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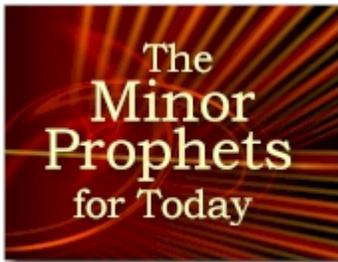
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The Minor Prophets for Today

by Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., 1996

Transcribed and edited by David Sielaff, September 2012

Read the accompanying [Newsletter for September 2012](#)



This article is about the books of the Twelve Minor Prophets in the Old Testament. The Twelve Minor Prophets all represented one book put together in a particular order. The order of the Minor Prophets also relates to Temple imagery, as I explain in Chapter 6, “[The Design of the Old Testament](#),” in my book *Restoring the Original Bible*.¹

Let me say here that the Twelve Minor Prophets not only relate to the Temple, but they are particularly associated with the table of shewbread in the Holy Place. The other five books of the Prophets have to do with this priestly area east of the Holy of Holies, where the Altar of Burnt Offering was located.

In the original Old Testament there are three main divisions — the law, the prophets, and the writings. The third division, the writings, are sometimes called, in the Greek the Hagiographa, or the holy writings. At other times, the third division is called simply by the book that introduced those 11 books. That book was the Book of Psalms. These three divisions, all together, make up the Old Testament, and they are referred to by Christ, in Luke 24:44–45 after His resurrection from the dead.

Luke wrote under the auspices of the apostle Paul, and his gospel went primarily to Gentiles who wanted to know just which writings made up the inspired books of Scripture we now call the Old Testament. There

¹ See the survey regarding the unity of the Book of the Twelve Minor Prophets in Paul L. Redditt, “Recent Research on the Book of the Twelve as One Book,” in *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* vol. 9, 2001, pp. 47–81. See also in *Restoring the Original Bible*, “[Chapter 9, The Prophets Division](#)” where the Temple theme of the books is discussed. DWS

In Acts chapter 7 the evangelist Stephen referred to a prophecy in one of the 12 books. Stephen calls it the “**Book of the Prophets**.” Note that the singular term “book” is used, and not “books.” *ELM* Read Acts 7:42–43:

“Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the **BOOK OF THE PROPHETS**, O you house of Israel, have you offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? Yea, you took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which you made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.”

Stephen was referring to Amos 5:25–27:

“Have you offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? But you have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which you made to yourselves. Therefore will I cause you to go into captivity beyond Damascus, says YHWH, whose name is The God of hosts.”

were a number of books in the 1st century claiming inspiration from God. People wanted to know, especially the Gentiles, just what represented the true Scriptures.

Luke records what Jesus said to His apostles shortly after His resurrection:

“These are the words which I spoke unto you while I was yet with you that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.”

• **Luke 24:44**

“Psalms” is the third division of the Old Testament, the introductory book to the 11 books of the third division. The prophets which preceded it, represented six books, including the Twelve minor prophets (all considered as one of the six prophetic books). Luke continues: **“Then opened he [Christ] their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures”** (Luke 24:45). So, what represented the Scriptures? The Scriptures of the Old Testament were the only ones in existence when Christ made these statements.² They called them the Tanak, the three divisions that Christ mentioned.

We find these minor prophets within the second Prophets division. The Bible is a book for all generations, but from a prophetic point of view its application is primarily to that generation that exists just prior to the Second Advent of Christ. This is the generation that precedes the Day of the Lord, and the time when the Kingdom of God will be introduced on Earth. That is why I titled this presentation “The Minor Prophets for Today.”

Temple Symbolism of the Minor Prophets in the Second Division

The Twelve Minor Prophets were each associated with the Temple itself. In fact, when you look at the design of the Old Testament in its three divisions, it reflects the Temple in its three major divisions. Then outside of the Temple there was also a significant ritual location known as the “Place of the Red Heifer.”

If you will look carefully at the design of the Old Testament, there are definite parallels between the first five books that are associated with the Holy of Holies. The next six books of the Prophets, which include these Twelve Minor Prophets, are associated with that part to the east and outside of the Holy of Holies, the Holy Place, where only the priests could go and perform their administrations.

Then comes the final division of books, starting with the Psalms. Since David was a king and not a priest, but he wrote under the divine inspiration of God, these 11 books from Psalms to Chronicles have to do with the eastern portion of the Temple, the Court of Israel, both the courts of the men, and the women.

Then outside the eastern gate in the time of Christ, upon the Mount of Olives, was an outer Temple where the Red Heifer was sacrificed, as the Mosaic Law required in Numbers chapter 19.

So there is a Temple theme to all of this. The other five books of the Prophets³ have to do with this priestly area east of the Holy of Holies, where the Altar of Burnt Offering was located. The Temple is God’s House where you have an altar from which He eats. On that altar they offered animals. They also offered vegetables, that is, wheat, grain, and things of that nature. The House of God was governed by regulations, and by laws. In a house, you eat, you have a meal in the morning; that was the morning sacrifice. You have a meal in the evening; that is the evening sacrifice. You have food of various kinds, and you have drink, like wine on the altar.

The last prophetic books of the Twelve were associated with the altar of shewbread in the Holy Place. On the altar of shewbread were 12 loaves of bread that the priests themselves would eat. They would eat

² The Books of the New Testament were added later with authority from God. See Chapters 24–29 of [Restoring the Original Bible](#) which explains from within the New Testament text the process of canonization. There is no need to rely upon extrabiblical human authority for the canonization of the New Testament books. This book can be read free online and is also available for purchase in print at <http://www.askelm.com/books/book002.htm>. See <http://www.askelm.com/restoring/res000a.pdf> for the graphic structure of the Holy Scriptures. Christ is the center of creation, the center of time, and the center of God’s Word. DWS

³ The major prophets were [1] Joshua-Judges, [2] Book of the Kingdoms, [3] Isaiah, [4] Jeremiah, and [5] Ezekiel. DWS

with God in His house. Jesus spoke about Himself being the Word of God and how the people should eat of His flesh, and drink of His blood. He broke bread into 12 portions, giving one to each apostle at the Last Supper. He did not eat or drink at that time.

There are many other symbolic passages in the Bible which speak about eating the Word of God. **“Take it [the scroll, the book], and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in your mouth sweet as honey”** (Revelation 10:8–11). It depends on the circumstances. The 12 loaves of the shewbread are, in one way of looking at it, identified with the Twelve prophetic books we will examine. Yet I must emphasize, though there are 12 divisions, they are always reckoned as being one book.

These Twelve prophets are termed “minor” simply because the word means “shorter in length.” Under no circumstances does it mean that they are minor in influence or importance.⁴ They are just as important as the major prophecies. In fact, some of the most profound prophecies dealing with Christ, and with the end-time, are associated with these prophecies. The Books of the Twelve Minor Prophets are all arranged chronologically, even within their time period:

- The first seven books, starting with Hosea, and going down to Nahum, primarily pertain to the period of the Assyrians, the greatest Gentile power in the Middle East at the time.
- The next two books, Habakkuk and Zephaniah, were written in the Babylonian period, primarily that of Nebuchadnezzar.
- The last three books, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, were written in the post-Babylonian period, that is, in the Persian period, after many of the Jews came back to Jerusalem and established Temple services once again. At that time under Zerubbabel and Joshua (the high priest), as well as Ezra and Nehemiah, a Jewish commonwealth was established, under the Persian government.

Temple Symbolism in the New Testament

According to this understanding of symbolic geography, the New Testament commences outside of the camp of Israel, where the Red Heifer Altar is located at Jerusalem, because it starts with Christ. That is where Christ was crucified, buried, resurrected from the dead, and ascended into heaven (and where He will return from heaven to step back on earth). It is for the Gentiles, for the whole world. It has a Temple imagery to it, but it is outside the camp of Israel. We have left the Israel of old, we have left the Temple. We look forward to a new Jerusalem, not the old Jerusalem.⁵

Table 1: Chronological Structure of the Twelve Prophets

1	<i>Assyrian Period</i>	}	Hosea
2			Joel
3			Amos
4			Obadiah
5			Jonah
6			Micah
7			Nahum
8	<i>Babylonian Period</i>	}	Habakkuk
9			Zephaniah
10	<i>Post-Babylonian Period</i>	}	Haggai
11			Zechariah
12			Malachi

⁴ The Former prophetic books of Joshua-Judges (reckoned as one book) has 45 chapters in the King James Version, while the Book of Kings (1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings) have 92 chapters.

Isaiah, the first of the Latter prophets in our King James Version, has 66 chapters, Jeremiah 52 chapters, and Ezekiel 48 chapters. These three longer books are in chronological order. Isaiah preceded Jeremiah, who slightly preceded Ezekiel. The Twelve Minor Prophets are in one book, called the Book of the Prophets, the sixth book of the second division. The order of the Twelve Prophets is different in the Septuagint Greek translation, the LXX. *ELM / DWS*

⁵ The gospels are 5 in number if you include the Book of Acts. It is a sort of New Testament Torah or Law. The other books are arranged geographically as well. When the 7 books from James to Jude in the New Testament are considered, they reference Israelites living away from Jerusalem. *ELM* Together the 5 “gospels” and the 7 general epistles make up 12 books that correspond to the 12 Minor Prophets. *DWS*

When the 14 books of the apostle Paul’s are given, they start with Romans, the chief of the Gentile areas at the time. You have the 14 going out to the Gentile world. But it all originates from Jerusalem. From within there it comes from the center part, the Holy of Holies at the Temple. The final book is the Revelation, which deals with the end-time, for the totality of the Earth. *ELM*

The 5 gospels, the 7 general epistles, Paul’s 14 epistles (which includes Hebrews), plus 1 Book of Revelation = 27 total. See note 2 above for the graphic representation of the entire Bible from Dr. Martin’s book *Restoring the Original Bible*. *DWS*

The Bible focuses around a geographical theme, and the area that it centers on is Jerusalem, and then spreads out to all areas of the world. If we would take this one book of the prophets (as Stephen refers to in Acts 7:42–43) out of the Bible, then the structure collapses. There are 22 books of the Old Testament and 27 books of New Testament. Put them together and you get 49 books, seven times seven, in seven divisions.

We need to be knowledgeable of the whole Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. It is a book designed with a relevance for us. When we look carefully, we find that the major emphasis is that this Bible will be understood — clearly and plainly — in the last generation prior to the Second Advent of Christ. You (and I) have the privilege of living in that generation. We are starting into it right now.

It will be a very exciting time. God has picked you personally, long before the foundation of this world to be on earth at this time, at this moment. You are here for a purpose. God looks upon you as important. He wants you to understand what these Twelve Minor Prophets are all about and to realize what they teach. They are arranged in a chronological order and we should not separate them in any way. Keep them in that chronological order. There is historical evidence to show that as early as the 3rd century before Christ these Twelve were reckoned as one book.⁶ They were always reckoned, in almost all the manuscripts, as being just exactly in the fashion that we have them today.

Peter at Pentecost Quotes Joel

Notice what the apostle Peter said in the very first sermon he gave after the resurrection of Christ. The disciples were in Jerusalem near the Temple on that Pentecost Day, when great power from God was demonstrated by the manifestation of God's Holy Spirit. Many Jews standing nearby on that Pentecost Day wondered what was going on.

“But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice. and said unto them, ‘You, men of Judea, and all you that dwell in Jerusalem, be this known unto you and hearken to my words: For these [these people here], are not drunken as you suppose. seeing it is but the third hour of the day [9 a.m.]. And this is that [the word “is” there actually means “represents”] ... spoken by the prophet Joel’ ...”

• **Acts 2:14–16**

I mention this because the first sermon Peter gave after Jesus' resurrection was to interpret and teach on a book of these minor prophets, the Book of Joel.

“‘And it shall come to pass in the last days [quoting Joel];’ says God, ‘I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my hand-maidens I will pour out in those days [the last days] of my Spirit: and they shall prophesy:

And I will show wonders in heaven above. and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord [at that time] shall be saved.’”

• **Acts 2:17–21⁷**

⁶ See James Nogalski, *Literary Precursors to the Book of the Twelve* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1993), p. 3:

“Several early references indicate the writings of the twelve prophets were considered as one book. The earliest explicit reference appears in Jesus Ben Sirach 49:10 (c.200 B.C.), which mentions the twelve prophets in the context of other prophets including Isaiah (48:20), Jeremiah (49:5), and Ezekiel. [note 3, below] Both 4 Ezra 14 and Josephus treat the Book of the Twelve as a single book because of the number of Old Testament books they count. Archaeological data from Qumran reinforces evidence that the unity of the Book of the Twelve was already established.”

[Nogalski's Note 3, p. 3:] **“Sirach 49:10 says, ‘May the bones of the twelve prophets [together] revive from where they lay, for they [the twelve prophets in one book] comforted the people of Jacob and delivered them with confident hope.’”**

DWS

⁷ Peter is quoting Joel 2:28–32. The apostle Paul also quotes from Joel 2:32 in Romans 10:13 with reference to salvation for

Based on that passage of Scripture from Joel, the apostle Peter looked at the people in the eye and said, **“You men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth ...”** Then he carried on with his teaching. The very first sermon after the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and His glorification, is from the minor prophets, from Joel, speaking of the last days.

It is true that the apostle Peter at that time believed he was living in that last generation. The apostle Paul believed the same thing. Up to about 61 AD they believed Jesus would return within that generation. That is clear and plain. But Jesus also told them that they would not know the times exactly.

After 63 AD, however, we find that the apostle Paul, along with others, was given further information and then Peter finally said **“a day with the Lord is as a thousand years”** (2 Peter 3:8). They began to understand from the knowledge that God gave to them that there was to be another 2,000 year period before the Second Coming of Christ.⁸ So, the prophecy given by Peter, properly so for the generation of the end, he gave thinking that it was the time of the end. Later, he found it was not for his time. After all, the passage in Joel speaks about the sun being turned into darkness, the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord, wonders in heaven, signs in earth, blood and fire, vapors of smoke. At that time, those who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. It speaks about the last generation.

Emphasis on the Day of the Lord

The Book of Joel has that information. Hosea also does, and so do all the rest. In fact, the last statement in these Twelve Minor Prophets speaks about events immediately before the day of the Lord.

“Remember you the law of Moses my servant. which I commanded unto him in Horeb [the mountain range in Sinai] for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.”

• ***Malachi 4:4-5***

Then comes the last verse of Malachi and the last verse of all the Minor Prophets:

“And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.”

• ***Malachi 4:6***

The minor prophets end with Malachi discussing the generation just prior to the **“day of the Lord”** and what the Elijah to come will accomplish. This is why it is imperative for you to study these Scriptures, because even though Peter, Paul, James, John, and the others, at first, thought that their generation would experience these things, God revealed to them later it would not occur for many, many generations.

Though I cannot, and you cannot, set any dates, and we do have a few years in advance of us, we are getting prepared to understand what the prophecies in these Twelve books are all about. Some of the most important teachings about the modern world are found within this section of the Old Testament.⁹

This Book of the Twelve is important because there are 12 loaves of shewbread on that table, and the priests were commanded to eat those twelve loaves. By doing so they were figuratively eating the Word the God. Afterward the priests would come out to tell the people the Word of God. This is a symbol, an allegory. When they ate those 12 loaves, in a figure of speech, they came out with wisdom, knowledge, and

Gentiles. *DWS*

⁸ See Dr. Martin’s article [“The History of the Revelation of the Mystery”](#) about Paul’s reception of The Mystery after 61 AD, along with another article on the same subject [“The Mystery and the New Covenant”](#) which explains the differences between these two biblical teachings. *DWS*

⁹ In the New Testament, with the Book of Revelation, we have an outline of events put into a proper chronological sequence. We do not understand everything exactly yet, but we are getting closer to a comprehension that will make perfectly good sense as time goes on. That is why you need to pay close attention to all of these prophecies of the Old Testament, going back to Genesis, to “fit them in” to the prophetic sequences. *ELM* See Dr. Martin’s presentation [“Mosaic Prophecies for the End Time.”](#) *DWS*

understanding, because the Word of God would be in them, and they could tell the Word of God to the people. Again, I want to emphasize that the first sermon preached after receiving the Holy Spirit, the first prophetic indication ever taught in the Christian *ekklesia*, was from Joel, from this Book of the Twelve.

This one book is put together for the generation that will witness these marvelous events. Get ready to see them because they will occur. Jesus Himself said that the Abomination of Desolation (which many people thought took place back in the time of Antiochus Epiphanies in the 2nd century BC) will occur in the future before with His Second Coming. The apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians speaks about a man of sin coming at the end of the age who will sit in the Temple of God.¹⁰ Zechariah chapters 12, 13, and 14 give a chronological scheme of prophetic occurrences that are clearly put forth, dealing with the time of the end in Jerusalem and the geographical areas associated with it, including the Mount of Olives.

In the epistle of First Corinthians the apostle Paul wrote about the Exodus, giving historical incidents dealing with the Exodus period some 1400+ years before the birth of Christ. He gave a principle that applies to the prophetic statements in other parts of the Bible:

“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [examples, types], and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [Greek, *aions*] are come.”

• **1 Corinthians 10:11**

The ends of the eons, the ends of the ages, **“are come.”** The apostle Paul felt that he was living in that end-time generation when he wrote First Corinthians in 55 AD. In another six years he found that things were different. These Scriptures will be fulfilled, and they in fact will have an application for the generation preceding the Second Coming of Christ.¹¹

Duality in Prophetic Teaching

The apostle Paul said that these admonitions, up to the coming of Christ, were given as examples and warning **“upon whom the ends of the ages are come.”** They are for the end-time generation, from a prophetic point of view. This principle is given in the Old Testament. Isaiah 41:21–22 gives an example of what we call the duality principle. Many of the books, beginning with Hosea, go back to the 9th century BC. They give geographical terms. They speak of individuals who lived at that time. They speak about customs that were pertinent to that period. You would think that they only applied to that period of time back then, but they actually have to do with the end-time prophecies to Israel.

These prophecies in the Old Testament are intended for Israel and are not for Gentiles. You and I can learn from them because we all will be caught up into the prophetic environment in which Israel will be the center. They are given to the Christian *ekklesia*, for us to understand, basically, what the future is. You and I have a relationship with God which is different from Israel. But at the same time we are all human; we all live in this world. If the sun does not shine, or if the moon turns to blood red, or if there are volcanoes or earthquakes, I assure you it will not only be Israel that shall be affected; you will hear it and feel it as well. We all must be cognizant of these things. Isaiah, says this, in a courtroom scene:

“Produce your cause [your case], says YHWH; bring forth your strong reasons, says the King of Jacob. [God is saying this to Israel] Let them bring them forth ... and show us what will happen [in the future]: let them show [the future]: let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them [in the future].”

• **Isaiah 41:21–22**

¹⁰ Some of those Scriptures relating to the antichrist are from the Book of Daniel. Although it is not one of the 12 Minor Prophets, certain sections of Daniel are very pertinent to the antichrist and the Day of the Lord. *ELM*

¹¹ A generation is normally 40 years. There was a 40-year period for teaching the gospel to the Jews first. Jesus was crucified in 30 AD. The Jewish Temple, the Temple of God, was destroyed in 70 AD, exactly 40 years later. In Jewish records that 40-year period was highly significant to the Jews. *ELM* See Dr. Martin’s article [“The ‘Great Generation’ and Modern Prophecy”](#) that Dr. Martin’s research shows will be longer than the regular 40-year span. *DWS*

You have the former things and the latter things given to you. If you want to know the latter things (those things to happen in the future), then you must understand the former things. The former things give the foundational teaching for what will happen in the future.¹²

Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, also wrote under inspiration about many of these principles. In the Book of Ecclesiastes there is a duality principle, where the former things tell you what the future is all about. Pay close attention to that past, especially if it has to do with the Day of the Lord, the coming of the Elijah, or whatever the topic.

“The thing that has been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.”

• ***Ecclesiastes 1:9***

Notice that the past is a prologue to the future, and things that happen in the past can, and, in many cases, will be repeated in the future.

In the Bible there are types and antitypes. There is the first Adam; there is the last Adam. There is the first Moses; there is the last Moses. Christ Jesus was like Moses in many ways. There is the first David who wrote many of the Psalms, in the first person, many of them refer to the last David, a descendant of his, Christ Jesus. There is type and antitype, past and future. If you want to know the future, look closely at the past. Solomon later states the principle again but in a different way:

“That which has been is now; and that which is to be has already been; and God requires that which is past.”

• ***Ecclesiastes 3:15***

What did the apostle Paul say? Those things that happened to Israel, are given as examples, as types, for us who live at the end of the age. They are put together in the Bible as a witness in evidence for a long time. The Old Testament was put into its final order and arrangement by Ezra in the 5th century BC. The New Testament was finally canonized and given its divine sanction in the last decade of the 1st century by the apostle John. Since that time, we have had the complete Bible in our midst. In the last part of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th centuries, the church father Jerome changed the order of the books of the Bible to what we have today.

But at the end of the age do you know what will happen? There will be a restoration of all things. We will see once again the Bible in its pristine order, the way that it came from God, to divulge its teachings to the world. God is about ready to intervene in world affairs, to do the very thing that Paul, an apostle to the Roman Gentiles said:

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

• ***Romans 15:4***

Some people were saying at that time, even when Peter wrote, that the prophecies were failing. Jesus Christ did not come when most people thought He should. That was true. He did not come back in that generation. The apostle Peter said that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years (2 Peter 3:8). And you better look to the future, because He is coming right on time.

¹² The Minor Prophets themselves fulfill this criteria. Paul R. House, *The Unity of the Twelve* (Bible and Literature Series, 27; Decatur, GA: The Almond Press, 1990), p. 56 writes:

“Clearly the content of the minor prophets presents a unified portrait of prophecy that closely parallels the subject matter of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. All the main elements of the prophetic message are present in the Twelve.”

House goes on to explain that the Book of the Twelve [1] all share a common genre, [2] they give evidence of arrangement and connectedness to **“offer a complete treatment of the meaning of prophecy,”** and finally, [3] the common theme leads to the conclusion of a unified literary content that **“reflects a unity of construction”** (p. 56–57). *DWS*

“[As there] were false prophets also among the people [back then], even as there shall be false teachers among you who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them.”

• **2 Peter 2:1**

Revelation

Look at the Book of Revelation. When you analyze that book, these are references to a period of time just prior to the introduction of the Kingdom of God on Earth. It will be a seven year period, broken into two three and half year periods — a time, times, and half a time, and then another time, times, and half a time, 1,260 days or 42 months. The Book of Revelation deals with that end-time generation. If you analyze the verses mentioned in Revelation, they come from all sections of the Old Testament — from Ezekiel, Isaiah, the Psalms, and from the Minor Prophets. All of them are put together by Jesus Christ Himself, in a chronological framework in Revelation, so that we, in an A-B-C fashion, can read what will happen in the near future.

At this generation of the end there will be, as prophesied, a restitution of all things. It means we will be able to understand, to comprehend, what the Minor Prophets are all about. We will know soon just exactly why those first seven books of the minor prophets, from Joel to Nahum, were written in the period when the Gentile Assyrians predominated. We will know why they are succeeded by the other two books from the Babylonian period, and then the three in the post-Babylonian period (the time the Jews call the “Second Temple” period).

The Book of Revelation is the best example to show that disparate prophecies, with different nations, different chronological periods, different actors, can still have a symphonic harmony at the end of the age. It is a seven-year period that we are really interested in, at the very end of the age, but the generation before is ~~really one of forty years, the last seven of a forty-year period~~¹³ will be something that is most interesting, and we ought to pay close attention to it.

Restitution and Times of Refreshing

The apostle Peter in the second sermon that he gave was talking to the men of Israel after God healed a lame man through Peter in the Temple. Peter and John went by the lame man in Solomon’s porch, and the man was healed.

“And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, ‘You men of Israel, why marvel you at this? or why look you so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers has glorified his Son Jesus: whom you delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate.’”

• **Acts 3:12**

Jesus did it. The Spirit of God did it. Peter goes on to give them encouragement. Verse 18:

“But these things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets [notice, all the prophets together], that Christ should suffer, he has so fulfilled. Repent you therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.”

• **Acts 3:18–19**

A time of great refreshing is coming. This will be a time when God will restore His knowledge to this world, when He will restore the knowledge of the Bible, including what the Twelve Minor Prophets are all about. Much of the information in this Book of the Twelve has to do with the end-time, the generation we will live in. Peter goes on to say in verse 20:

¹³ See the article in Note 10 above for Dr. Martin’s correction of the last “Great Generation” before Christ returns. DWS

“And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive [He will stay in heaven] until the times of restitution of all things.”

• **Acts 3:20–21**

“Restitution” means “restoring.” There will come a restoring that will take place prior to the Second Advent of Christ. Once the restitution takes place people will be able to understand what the Gospel is all about and what the Old Testament prophecies are all about. There will be a restitution of knowledge, of understanding, of what the apostles and the prophets were talking about. It will be a time of refreshment to know what the truth of God really is. You and I will not only begin to know, but He will reveal through His Holy Spirit everything we need to get out the teaching of the Gospel, and for us to be protected during these periods of time.

“Whom [Christ] the heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world [Greek, *kosmos*] began.”

• **Acts 3:21**

God will bring things to a head soon. This restoration will be done, starting in Israel, not by me; not by anyone that I know, but someone with the name of Elijah coming on the scene, like John the Baptist was at one time. He will teach Israel to understand things as never before. Just as John the Baptist came out of the wilderness and began to tell the people of Israel to repent, so there will be another that will do the same thing, probably in a similar way.

Elijah’s Role in the Restitution/Restoration

When Jesus and the apostles came down off the Mount of Transfiguration, which was Mount Hermon in the north part of Israel¹⁴:

“And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them [the apostles], saying, ‘Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.’”

• **Matthew 17:9**

They saw a vision up there, when God the Father said that Jesus was His divine Son.

“And his disciples asked him, saying, ‘Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come?’ And Jesus answered and said unto them, ‘Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things.”

• **Matthew 17:10–11**

Jesus is referencing Malachi 4:5. Now here is your restoration:

“And I say unto you, That Elijah is come already [the type], and they knew him not, but have done unto him [John the Baptist] whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist.”

• **Matthew 17:12–13**

It says **“have done unto him.”** Understand that John the Baptist was already dead when Jesus made this statement. It was not John the Baptist that was to come back to **“restore all things.”** It was a future Elijah, a person coming in the spirit of Elijah to restore all things before the Day of the Lord commences. The Day of the Lord commences with Christ Jesus coming to this Earth — the Second Advent.¹⁵

¹⁴ Mt. Hermon is presently in the nation of Syria, just west of the ancient city Damascus. DWS

¹⁵ Read Dr. Martin’s expansion of this information in his presentation [“The Elijah to Come.”](#) Besides Matthew 17:10–11’s use of Malachi 4:5, Matthew used several quotations from the Book of the Twelve to show that Jesus was the Messiah. The birth narrative (Matthew 2:5–6) quotes Micah 5:2 (and 2 Samuel 5:2) to show that Jesus as Messiah descended from David and came from Bethlehem. Matthew 2:15 says the return of the infant Jesus and His family from Egypt was the fulfillment of Hosea 11:1. Matthew 21:5 states that Zechariah 9:9 was fulfilled. As a teacher Jesus corrected the Pharisees about the true meaning of Hosea 6:6,

Go again to the Book of Malachi, the last of the Twelve Minor Prophets. Malachi's purpose is to get Israel ready to receive a divine messenger that will come on the scene. That messenger is introduced in Malachi chapter 3. In Jewish tradition this Malachi is Ezra the priest. The term "Malachi" itself is a title that means "messenger." It can also mean "angel," or it can mean "king." In Hebrew, it can mean all of those things. It could be Ezra the priest himself who finalized the structure and order of the Hebrew Bible.¹⁶

Malachi gives the prophecy Jesus referred to:

"Remember you the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb [the Mount Sinai region] for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

• *Malachi 4:4–5*

First, remember the law of Moses. Then look for Elijah who is coming. Why? He is coming to restore all things.¹⁷ The restitution, the refreshment, is coming before the **"Day of the Lord."** What shall that Elijah accomplish?

"And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and [turn] the heart of the children to their fathers, [Why is this necessary?] lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

• *Malachi 4:6*

I think I know exactly what that means, when it says in verse 6 **"he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children."** The children will come along who have new ways of looking at things, and God will inspire them to teach the fathers. The children are also going to go to the fathers. But what fathers are being talked about? Their immediate fathers? No, because they will be taught by the children. It means the fathers that lived long time ago — Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel.

Now, what about our Twelve Minor Prophets, Hosea to Malachi? They are also the fathers. The children, even young children, will be telling us what the fathers have said in the past. The restitution, the refreshment will happen before the day of the Lord. It will mean that we shall begin to understand what Malachi is all about. We will begin to understand fully what Zechariah is all about.

The prophecies of Zechariah chapters 12 through 14 are the clearest prophecies of what will happen, and what is beginning to happen in Israel at the present time. You ought to read those prophecies because there is a day coming soon when the Spirit will come down from God and pour out on the house of David and the people of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication, and the people there will accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah. Then other things begin to take place. In Zechariah chapter 14 Jesus Himself comes back and His feet touch the Mount of Olives.

These things are for the future. The minor prophets have teaching for us today, for the end-time generation. I remember talking to Professor Benjamin Mazar years ago when I was down in Israel. Being a Jew and a professional academic, a kind and gentle person, but an individual that you could easily respect very

"I desire mercy, not sacrifice" in Matthew 9:13 and 12:7. Paul L. Redditt, "The Production and Reading of the Book of the Twelve," pp. 27–28 in *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, edited by James D. Nogalski and Marvin A. Sweeney, SBL Symposium Series No. 15 (Atlanta, GA: Society for Biblical Literature, 2000), pp. 11–33.

There are others: Luke 23:30 and Revelation 6:16 cite Hosea 10:8, and Matthew 12:40 references Jonah 2:1; Matthew 10:35–36 clearly refers to Micah 7:6; Zechariah 11:12–13 quoted in Matthew 27:9; Zechariah 12:1 cited in John 19:37; and Zechariah 13:7 referenced in Matthew 26:31 and Mark 14:27. DWS

¹⁶ In Malachi 3:1 the Hebrew term *malachi* is translated in Matthew 11:10 as *aggelon*, angel. Jesus Himself identifies the "messenger" of Malachi 3:1 to be the man John the Baptist. DWS

¹⁷ Rolf Rendtorf comments on Malachi 4:4–6 in "How to Read the Book of the Twelve as a Theological Unity," p. 86, in *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*:

"The naming of Moses alongside Elijah at the end of the collection of prophetic writings connects the first two main parts of the Hebrew Bible, Torah [Law] and Nebiim [Prophets]. The second coming of Elijah will happen before the day of the Lord comes.' ... Obviously, the Day of the Lord is one of the dominating themes [of the Twelve]."

much (and I did). He told me, “You know, Martin” (he always called me Martin), “my parents were born in Russia. My grandparents were born in Russia. I have a genealogy that goes back a long way. But you know, in actual fact, here I am in Jerusalem working in archaeology, right here, right now. You know something? I actually do not believe in my heart that I was born in Russia, or my parents. I believe that my parents and grandparents were here, and saw this very Temple in existence.”

In other words, to him and to many other Israelis who live in Israel at the present time, there is a great hiatus that has come in, a kind of a gap, in which they forget all about what has gone on in between, but their hearts are back there in the time of Jesus, and the time of the apostles, when the Temple was in existence. All of these relevant prophecies will be brought up, and they will forget all about their hiatus. They will be brought right up to us today.

The minor prophets are a major part of what will soon happen. They are for today.

Ernest L. Martin, 1996
David Sielaff, September 2012

Addendum: The Unity of the Twelve Minor Prophets, by David Sielaff

Interesting work has been done by scholars over the past 40+ years regarding the unity of the Twelve Minor Prophets. Scholars are increasingly recognizing that the Twelve Minor Prophets were compiled and edited into a single book that tells a coherent message. One way this was determined was by the catchword phenomenon put forth by James D. Nogalski (see footnote 6 above):

“Throughout the Book of the Twelve, the end of one writing contains significant words which reappear in the opening sections of the next writing. Because of the nature of translating from one language to another, modern and ancient translations of the Book of the Twelve do not illuminate the full extent of the words and phrases shared between these writings.”

• *Nogalski, Literary Precursors, p. 20*

Nogalski points out that the pattern of significant word and phrase connections seems to break down with Jonah 4:1ff and Zechariah 14:1ff. However, there is an interesting solution:

“... even these exceptions point out other phenomena, which bear strikingly upon the question of the growth of the Book of the Twelve. While Jonah 4:1ff contains no significant repetition of words, the hymn in 2:3ff — long argued as a secondary addition to the writings by a large contingent of scholars — does exhibit this catchword phenomenon. This hymn (Jon 2:3ff) will be translated here with Mic 1:1ff. Zechariah 14:ff, the conclusion of Deutero-Zechariah [i.e., Zechariah chapters 9–14], likewise contains no real evidence of catchwords, but Zechariah 8:9ff, the conclusion of Proto-Zechariah [Zechariah chapters 1–8], shares numerous words and phrases with Malachi 1:1ff.”

• *Nogalski, Literary Precursors, footnote p. 20*

Ernest Martin correctly understood that Zechariah chapters 9–14 were actually written by Jeremiah and attached to the original end of Zechariah after chapter 8, probably by Ezra the Priest. He believed this to be true because of Matthew 27:9 where Jesus quotes Zechariah 11:12–13 but He says that Jeremiah spoke the words. Either Jesus made a mistake or He spoke the truth and He was exactly correct.¹⁸

Table 2: Connections between the Twelve Prophets (Nogalski, pp. 21–55)

Hosea 14:5–10	with	Joel 1:1–12
Joel 4:1–21	with	Amos 1:1–2:16
Amos 9:1–15	with	Obadiah 1–10
Obadiah 15–21	with	Micah 1:1–7
Obadiah 11–14, 15b	with	Jonah 1:1–8
Jonah 2:2–10	with	Micah 1:1–7
Micah 7:8–20	with	Nahum 1:1–8
Nahum 3:1–19	with	Habakkuk 1:1–17
Habakkuk 3:1–19	with	Zepheniah 1:1–18
Zepheniah 3:18–20	with	Haggai 1:1–4
Haggai 2:20–23	with	Zechariah 1:1–11
Zechariah 8:9–23	with	Malachi 1:1–14

¹⁸ Dr. Martin’s article “[Jeremiah, Part 2](#)” discusses the attachment of Jeremiah’s prophecies to the Book of Zechariah. *DWS*

Other authors have presented other evidence for the Minor Prophets being a single edited book. Of course, the Books of the Twelve were written over a period of 300+ years of decline, defeat, and initial recovery, yet there was apparently one original editor that saw and edited the Twelve into the unity of a single Book. Dr. Martin would agree with Aaron Schart when he wrote:

“A prominent topic of the Twelve is the Day of YHWH [the “Day of the Lord”]. No other prophetic book contains as many passages about this day, which are at the same time central for the overall structure. In addition, the Day of YHWH is the concept which integrates basic topics into one scenario.”

• **Aaron Schart, “Reconstructing the Redaction History,” p. 40¹⁹**

While not all of the Books of the Twelve mention the Day of YHWH, those that do not come after a book that does, relating and reacting to the immediately previous book. Rolf Rendtorff also notes that the Day of the Lord is one of the dominating themes of the Twelve and that there is a **“complex of repentance and salvation in the face of the Day of the Lord.”²⁰**

“One of these topics is the ‘Day of the Lord.’ This day is mentioned once in Amos (5:18–20), where the reader gets the impression that such a day is well-known to Amos’s audience. But from what source do they know? The present reader of the Book of the Twelve knows from the writing that precedes Amos, from Joel, where the Day of the Lord is the central topic. It is again the central topic in the writing that follows Amos: Obadiah. ... the theme of the Day of the Lord has a strong impact on the book up to its end (Malachi 4:5).”

• **Rendtorff, “How to Read the Book ...,” p. 77**

Professor Paul House in his book *The Unity of the Twelve* finds three sub-themes in the structure of the Twelve (see Table 3):²¹

“The Twelve are structured in a way that demonstrates [1] the sin of Israel and the nations, [2] the punishment of the sin and [3] the restoration of both from that sin.”

• **Paul House, *The Unity of the Twelve*, p. 68**

Note that the outline by House differs only slightly with the chronological arrangement of the Minor Prophets (see Table 1). The Minor Prophets provide:

“A full-orbed portrait of God includes images of God as spouse, parent, judge, healer, creator, sovereign ruler, shepherd, deliverer, and refiner of a sinful world. ... the writers depict what they deem to be the same God.”

• **Paul House, “The Character of God,” p. 144²²**

The Minor Prophets are a marvelous and intricate construction put together as a twelve block mosaic quilt full of information for our generation. We should not overlook it. We should not neglect it. We should not be frustrated that we cannot yet understand it. God has put these works in one Book for our instruction.

David Sielaff, September 2012

Table 3: Outline of the Twelve Prophets – Prof. Paul House

1	<u>Sin</u>	}	Hosea
2			Joel
3			Amos
4			Obadiah
5			Jonah
6			Micah
7	<u>Punishment</u>	}	Nahum
8			Habakkuk
9			Zephaniah
10	<u>Restoration</u>	}	Haggai
11			Zechariah
12			Malachi

¹⁹ Aaron Schart, “Reconstructing the Redaction History of the Twelve Prophets: Problems and Models” in *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, pp. 34–48. DWS

²⁰ Rolf Rendtorff, “How to Read the Book of the Twelve ...” in *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, pp. 75–90. DWS

²¹ Paul R. House, *The Unity of the Twelve*, p. 72. DWS

²² Paul R. House, “The Character of God in the Book of the Twelve,” in *Reading and Hearing the Book of the Twelve*, pp. 125–145. DWS