



## heartbreak hotel

**Scripture Story:** Hosea.

**Commentary:** *Prophets and Kings*, chapters 23, 24.

### PREPARING TO TEACH

#### I. SYNOPSIS

God loves us to death. His love for us is unending, undying, and unwavering. The story of Hosea demonstrates this kind of sacrificial love. It shows us the kind of love God has for His people. This story and lesson is not just about Hosea's broken home and heart, but also about God's. Students should become well acquainted with God's passionate love for them, God's pain over sin, and God's plan to redeem them. God's passionate love caused Him to pull out all the stops to show Israel how much He cared for her. He was desperate to save and deliver her. Israel, though, had to make the decision to come back. In the same way, God is desperate to redeem and restore His people of today. He anxiously waits for us to give ourselves completely to Him.

As in the time of Hosea, God is often rejected, forgotten, or ignored, and this causes God great pain. He who fixes hearts reveals that He Himself is suffering from a broken heart. God, however, refuses to give up. God vows to fight for His bride.

God's plan is to redeem His people, as Gomer was redeemed. God leaves us with the promise that He will restore and heal His children. God is willing to do all He can to make our relationship with Him work. God wants to restore and remake us. Relationships, however, are two-way. We must do our part to stay faithful to God and maintain a loving relationship with Him.

#### II. TARGET

The students will:

- Understand the deep love God has for us. (*Know*)
- Sense the emotions God feels when we ignore Him. (*Feel*)
- Choose a friendship with God and choose His way for their lives. (*Respond*)

#### III. EXPLORE

- Grace
- God (loving, unfailing, personal)
- Leadership

You will find material to help you explore these and other topics with your students at [www.leadoutministries.com](http://www.leadoutministries.com).

### TEACHING

#### I. GETTING STARTED

##### **Activity**

Refer the students to the What Do You Think? section of their lesson. After they have completed it, discuss their responses.

What emotions do you think God feels? Give an example from the Bible when God felt joy. When did God feel sorrow? When did God get angry? For larger classes, have students get into groups of two or three to answer the questions.

### **Alternate Activity**

Provide the students with paper, pens, and markers. Have the students draw a scene from the Bible where God showed some type of emotion. For example, someone may draw a Creation scene to show God's joy, or the golden calf scene as a time when God showed anger. When they have completed their pictures, give each student an opportunity to share their picture and the emotion God displayed.

### **Illustration**

*Share this illustration in your own words:*

The phone rang and a young child answered the phone in a hushed whisper, "Hello."

It was his father's boss who needed his urgent help. "Is your father there, son?"

"Yes," the boy answered, speaking in soft tones.

"May I speak with him," he kindly requested.

To his surprise, the boy whispered, "No."

"Well, is your mommy there?" he replied.

"Yes," he quietly answered back.

"May I speak with her?"

"No," the child said in whispered tones.

The boss figured maybe he was home with someone else, so he asked to speak with the adult watching him in order to leave a message. "Is there anyone there besides you?"

"Yes, a policeman," the boy quietly revealed.

Wondering why a policeman would be there, he asked to speak with him.

"No, he is busy," whispered the child.

"Busy? Well, what is he doing?" the boss impatiently inquired.

"Talking to Daddy and Mommy and the fireman," came the whispered answer.

The boss was both frustrated and concerned. As he was trying to figure out what to say next, it sounded as if he heard a helicopter in the background. "What is that noise?" he asked.

"A hello-copper," answered the whispering voice.

His concern turned to worry, "What is going on over there?" he demanded.

Excited, the boy answered in his loudest whisper, "The search team just landed the hello-copper!"

"Well, why are they there?" the boss frantically questioned.

Still whispering, but now giggling, the child confessed, "They are looking for me!"\*

## II. TEACHING THE STORY

### **Bridge to the Story**

*Share the following in your own words:*

When you were little, did you ever run away? Share a time when you tried or wanted to run away as a little child. How do you think your parents would have felt if their little child stayed lost? Losing something is not very fun; especially if it is something you love. When that something is someone you love, it can be heartbreaking. Our lesson is about heartbreak—Hosea's heartbreak and God's heartbreak.

### **Out of the Story for Teachers**

*After you read the Into the Story section with your students, use the following in your own words to process it with them.*

- What did God tell Hosea to do?
- What do we know about Hosea's wife?
- How had Israel behaved toward God?
- How did God deal with Israel when she forgot God and did her own thing?
- What emotions do you think God felt when He saw Israel?
- *Circle* all the words that showed emotions or feelings.
- How would you feel if you were married to someone like Gomer?
- How do you think God feels about His relationship with you?
- What do you think God was trying to tell us through the marriage of Hosea and Gomer?
- What promise did you find in this story?

*Use the following as more teachable passages that relate to today's story:*

Ezekiel 33:11; Jeremiah 3:12; Hosea 6:1-3; 14:1, 2; 1 Timothy 2:3, 4.

### **Sharing Context and Background**

*Use the following information to shed more light on the story for your students. Share it in your own words.*

Israel was on the brink of destruction. Israel had disobeyed God time and time again. As a result, they were soon to be led into captivity. Hosea was the last prophet to Israel before it was destroyed. All the prophets before spoke of the ensuing judgment and


the flaming wrath that was to come on all who had turned away from God. In Hosea, God shows His softer side, the deepness of His heart and the depth of His love.

The name Hosea means “salvation” or “savior.” It has the same meaning as Joshua and Jesus. Actually, Jesus is the Greek version of Hosea. Hosea was also the name of Israel’s last king, before it was destroyed as a nation. This name was a promise of salvation.

God instructed the young prophet Hosea to get married. The woman he was engaged to was unfaithful and was a prostitute. Nevertheless, Hosea married Gomer and started a family, but Gomer never let go of her old lovers. She cheated on Hosea more than once, and found herself a slave.

Hosea was heartbroken. He had fallen in love with Gomer, and it seemed as if Gomer wanted everyone but him. God shared with Hosea that this was exactly how He felt about His wife, Israel. God had loved her and provided for her, but she continued to forget all about God. Israel wanted the gods of the world. This broke God’s heart.

God told Hosea to go get his wife back. By the time he found her, even though she was his wife, he had to pay another man for her freedom. The Bible says that he bought her for 15 shekels of silver and 1½ homers of barley. In Hosea’s time, 1½ homers of barley was equal to about 15 shekels of silver. The prophet paid the equivalent of 30 pieces of silver for



**Tips for Top-notch Teaching**

*Random Draw*

Allowing the students to participate in reading and answering questions is a great way to keep them involved. Students do not always volunteer for these opportunities; so try calling on students randomly. They are more likely to be alert and more engaged if they do not know when they will be called on. To make this fun, write each student’s name on a small object, such as a card or craft stick, and place them all in a container. After asking a question, draw a name to determine who will answer it. Return the object to the container and mix them up for the next question or duty.

his wife. This was the price of a slave. This was also what the priests paid Judas for Jesus.

Hosea probably made only 10 shekels a year, so 30 shekels was a large price to pay. Hosea had to pay a great cost to forgive and restore his wife. Hosea’s story points to Christ who purchased us from the slavery of sin with His own blood. God loved us too much to leave us as slaves. Though we hurt Him, He still extends the invitation for us to be in loving relationship with Him.

## Teaching From . . .

*Refer your students to the other sections of their lesson.*

- **Other Eyes**

*Ask them how the quotes in Other Eyes convey the point of the story in this lesson.*

- **Flashlight**

*Read the Flashlight statement, pointing out that most of the time it is from the commentary on this week’s story found in the book Prophets and Kings. Ask what relationship they see between the statement and what they have just discussed from Out of the Story.*

- **Punch Lines**

*Point out to your students the verses listed in their lesson that relate to this week’s story. Have them read the passages and ask each one to choose the verse that speaks most directly to them today. Then ask them to explain why they chose the one they did.*

*Or you might assign the passages to pairs of students to read aloud and then discuss, in order to choose the most relevant one to them.*

### III. CLOSING

#### **Activity**

*Close with an activity and debrief it in your own words.*

God went through great pains to show His love for us. Now give the students a chance to express their love for Him. Have students get in groups of three or four and instruct them to write a six-line love song to God. Each group will work on one song together. When each group has finished, give them time to share their love songs. The songs should be sung for the whole group.

#### **Summary**

*Share the following thoughts in your own words:*

Hosea is a story of love. Hosea fell in love with a woman who did not love him back. In the midst of this pain, God helped him to love again. Though his wife

was unfaithful and unloving, God was able to heal their relationship and restore their family.

In the same way, Hosea's story shows how God feels about us. God loves us to death. God desperately wants us in a loving relationship with Him. This story gives us a glimpse of God's passionate love for His children. "How can I give you up?" God exclaims. God wants to fight for us. This story also displays the pain we cause God when we walk away from Him, neglect Him, or ignore Him. God has a plan for our lives. Hosea points to Jesus who died to set us free from the bonds of slavery. And because of Jesus Christ, we can be restored into a right relationship with God.

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\*Adapted from illustration "Looking for the Lost" found on SermonCentral.com. [www.sermoncentral.com/sermoncentral\\_pro/super\\_sermon\\_illustration\\_search.asp?search\\_entire\\_chapter=&ScriptureBookA=Luke&ScriptureStartChapterA=15&ScriptureStartVerseA=1&ScriptureEndChapterA=15&ScriptureEndVerseA=32&Go2.x=0&Go2.y=0](http://www.sermoncentral.com/sermoncentral_pro/super_sermon_illustration_search.asp?search_entire_chapter=&ScriptureBookA=Luke&ScriptureStartChapterA=15&ScriptureStartVerseA=1&ScriptureEndChapterA=15&ScriptureEndVerseA=32&Go2.x=0&Go2.y=0)



Remind the students about the reading plan that will take them through the inspired commentary of the Bible, the Conflict of the Ages Series. The reading that goes with this lesson is *Prophets and Kings*, chapters 23, 24.

\*A special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings* has been created just for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and the Pacific Press Publishing Association. Get more info about it at [www.cornerstoneconnections.net](http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net).