

1. In the Hebrew Bible you will find a unified collection of 12 smaller writings placed after the Book of Ezekiel. The 12 books are called "The Book of the Twelve" or the "Minor Prophets."
2. Unfortunately - very little is ever taught from the richness of these prophetic writings.
3. The 12 books provide great insight into the condition of the world and the divided nation of Israel. These books also provide insight into the 400yr intertestamental period.

Important Events Between the Testaments:

331 B.C. Alexander defeats the Persians	214 B.C. The Great Wall of China begun
175 B.C. Apocryphal literature completed	169 B.C. Epiphanes defiles the Temple
166 B.C. The revolt of the Maccabees	146 B.C. Destruction of Carthage by Rome
63 B.C. Pompey conquers Jerusalem	44 B.C. Julius Caesar is assassinated
37 B.C. Herod is appointed to govern Jerusalem	19 B.C. Restoration of the 2 nd Jewish Temple
6 B.C. Birth of John the Baptist	7-9 B.C. Birth of Jesus

4. We will take a look at each book in the order they are placed in the canon. Let's begin with the Book of Hosea.
5. We know virtually nothing about Hosea himself. We know nothing of his ancestral family beyond the name of his father, Beeri.
6. We do not know where his home was, what events were formative in his early life, or how he was educated. We do not know how close he was to the political events of his lifetime.
7. His remarkable familiarity with the Torah, Joshua, and Judges suggests that he was thoroughly trained in the Scriptures (as they existed in his day).
8. We do not know how or where he died. He became a prophet prior to his marriage because it was by divine command that he chose the woman he did.
9. We can draw from chapter 1:1 that his ministry lasted quite a long time - he may have become a prophet at a reasonably young age.
10. We know more about the age in which he lived. Hosea 1:1 tells us that he prophesied "during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the reign of Jeroboam son of Jehoash king of Israel."
11. The fact that he lived into Hezekiah's reign is especially significant because it tells us that he lived to see the fall of Samaria (722 B.C.).
12. At the time Judah was ruled by one of the godliest kings - Hezekiah. It was Hezekiah who had all idolatry abolished and led to the restoration of the temple. He invited all the tribes - not just Judah - to a celebration. (2 Kings 18:1-8)

13. Jeroboam II - who reigned from about 790 to 750 B.C. - came to power while Israel's two enemies to the north, Syria and Assyria, were weakened by internal conflicts.
14. Soon after Jeroboam II's death the situation approached anarchy; almost every king of Israel died by assassination at the hands of his successor. (Jeroboam II died during the reign of Uzziah)
15. Hosea lived a pain-filled life and preached in a troubled time. His family life uniquely qualified him for the title of suffering prophet. In addition to that, however, was the sorrow he felt as a result of the political upheaval and disaster he saw in his lifetime.
16. Why did Hosea neglect to mention the rest of the kings of Israel? (Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea)
17. The reason is twofold. First, he saw Jeroboam II as the last king of Israel with any shred of legitimacy.
18. Those after him were a pack of power hungry assassins and who had no right to the title "king." Hosea's assessment of the kings of Israel appears in texts like 7:1-7.
19. Second, he hoped for better things from Judah. At times he criticized the south as heavily as the north (5:5, 12), but he also prayed that they not follow Israel's lead (4:15).
20. Most importantly, he looked for salvation and reunification in the line of David (3:5).