

The Minor Prophets of the Old Testament in the Theology of St. John's Apocalypse

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Abstract

The "Dodekapropheton" have been renowned in the history of the people of Israel by keeping alive the hope of Salvation and the righteous Judgment of Yahweh. The Book of Revelation belongs to the "apocalyptic" genre, which has been quite cultivated in the first century of the Christian, essentially illustrated by the Book of Daniel. It is quite difficult to make an accurate analysis of the use of Old Testament writing in the Apocalypse of St. John. Because of the absence of formal quotations, the scholars should rather intuit the actual allusions or echoes present in the consistent johannine narrative. This fact makes the attempt of identifying the sources of the writing a rather subjective undertaking. St. John takes many images and even a certain type of language from the writings of the Minor Prophets, but in most cases it is impossible to identify a single text that the author will want to evoke through a hint. Therefore, the present study aims to take into account rather the so-called "literary allusions". Therefore, the Book of Zechariah seems to be by far the most quoted text in Revelation, most likely due to its extension, themes, and style. It is followed by the Book of Joel, which contains ample images of the imminence of the Parousia (i.e. The Second Coming of the Lord). Last but not least, there is an allusion to the Book of Hosea, which also presents an eschatological issue. The scholars also talk about other echoes of five other Minor Prophets in the Book of Revelation, which are not of particular interest for our study, as follows: Amos, Zephaniah, Nahum, Micah and Malachi.