

Dr. Gary Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 3, Overview of the Book of the Twelve, Part 1 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 3, Overview of the Book of the Twelve, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Gary Yates' lecture provides an overview of the Book of the Twelve, also known as the Minor Prophets, within the Hebrew canon. He explains that these twelve books are viewed as a single unit in the Hebrew Bible despite being authored by different prophets. The lecture explores the order of these books in the Masoretic text and Septuagint, highlighting both chronological and thematic arrangements. Yates also examines how these books are interconnected through shared themes like the Day of the Lord and references to Exodus 34:6-7, emphasizing God's character. Furthermore, the lecture emphasizes that the minor prophets address how people respond to God's message, underscoring the call to repentance and the consequences of ignoring divine warnings.

**2. 46 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 3 – Double click icon to
play in Windows media player or go to the
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link
there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Book of the
Twelve [Minor Prophets]).**



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3. Briefing Document: Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 3, Overview of the Book of the Twelve

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from Dr. Gary Yates's lecture on the overview of the Book of the Twelve (Minor Prophets), Part 1.

Briefing Document: Overview of the Book of the Twelve (Minor Prophets), Part 1

Main Themes:

- The Nature and Significance of the Book of the Twelve:** Dr. Yates clarifies the dual designation of these prophetic books, explaining why they are called both "Minor Prophets" and "The Book of the Twelve." He emphasizes that "Minor" refers to the *size* of the books, not the importance of their messages. He notes, "When we use the term Minor Prophets, please understand we are not talking about the significance of their message. We're talking more about the size of these books compared to Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel." The term "Book of the Twelve" highlights the historical understanding of these books as a unified collection within the Hebrew canon.
- The Unity and Diversity of the Book of the Twelve:** The lecture explores the tension between studying the Minor Prophets as twelve distinct books with unique messages versus viewing them as a unified composition with overarching themes. Yates states, "Primarily, as we're working through the Minor Prophets, we're going to look at them as 12 different prophets, their unique messages, their contributions, and their theology, and see them as units. But I think it's also important to understand that there do appear to be ways that the final editor or the prophets themselves, these books have been stitched together in a way." He argues for a balanced approach, acknowledging both the individual contributions of each prophet and the intentional connections between the books.
- Arrangement and Chronology:** The lecture discusses the arrangement of the books in the Masoretic Text (Hebrew Bible) and the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament), noting that the Masoretic text order is primarily chronological but also influenced by thematic concerns. The order in the Masoretic text is Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. He points out that Joel and Obadiah's placement may be due to thematic connections with the books around them, stating, "I would argue that these two books specifically probably have gained their place in the order and in the arrangement because of thematic concerns."

- **Intertextual Connections and Catchwords:** Yates highlights the presence of "catchwords" (repeated words or phrases) and thematic connections between the books, suggesting a deliberate effort to link them together. For example, the shared references to "grain," "wine," and "vine" at the end of Hosea and the beginning of Joel, as well as the references to Edom in Amos and Obadiah. He states, "The fact that it occurs in a fairly recurring basis, James Nogalski and other contemporary scholars who deal with the minor prophets are going to put an emphasis on the way that these books have been stitched together. I think there is a design, and there is an intent that we are to read these prophets as a unit."
- **Thematic Unity: Exodus 34:6-7:** Dr. Yates emphasizes a central unifying theme is the recurring reference to Exodus 34:6-7, a key passage about God's character: merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, but also just and unwilling to clear the guilty. This confession appears (or is alluded to) in Joel, Jonah, Micah, and Nahum. He notes, "One of the unifying things about the minor prophets is that there are a number of places where we have the confession of Exodus chapter 34 verse 6."
- **The People's Response to the Word of God:** A major theme is how the people of Israel responded (or failed to respond) to the prophetic word during the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian periods. The Book of the Twelve serves as a historical record of their response and the consequences thereof. As Yates puts it, "But an overriding message in the book of the 12 as a whole is that here's a record for us to see, for us to examine how the people responded to the Word of God." The call to repentance ("shub") is a key aspect of this theme, especially prominent in Hosea.

Key Ideas and Facts:

- The Hebrew canon is divided into the Law (Torah), the Prophets (Nevi'im), and the Writings (Ketuvim). The Prophets are further divided into Former (historical books) and Latter Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel).
- Daniel is in the Writings, not because it lacks prophecy, but because Daniel wasn't an official prophet.
- The Book of the Twelve was viewed as a single book as early as 200 BC (evidence from Sirach 49:10).
- Jeremiah 26:17-19 mentions Micah's preaching leading to Hezekiah's repentance.

- The order of books in the Masoretic Text is primarily chronological but with thematic considerations (especially for Joel and Obadiah).
- The Septuagint order differs in the placement of Joel and Obadiah.
- The ministry of the Minor Prophets spans roughly 400 years (8th-5th centuries BC), encompassing the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian periods.
- Examples of catchwords and thematic connections:
 - Hosea's depiction of future abundance (grain, wine, vine) contrasted with Joel's description of judgment (destruction of grain, wine, vine).
 - Joel's description of God roaring from Zion connected to Amos's opening with the same imagery.
 - References to Tyre and Philistia in both Joel and Amos.
 - Reference to Edom in Amos and the entire book of Obadiah focusing on Edom.
- Examples of the confession in Exodus 34 being referenced or alluded to:
 - Joel 2 - a call to return to God because of His graciousness, mercy, slowness to anger, and steadfast love.
 - Jonah 4 - Jonah's anger that God was gracious and merciful towards Nineveh.
 - Micah 7 - God's pardon of iniquity and passing over transgression.
 - Nahum 1 - God is a jealous and avenging God, who is slow to anger and great in power, but will by no means clear the guilty.
- Hosea emphasizes the call to repentance, but also the people's inability to return to God due to their ingrained sinfulness.

Quotes:

- "When we use the term Minor Prophets, please understand we are not talking about the significance of their message. We're talking more about the size of these books compared to Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel."
- "Primarily, as we're working through the Minor Prophets, we're going to look at them as 12 different prophets, their unique messages, their contributions, and their theology, and see them as units. But I think it's also important to understand that there do appear to be ways that the final editor or the prophets themselves, these books have been stitched together in a way."

- "I would argue that these two books specifically probably have gained their place in the order and in the arrangement because of thematic concerns."
- "The fact that it occurs in a fairly recurring basis, James Nogalski and other contemporary scholars who deal with the minor prophets are going to put an emphasis on the way that these books have been stitched together. I think there is a design, and there is an intent that we are to read these prophets as a unit."
- "One of the unifying things about the minor prophets is that there are a number of places where we have the confession of Exodus chapter 34 verse 6."
- "But an overriding message in the book of the 12 as a whole is that here's a record for us to see, for us to examine how the people responded to the Word of God."

Implications/Takeaways:

- The Book of the Twelve should be approached with an understanding of both the individual prophetic messages and the overarching themes that connect them.
- The arrangement of the books, while primarily chronological, reveals intentional thematic connections.
- The repeated emphasis on Exodus 34:6-7 highlights the importance of understanding God's character as both merciful and just.
- The Book of the Twelve offers a historical case study of the consequences of responding (or failing to respond) to God's word, with ongoing relevance for today.

This briefing doc should provide a solid overview of the key points made in Dr. Yates's lecture.

4. Study Guide: Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 3, Overview of the Book of the Twelve

Unveiling the Twelve: A Study Guide to the Book of the Twelve

Quiz: Short Answer Questions

1. What are the three sections of the Hebrew canon and where are the prophets found?
2. Explain the difference between the Former Prophets and the Latter Prophets in the Hebrew canon.
3. Why is the Book of Daniel placed in the "Writings" section (Ketuvim) of the Hebrew canon instead of among the Latter Prophets?
4. What is the significance of referring to the Minor Prophets as "The Book of the Twelve" and what is the significance of the Minor Prophets as a single book?
5. What does Dr. Yates mean when he says the order of the Book of the Twelve is "both chronological and thematic"?
6. What is a "catchword" and how does it function within the Book of the Twelve? Give an example.
7. Explain the significance of Exodus 34:6-7 in the Book of the Twelve.
8. According to Dr. Yates, what is the central issue that the Book of the Twelve addresses?
9. What is the significance of Hosea being the opening book of the Minor Prophets?
10. How did the people of Israel respond to the preaching of Jonah?

Quiz: Answer Key

1. The three sections are the Law (Torah), the Prophets (Nevi'im), and the Writings (Ketuvim). The Prophets are found in the second section, the Nevi'im.
2. The Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings) are historical books where the preaching of the prophets is a prominent feature, determining the unfolding of Israel's history. The Latter Prophets are more explicitly prophetic books like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

3. Daniel is placed in the Writings because Daniel himself was not officially a prophet.
4. "The Book of the Twelve" emphasizes that these books were viewed as a single, unified composition early in Israel's history. This suggests the books should be read in light of each other, revealing thematic connections and a unified message.
5. The order is primarily chronological, reflecting the time periods in which the prophets ministered (Assyrian, Babylonian, post-exilic). However, thematic considerations, such as shared messages or catchwords, also influenced the arrangement, placing certain books together.
6. A "catchword" is a word or phrase that links the end of one book to the beginning of another, creating a thematic connection and suggesting a deliberate arrangement. An example is the connection between Hosea's description of future abundance (grain, wine, vine) and Joel's depiction of judgment (destroyed grain, dried-up wine) in Joel 1.
7. Exodus 34:6-7, which describes God as merciful, gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, is a central confession about God's character that appears in several Minor Prophets. It provides the theological basis for both God's judgment and his willingness to show compassion and forgive.
8. The central issue is how people respond to the word of God as communicated by the prophets. The Book of the Twelve demonstrates the consequences of either repenting and turning to God or rejecting his message and facing judgment.
9. Hosea emphasizes the fact that the prophet calls the people to repentance.
10. The people of Ninevah repented and turned back to God.

Essay Format Questions

1. Discuss the arguments for and against reading the Book of the Twelve as a unified composition versus twelve individual prophetic messages. What are the implications of each approach for interpreting the individual books?
2. Analyze the role of chronology and thematic connections in the arrangement of the Book of the Twelve. How does this arrangement contribute to the overall message of the Minor Prophets?
3. Explore the significance of Exodus 34:6-7 as a unifying theme in the Book of the Twelve. How do different prophets emphasize different aspects of God's character as revealed in this passage, and what does this reveal about the nature of God?
4. Examine the theme of repentance in the Book of the Twelve, focusing on specific examples of calls to repentance and the responses of the people. How does the Book of the Twelve portray the consequences of either heeding or ignoring these calls?
5. Trace the historical context of the Book of the Twelve, showing how the prophets addressed specific crises (Assyrian, Babylonian, post-exilic). How did these historical circumstances shape the message and concerns of the prophets?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Hebrew Canon:** The authoritative collection of Jewish scriptures, traditionally divided into three parts: the Law (Torah), the Prophets (Nevi'im), and the Writings (Ketuvim).
- **Former Prophets:** The first division of the Prophets in the Hebrew canon, comprising the historical books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings.
- **Latter Prophets:** The second division of the Prophets in the Hebrew canon, comprising the major prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel) and the Book of the Twelve (Minor Prophets).
- **Book of the Twelve:** A collection of twelve shorter prophetic books (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi) viewed as a single, unified book in the Hebrew canon.

- **Minor Prophets:** Another name for the Book of the Twelve, referring to the relatively shorter length of these prophetic books compared to the major prophets.
- **Masoretic Text:** The authoritative Hebrew text of the Old Testament, used as the basis for most modern translations.
- **Septuagint (LXX):** A Greek translation of the Old Testament, traditionally believed to have been produced by seventy Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt.
- **Chronological Order:** Arranged in the order of time; in the context of the Book of the Twelve, referring to the approximate historical periods in which the prophets ministered.
- **Thematic Connections:** Links between different books based on shared messages, ideas, or motifs.
- **Catchword:** A word or phrase that connects the end of one book with the beginning of another, creating a thematic link.
- **Redactor:** An editor who compiles and arranges existing texts, sometimes adding their own interpretations or additions.
- **Exodus 34:6-7:** A central Old Testament passage describing God's character as merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and yet also just and not clearing the guilty.
- **Repentance (Shub):** Turning away from sin and returning to God; a key theme in the Book of the Twelve.
- **Hesed:** Hebrew term for steadfast love, covenant faithfulness, and loyal kindness; a key attribute of God emphasized in Exodus 34:6-7.
- **Post-Exilic Period:** The time period after the Babylonian exile when the Jews returned to the land of Israel and began rebuilding the temple and their society.
- **Day of the Lord:** A recurring theme in the Minor Prophets, referring to a time of divine judgment and/or salvation.

5. FAQs on Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 3, Overview of the Book of the Twelve, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Here is an 8-question FAQ based on the provided source:

FAQ on the Book of the Twelve (Minor Prophets)

- **Why are these books referred to as both the "Minor Prophets" and the "Book of the Twelve"?**
- The term "Minor Prophets" refers to the shorter length of these twelve books compared to the Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel). "Book of the Twelve" reflects how the Hebrew canon often viewed these books as a single, unified composition, rather than twelve completely separate works. The term "Minor Prophets" was later developed by Augustine. The term "Book of the Twelve" was in use in the time of Jesus.
- **Does "Minor Prophets" mean their messages are less important than the messages of the "Major Prophets"?**
- No. The "Minor" designation refers only to the length of the books, not the significance of their content. Several of these prophets had a significant impact on Israel's history and culture, including Micah influencing Hezekiah's repentance, Jonah leading Nineveh to repentance, Zephaniah possibly influencing Josiah's reforms, and Haggai and Zechariah motivating the rebuilding of the temple.
- **How should we approach studying the Book of the Twelve – as twelve individual books or as a unified work?**
- Both approaches are valuable. It's important to study each prophet's unique message, contributions, and theology individually. However, there is also evidence of deliberate connections and thematic unity between the books, suggesting that they should be read in light of each other.
- **Is there evidence that the Book of the Twelve was viewed as a single unit in ancient times?**
- Yes. By 200 BC, there's evidence that the Jews considered the Book of the Twelve a unified composition. Sirach 49:10 refers to the "bones of the twelve prophets" suggesting a collective view.

- **How are the books of the Twelve arranged, and is there a specific purpose to the arrangement?**
- The arrangement is primarily chronological, but also incorporates thematic connections. The first six books (Hosea, Amos, Micah, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah) are largely in chronological order based on historical notations. The remaining six (Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Malachi) are also arranged in chronological order except for Joel and Obadiah, which appear to have been placed near the front for thematic reasons.
- **What thematic connections exist between the books of the Twelve?**
- Several thematic connections exist, including the use of catchwords (linking words between books), references to Exodus 34:6-7 (God's attributes of mercy, grace, and justice), and an unfolding message related to the response of God's people to the word of the prophets. Joel may be at the front as it shows the ideal response of the people to God, calling them back to God and them repenting and God sending blessings in place of judgment. Obadiah may be placed where it is because it follows Amos and refers to Edom, whom Amos also mentions.
- **How does the Book of the Twelve emphasize the importance of responding to God's Word?**
- A major theme is the response (or lack thereof) of the people to the word of God delivered by the prophets during the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian periods. The Book of the Twelve demonstrates that judgment and salvation are often dependent on how the people listen to and act upon the prophetic messages.
- **What role does the confession of Exodus 34:6-7 play in the Book of the Twelve?**
- Exodus 34:6-7, which describes God as merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and also just, is a central confession that unifies the Book of the Twelve. It is directly referenced or alluded to in multiple books (Joel, Jonah, Micah, Nahum), highlighting the balance between God's compassion and justice in His dealings with both Israel and the nations.