

## Marinating in God's Word: Hosea

Ask about a favorite book of the Bible, and you're not likely to someone cite the Minor Prophets. And yet we hear God's word through them too. Thus we're focusing this summer on a portion of the Bible we tend not to know very well.

For further reflection on your own or in a small group, consider these questions:

Just as Jesus used images to teach (faith is like a mustard seed, the Kingdom is like a pearl), so the prophets used images – some quite abrasive. Hosea compare Israel to a whore. As with Jesus's images, Hosea's image brings a symbolic impact. What is the impact of "whore"? In our sexually libertine culture, why is "whore" still such a distasteful term?

Scan through chapters 1-3 of Hosea. What happened? How did this part of Hosea's and Gomer's marriage match the Lord's relationship with Israel?

We often see the image of marriage used in scripture to describe the Lord's relationship with his people. What can we learn about the Lord and his people from a healthy marriage? And what do we learn about the Lord and his people from Hosea's unhealthy marriage?

Hosea shows the great love of God for his people, despite their unfaithfulness. How does Jesus expand and fill out the picture of such love?

Next week John Daniel will lead us in our focus on Jezebel.