CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS
MAY112024

Scripture Story: Hosea.
Commentary: *Prophets and Kings* (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapters 23; 24.

come home!



Photo © Getty Images

keytext

"I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them."

(Hosea 14:4, NIV)

flashlight

"Despite the efforts of Satan to thwart God's purpose for Israel, nevertheless even in some of the darkest hours of their history, when it seemed as if the forces of evil were about to gain the victory, the Lord graciously revealed Himself. He spread before Israel the things that were for the welfare of the nation. . . . Tenderly had the Lord dealt with them, instructing them by His prophets line upon line, precept upon precept" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 296).

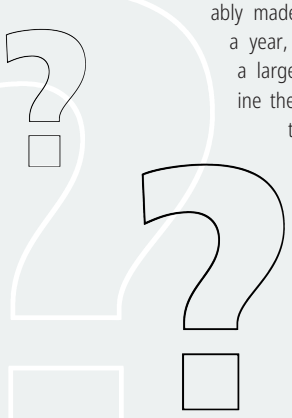
what do you think?

Write down what emotions you would feel if the following happened to you:

- You find a $100 bill on the street. _____
- You drop and break your cell phone. _____
- You get a C on your exam. _____
- Everyone laughs at your new outfit. _____
- You find a mouse in your backpack. _____
- Your best friend moves away. _____
- Your family forgets your birthday. _____
- It is the last day of school. _____
- Your boyfriend/girlfriend breaks up with you. _____

did you know?

Hosea had to buy his wife back with 15 shekels of silver, and 1½ homers of barley. In Hosea's time, 1½ homers of barley was equal to about 430 pounds of barley and was worth 15 shekels of silver. That means he had to buy his wife for 30 pieces of silver—the price of a slave. That was also the price Judas received for Jesus. Hosea probably made only 10 shekels a year, so 30 shekels was a large price to pay. Imagine the prophet walking up to the slave master with 430 pounds of grain!



INTO THE STORY

"When the Lord began to speak through Hosea, the Lord said to him, 'Go, marry a promiscuous woman and have children with her, for like an adulterous wife this land is guilty of unfaithfulness to the Lord.' So he married Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son."

"She will chase after her lovers but not catch them; she will look for them but not find them. Then she will say, 'I will go back to my husband as at first, for then I was better off than now.' "

"The Lord said to me, 'Go, show your love to your wife again, though she is loved by another man and is an adulteress. Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites, though they turn to other gods and love the sacred raisin cakes.'

"So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and about a homer and a lethek of barley. Then I told her, 'You are to live with me many days; you must not be a prostitute or be intimate with any man, and I will behave the same way toward you.'

"For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or household gods. Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the Lord and to his blessings in the last days."

"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. But the more they were called, the more they went away from me. They sacrificed to the Baals and they burned incense to images. It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love. To them I was like one who lifts a little child to the cheek, and I bent down to feed them. . . .

"How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I treat you like Admah? How can I make you like Zeboyim? My heart is changed within me; all my compassion is aroused. I will not carry out my fierce anger, nor will I devastate Ephraim again. For I am God, and not a man—the Holy One among you. I will not come against their cities."

"I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them."

(Hosea 1:2, 3; 2:7; 3:1-5; 11:1-9; 14:4, NIV)

OUT OF THE STORY

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 they forgot God and did their own thing?

_____

_____

What emotions do you think God felt when He saw Israel?

_____

_____

_____

Circle all the words that show 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?

_____

_____

_____

punch lines

"The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying:

" 'I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness' " **(Jeremiah 31:3, NIV).**

"I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you" **(Isaiah 44:22, NIV).**

" 'Come back to me, you unfaithful children, and I will forgive you for being unfaithful.'

" 'Yes, we will come to you, because you are the LORD our God. It was foolish to worship idols on the hills and on the mountains. Surely the salvation of Israel comes from the LORD our God' " **(Jeremiah 3:22, 23, NCV).**

" 'In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you,' says the LORD your Redeemer" **(Isaiah 54:8, NIV).**

"Now it's time to change your ways! Turn to face God so he can wipe away your sins, pour out showers of blessing to refresh you" **(Acts 3:19, *The Message*).**

further insight

"By giving Christ to our world, God manifested His love for mankind."—Ellen G. White, *Lift Him Up*, p. 134

"Christ was the medium through which He [God the Father] could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world."

—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 13

Sabbath

Read Genesis 6:6; Psalm 2:4; Exodus 32:9, 10; Zephaniah 3:17.

Complete the *What Do You Think?* section of the lesson. You were asked to list some emotions you feel in everyday situations. Emotions come to us naturally, without even thinking about them. What kind of positive emotions do you feel? What kind of negative emotions do you feel? What kind of emotions does God feel?

Emotions are not bad. They give us a clue to what is going on in our hearts. This week's lesson is an emotional one. It takes a peek into the heart of God. Write down God's feelings and manifestations in each of the Bible passages listed at the top of this column for today's reading.

_____

Sunday

Read Isaiah 44:22.

Read the story of Hosea and Gomer in this week's *Into the Story* section and respond to the study questions. This is a story of scandal and pain, and everybody had their share. Which of the characters in the story did you most identify with? Why?

What emotions do you think God and Hosea had in common?

_____

Hosea and God both knew what it was like to lose someone they loved. When Gomer strayed from her husband she went so far that she ended up being sold into slavery. God sent Hosea to buy her back. What emotions do you think Gomer felt as she stood on the auction block and saw Hosea in the crowd bidding for her?

How are you like Gomer?

_____

Monday

Read Acts 3:19.

God loved Israel to death. God was very hurt about how Israel had broken His heart and left Him. He was angry too. God came up with a solution for this problem. Read this week's *Key Text* and write down God's solution below:

_____

God saw that Israel was sick—sin-sick and in need of healing. He promised to heal them and to love them freely. What do you think that means? Did God loving Israel freely mean they could continue to do what they wanted? What should Israel do in response to God's love? What should we do in light of the love God freely gives us?

_____

Tuesday

Read Jeremiah 31:3.

In the *Flashlight* section, Ellen White reveals that God was not the only one after Israel's love and affection. Satan was very active trying to ruin the relationship God had with His people. Read the *Flashlight* section and jot down the kinds of things you think Satan did to keep Israel away from God.

What things does Satan do to try to ruin your relationship with God? Does it work?

_____

Wednesday

Read all the verses in the *Punch Lines* section. What do these verses reveal about God? If you had to summarize all the verses in five words or less, what would you write? Which verse stood out to you the most? Why?

God loves us. He works hard at keeping a relationship with us. Even when Satan tries to distract us, God reveals Himself and speaks to us through His Word.

Jeremiah 3:22, 23, one of the verses you read, is God's invitation for Israel to come back to Him and His promise to forgive them. It also includes a response from Israel. Write out how you would respond to God's invitation.

Thursday

Read Psalm 62:1; 119:105; 1 Chronicles 16:11; Philippians 4:8, 9.

One of the things good relationships are built on is time. Quantity time is quality time. God is pleading for you to give Him top priority in your life. One way to help with this is to make sure God has time with you every day. Commit to a time in the next 24 hours that you will spend alone with God. Make it a date and do not let anybody pull you away from it. You might even want to ask a trusted friend to help you keep that commitment.

Time: _____ Place: _____

Things to remember in prayer: _____

_____

Friday

Read Acts 3:19.

Take some time to reflect on how God may be feeling about His relationship with you. What are the things in your life that bring God pain? What are the things in your life that make God angry? What are the things in your life that bring God joy? What are you willing to do in the next week to bring God even more joy? Who can help you keep that commitment? Imagine that God wrote you a letter about your relationship with Him. On a separate sheet of paper, write down what you think it would say.

this week's reading*

Prophets and Kings (or *Royalty in Ruins*), chapters 23; 24.

**Royalty in Ruins* is a special adaptation of *Prophets and Kings*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press®. Get more information about it at http://www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.