1:18, the "the people of the land" is mentioned with ". . . against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, its princes, its priests." Here the expression "the people of the land" is interpreted as referring to any of the Judean population who, together with the ruling

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[56]Dayton, p. 129.

[57]Nicholson, p. 64

[58]Pope, p. 106.

classes and the priesthood, might attempt to persecute the prophet. This interpretation is in accordance with the first half of the verse with its promise of protection for the prophet "against the whole land." The term "the people of the land" is a comprehensive term for the rest of the population apart from the royal house or the ruling classes and the priesthood.[59]

The expression "the people of the land" occurs six times in the book of Ezekiel. (12:19; 33:2; 39:13; 45:22; 46:3, 9). One example in 12:19 reads: "Say to the people of the land: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says about those living in Jerusalem and in the land of Israel." In this verse the "the people of the land" is parallel to the "inhabitants of Jerusalem" and "the land of Israel." In 39:13, "All the people of the land" is synonymous with "the house of Israel" in verse 12. "The people of the land" in Ezek. 33:2 refers in a general sense to the inhabitants of a country. The expressions in 45:22 and 46:3, 9 refer to the Jewish community as distinct from the people of other nations. The prophet Ezekiel, who spent his whole ministry in the Babylonian exile, used "the people of the land" in the sense of "inhabitants" and to contrast the Jewish inhabitants with others, but he did not use it to refer to a social high class.

Haggai 2:4 reads: "But now be strong, O Zerubbabel. Be strong; all you people of the land." Haggai exhorts Zerubbabel and the people of the land to work for the rebuilding of the Temple. The people of the land is parallel to the remnant of the people in 2:2. Zechariah 7:5 reads, "Ask all the people of the land and the

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[59]Nicholson, p. 65.

priests." The expression might refer to the population as a whole. According to R. J. Coggins, "the people of the land" of the immediate post-exilic period meant substantially the same thing as it had been before the Exile. For this reason, Haggai and Zechariah continue as they do to regard "the people of the land" as among those responsible for the rebuilding of the Temple and the restoration of Judah (Hag. 2:4; Zech. 7:5).[60]

In Ezra 4:4, where one reads, "Then "the people of the land" around them set out to discourage the people of Judah and make them afraid to go on building," the "the people of the land" is contrasted with the people of Judah and is a general term designating those elements in the population of the country who attempted to frustrate the efforts of the returned exiles to rebuild the Temple. The people of the land in Ezra 10:2, 11 and Neh. 10:31, 32 are synonymous and both clearly designate the heathen population of Palestine amongst whom the Jews who had returned from the exile had to live. Ezra 9:1 specifies: "Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians and Amorites".[61]

From the time of Ezra in the postexilic period "the people of the land" referred not to the Israelite inhabitants but to the population who came to Palestine and the people resulting from mixed marriages. Coggins writes about the change:

> It would seem rather that the change was a gradual one, taking place in the time between Haggai/Zechariah and the time when Ezra's work finally made of the Jews a closely knit religious community. And this change is, of course, reflected

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[60]R. J. Coggins, "The interpretation of Ezra 4:4," JTC 16(1965): 125.

[61]Pope agrees that am haarez designates the inhabitants. Pope, p. 106.

> in the attitude of the Chronicler's who has put into the mouth of the "the people of the land" sentiments which identify them with the Samaritans.[62]

After the fall of the northern kingdom, Assyria deported people of the northern kingdom and brought other people into Samaria who mingled with the surviving Israelite population.[63]

It is necessary to examine the reason why there were conflicts between those returning from the exile and the remnant ("the people of the land")[64] in Palestine. In regard to the economic condition of both the returnees and the remnant, Haggai tells us that the returnees were dogged by a succession of poor seasons and partial crop failures (Hag. 1:9-11; 2:15-17). They were without adequate food and clothing (Hag. 1:6). However their neighbors, especially the aristocracy of Samaria ("the people of the land"), who had regarded Judah as part of their territory and resented any limitation of their prerogative there, were hostile. The remnant in Palestine had regarded the land as theirs (Ezek.33:24). They would scarcely have been eager to give place to the returnees and acquiesce in their claims to ancestral holdings.[65] The Samaritans were comparatively richer than the returnees so that the Samaritans suggested that they participate in constructing the Temple. At that time the returnees

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[62]Coggins, p. 125.

[63]Bright, p. 258.

[64]Daiches, p. 248. He interprets am haarez as "the lords of the land." If his interpretation is correct, the am haarez were rich people. This writer, however, does not follow his assertion because Ezra 9:1 indicates that they were the inhabitants.

[65]Bright, p. 348.

were in a lower economic class than the remnant in Palestine. Instead the remnant became hostile to the returnees.

It is clear there was tension between them with regard to religious opinions. Coggins maintains that "the people of the land" in Jerusalem regarded themselves as the inheritors of the genuine Yahwistic tradition.[66] The theological presuppositions of the Chronicler debased them from loyal Yahwists to "the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin." By the time of Ezra "the people of the land" had intermarried with the other nations (cf. Ezra. 10:40). Daiches asserts that "the people of the land" became a by-word for their wrongdoing and for their neglect of the Torah, and in later times they became the prototype of the ignored people.[67]

In the preexilic period "the people of the land" referred mostly to the inhabitants or citizens. This continued until the early postexilic period: the time of Haggai and Zechariah. In the late postexilic period the Chronicler used the term to refer to those who had remained in Palestine and mingled with other nations. They became the ignored people, not because of economic inferiority but because of religious wrongdoing: intermarriage and neglecting the Torah.[68] It may, therefore, be concluded from this examination of the occurrences of the expression "the people of the land" in the Old Testament that the term has no fixed and rigid meaning but is

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[66]Coggins, pp. 126-7.

[67]Daiches, pp. 148-9.

[68]Solomon Zeitlin, "The am haarez," JQR 23(1932-1933): 45ff. Zeitlin asserts that the late postexilic am haarez were farmers. They tilled the soil and lived in the countryside. They were less developed than the city dwellers. They became the ignored people not only socially and economically, but also culturally.

used rather in a purely general and fluid manner and varies in meaning from context to context. Nonetheless, as it concerns Minjung theology, it can be asserted that הָאָרֶץ עַם is referring to the inhabitants or citizens of the land not to a certain sociological class.

Summary

Israel had theological characteristics even when Israel did not have human kings. Ezekiel shows that עַם is a theological entity in his favorite phrase: "I am Yahweh." The phrase is used in an oath between Yahweh and His people. Chronicles indicates that Israel was essentially a religious entity in the postexilic period. The Chronicles does this by mentioning the covenant with Abraham, Moses, and David, and by using theocratic language. In respect to the role of the Israelite kings in Chronicles עַם had the same feature in the monarchial period; They were God's servants, shepherd of God's people. God was the real king and David's descendants were vassals of God.

Ezra asked those who had intermarried to divorce, both because they had committed a sin against the law, and for the sake of the community of the people of God. It is important to note that Ezra asked all of those who had intermarried to divorce, from priests to laity. This indicates that the people were treated equally and not classified as separate groups or treated with a double standard.

In the covenantal renewal of Nehemiah, all of the people, from the governor (Nehemiah) to the common people, entered into the covenant. All of the people were

together the covenant partner of God. The people were a theological entity, regardless of sociological status. In Nehemiah's covenant renewal, the grace of God is emphasized in contrast to Minjung theologians' assertion, "The cry of the people moved God to liberate the people from their suffering." The people had retained the characteristics of a theological entity from the beginning of Israel to the end of the history of the Old Testament.

The Minjung theologians' assertion about "the people of the land" has not been supported by its scriptural contexts. In the preexilic period the term referred mostly to the inhabitants of the land or citizens. In the late postexilic period the Chronicler used the term to refer to those who had remained in Palestine and mingled with other nations. These people became "ignored" because of their religious wrongdoing.

CONCLUSION

The word עַם in the Old Testament and the concept of minjung of it have been examined as necessary for a correct theological interpretation in the Korean situation. Minjung theology has grown out of the peculiar socio-political situation of the 1970s in Korea. Contextually it is unique to Korea: Methodologically, it has been influenced by Western critical theology and liberation theology. Until 1978, Gerhard von Rad's understanding of the people of God dominantly influenced some Korean Old Testament theologians. Afterward, socio-economic methodology was introduced to them. Another cause for the rise of Minjung theology is a reaction to the fact that evangelical churches, which are dominant in Korea, have ignored the problem of the "here and now" world and have emphasized almost exclusively the "other world."

Minjung theologians understand minjung as a specific social class namely: the Minjung is the only subject of history, economically exploited, politically oppressed and used, and culturally alienated, in short, "han" (grudge)- ridden people. Thus the Minjung theologians reject the use of the term "people of God." They do not want to include this theological terminology in their term minjung.

Three Korean Old Testament scholars' works have been studied. They have adopted socio-economic interpretations. Each of them has his own characteristic

accent. Jung Choon Kim has been influenced by von Rad and asserts that minjung is the formative key to history, so that he elevates the position of Minjung. Throughout his works, Kim interprets the Old Testament on the basis of human existence rather than on God's gracious acts: God delivered the Israelites from Egypt because of their cries. Kim accents human deeds rather than God's merciful action in the salvation history. Salvation (liberation) is interpreted as being saved not from sin but from poverty and oppression, that is, salvation is treated in a material and strictly this-worldly manner.

Hee Suk Moon concentrates on the interpretation of the prophets on the basis of Walter Brueggemann's "two trajectories" theory. Moon advocates that every prophet followed the liberation trajectory. He treats people dualistically, classifying people as the poor or the rich, the ruler or the oppressed, and so forth. Moon insists that עַם in the Old Testament refers either to one certain social class or another one: the poor or the rich, the rulers or the oppressed. He interprets "messiah" only as a liberator: a liberator messiah would make a utopia in the world. The messianic prophecies have not been interpreted by Moon in light of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. As a result of that, the eternal kingdom of God cannot be found in his thought.

Joon Suh Park has approached Minjung theology with archaeology. Park studied Habiru in the Amarna letters and Nuzi letters and found the nature of Habiru: prisoners, laborers, in short, socially lower class people. Park identifies Habiru with Hebrew, and Hebrew with Israel. Subsequently the Habiru became the origin of Israel. By studying the nature of Habiru, Park tries to define the nature of God. He

concludes that the habiru were socially lower class people. Thus God in whom the Habiru believed was God of the poor. Of course God is God of the poor but God is also God of the rich. Park ignores this point.

The origin of עַם (Israel) has been studied. The origin of Israel is neither Habiru nor Hebrew, but the patriarch Abraham. Some critics deny the histori- city of the patriarchs. However, the archaeological discoveries have supported the historicity of patriarchs. Through the covenant with Abraham, God made Abraham the father of Israel. He remembered the covenant with him whenever Israel needed to be saved. During the patriarchal period of Israel, God gave circumcision to Isaac and the name "Israel" to Jacob as covenant gifts and marks. Israel had been a covenant community during the patriarchal period.

When Israel was dwelling in Egypt, the term עַם was a common word generally denoting the people of a certain country. Egyptians used it to refer equally both to Israel and themselves. Thus, עַם did not denote any social condition in the exodus. When God called Israel "my people" God recalled the covenant with their fathers. The purpose of God's deliverance of those whom He called "my people" is to let Israel worship Yahweh. The deliverance of עַם is not only from the oppression of the Egyptians but also from the condition in which Israel could not worship Yahweh freely.

Concerning the second period of the exodus, Ex. 15:5-6 has been examined. עַם and גּוֹי are synonymous in this passage. The role of עַם is that of the priesthood

for other nations. The idea is that the "special priesthood" was God's "consequent will" until that eschatological time when all believers could actually function as their redemption would indicate. In this period Israel was עַם סְגֻלָּה נוֹקְהֹשׁ: the private treasured possession of Yahweh (Deut. 7:6-9). According to the context the role of the treasured possession was to destroy the altars and idols of the Canaanites and not to join in with their activities.

עַם is used as a term designating not a certain political and/or sociological class, but rather the covenantal entity. In both the first and second parts of the exodus, God delivered Israel on the basis of Abraham's covenant and God chose Israel through the Sinai covenant. God elected Israel as His treasured possession.

In the final period of the exodus, the covenant renewal in Joshua 24 indicates that עַם was the covenantal partner of Yahweh through the structure of the covenant renewal and Joshua's choosing of the place (Shechem) for celebrating the covenant renewal. During the period of the settlement the judges led the people of God as mediators. God ruled over His people through the judges. The enemies of the people of God were the same as those of Yahweh. This was the theocracy. עַם was treated as a religious entity rather than as a certain social class, even though Israel was under a loose federation of the twelve tribes.

In the history of Israel, the monarchy began at the time of Samuel. Samuel anointed Saul as a נָגִיד. Israel was under a centralized authority. She had both political and religious status. However the writer of the book of Samuel emphasizes

more her religious status than the political one. After Saul, kings ruled over עַם as Yahweh's viceregent so that Israel was not the king's people but the people of God, the real King. The vassal ruled over Israel instead of an overlord. Israel's kings were not considered to be gods such as were the kings of other ancient Near Eastern countries.

The usage of עַם by some of the prophets in the era of the monarchy has been studied. עַם in the book of Hosea is used in a covenant context. In Hosea 1, God denied that Israel was His people because of her apostasy. In chapter 2, God restored the covenant relationship with His people. עַם is an eschatological entity. In chapter 6, the lawsuit context, Hosea makes a case against Israel for their lack of knowledge of God. Israel was accused because of religious failures: no faithfulness, and failure to remember the Heilsgeschichte.

עַם in the book of Amos refers to the whole covenantal people, that is, the people of the northern kingdom, and not only to the "haves," leaders, and aristocrats. It is necessary to note that there was massive economic deprivation in the northern kingdom (ch. 8). In this context עַם refers to neither the despoilers nor the victims. It is important to note that עַם in Amos 9:11 is found in the context of the restoration. עַם is typological of the church in the New Testament, and is an eschatological figure.

Isaiah dealt with עַם as a covenant partner of God in the introduction to his book (ch. 1). This means that Isaiah regarded עַם with the same status throughout his

whole book. In chapter 6, The word means the people of God, not the people of earthly kings. Isaiah indicated that עַם was unclean; religiously sinful. When Micah lived in Judah during the eighth century B.C., the עַם was a corrupted society. Micah, however, demonstrates that עַם is the whole people of Judah, the covenant partner of God, rather than a class of economic victims.

During Jeremiah's ministry, the southern kingdom fell. The political structure was broken and Israel was no longer under a human king. In this context, עַם in the new covenant refers to the covenant people of Israel. Jeremiah shows that the עַם continued to be the people of God even after the fall of the monarchy. The new covenant does not mean material liberation such as Hee Suk Moon asserts. Rather, Yahweh would undertake a new act of divine grace and restore the ancient covenant relationship by writing the law in people's hearts, forgiving their sin, and restoring the basic personal relationship, "their God-my people."

During the Exile, Ezekiel spent his whole ministry in Babylon. Ezekiel has as his favorite phrase, "I am Yahweh." This is His self-revelation to Israel: an oath between Yahweh and His people. This phrase is used in the context of Israel's election, the casting off of idols and the giving of laws and the sabbath, all purely for Yahweh's name sake. Ezekiel continued to regard Israel as the people of God in the Babylonian exile. The prominent characteristic of the postexilic period was theocracy under foreign domination. The Chronicler dealt with עַם in light of the theocracy. One aspect of theocracy in Chronicles is the Davidic kingdom and cult. In Biblical

eschatology the theocratic conception of the Davidic kingdom supplied the pattern for ideas concerning the coming kingdom of God. Ezra asked those who had engaged in intermarriage to divorce, because they committed sin against the law. Ezra wanted to protect עַם from the gods of the neighboring countries. Concerning intermarriage Ezra spoke to all the people, from priest to laity. עַם in Ezra refers to all of Israel, and not to a certain sociological class. The book of Nehemiah continues Ezra's reformation. Chapter 9 reflects a covenant renewal. The whole people of Israel, excluding no social class from governor on down to the common people, participated in the covenant renewal. In Nehemiah עַם can be understood as the object of God's deliverance in His gracious salvation history.

This study has discussed whether "the people of the land" refers to a certain social class: in the pre-exilic period the leaders and the rich, and in the postexilic period the lower class and ignored people. Such is the minjung theologians' assertion. In the pre-exilic period the phrase referred to the inhabitants of the land. In the late postexilic period the Chronicler referred to those who had mingled with other nations. They became the ignored people, not because of their economically inferior state, but because of their religious wrongdoing. The expression "the people of the land" in the Old Testament is used in a purely general and fluid manner and varies in meaning from context to context.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the character of עַם in the Old Testament: that is, whether or not עַם refers to a certain social class or to a religious

entity. It is clear that עַם refers to a religious entity throughout the Old Testament. This paticular aspect is in fact repeated in the various contexts. עַם can be typologically interpreted as the Church: the New Israel in the New Testament.

After comparing and contrasting Minjung with the עַם of the Old Testament it can be observed that עַם is both a theological and a sociological entity; Minjung is only a sociological one. עַם refers to the people of God as the covenant partner; Minjung includes those who do not believe in God. עַם has a theological mission as priests and a holy nation, Minjung are those who only receive liberation passively. עַם is an integral community of members; Minjung refers to merely a certain sociological class. עַם is an object of spiritual and physical salvation, that is, עַם knows its sinful nature; Minjung is only an object of physical liberation. Minjung is not concerned about theological corruption. עַם has a present as well as eschatological significance, while Minjung has only a present meaning. עַם is an object of history which God forms and leads. Minjung are seen as the subjects of a history which they form and lead.

The rise of Minjung theology stemmed from the unique Korean social condition: economically there was a big gap between the haves and have nots, and politically there was the authoritarianism of a long-term presidency, and so forth. The new Israel (Church) in Korea has not properly dealt with these problems. Yong Hwa Na, a Presbyterian theologian, made a comment "Most Korean churches have been

influenced by a lop-sided, other worldly eschatology and an abstracted doctrine of justification."[1]

The "new Israel" should at least not neglect the Minjung theologians' proper concerns: peace, freedom, the dignity of man, justice, and equal distribution. These items correspond to what God commands of the new Israel. This is the broad sense in which, in the second part of the Decalogue, God asks His new Israel to love her neighbors. There are many passages in which God is concerned with the poor, the oppressed and the ignored people in the Old Testament (Ex. 3:7; 23:10-11, Lev. 19:9,10; Deut. 24:19-22; Ps. 146:7-9; Isa. 3:14-15; Jer. 2:34; 7:5-7; Amos 2:7, etc.). This means that for the new Israel, the people of God, it is natural to obey what God commands: Christians should be concerned about what God is concerned about in the Bible as it is correctly interpreted. This does not mean that the people of God should subscribe to the assertions of Minjung theology.

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[1]Yong Hwa Na, A Criticism of Minjung Theology (Seoul: Christian Literature Crusade, 1984), p. 106.

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