

God Loves Israel



Key Passages

Hosea 4:1–2, 11:1

Lesson Focus

God loves His people.

Memory Verse

Isaiah 42:8 I am the Lord, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images.



Circle Time

Bring your stuffed animal, Bible, Flip Chart, Lesson Pictures of Hosea, Gomer, and the Children, and any other props you brought or prepared for this lesson.

PRAYER

Begin with prayer. Turn to the Flip Chart Prayer Page.

GOD'S WORD

These first five questions will be repeated throughout the year. The repetition of these questions will help to solidify these simple but foundational truths in the children's minds at a young age.

- ? Who made you? *God.*
- ? What else did God make? *All things.*
- ? Why did God make you and all things? *For His own glory.*
- ? Can you see God? *No, I cannot see God, but He can always see me.*
- ? Where is God? *God is everywhere.*

Bible Pass Around See the Teacher Guide for details about this activity.

Continue lesson when finished with Bible Pass Around.

Refer to the Lesson 2 Flip Chart. Last week we learned about the prophet Amos. He was a simple shepherd. God used Amos to give the people of Israel a warning. Because they disobeyed, God was going to punish them. This was sad news for God's people. But God is just. He must punish sin.

Today we will talk about another prophet. This prophet also had a message for God's people. Hold up the Lesson Picture of Hosea. His name was Hosea. He wrote the book in the Bible called Hosea. Let's open the Bible to the book of Hosea now! We are going to read from this book today. Make this a special time as the student brings the Bible, and he/she opens it to where the sticky note is.

Here it is in my Bible. As we go through our lesson today, we are going to see that God loves His people! Show the students where the book is. Have the student sit back down.

The Bible tells us that the prophet Hosea told the people of Israel to stop sinning and to turn back to God! God sent Hosea to the people because God loves His people!

? Can you say that with me? *Stop sinning and turn back to God! God loves His people! Have the students repeat the phrase a few times.*

But Hosea didn't just tell them this, he showed them! You see, the book of Hosea is a love story! It is a love story about a man and his wife AND it is a love story about God and His people. Let me explain.

God sent the prophet Hosea to help the people understand how much God loves His people. Hold up the Lesson Picture of Hosea. The people listened to what Hosea said because he was a prophet of God. And they watched what he did! And as they watched Hosea, the people began to understand God's message of love for them—that God loves His people.

This is what happened. Put the Lesson Picture of Hosea on the floor in the circle. God's prophet Hosea was married to a lady named Gomer. Put the Lesson Picture of Gomer next to Hosea. Hosea and Gomer had three children. Put the Lesson Picture of the three children by Hosea and Gomer. But one day, Gomer stopped loving Hosea. Refer to the Flip Chart and the Lesson Pictures. She thought she would be happier with other men. So Gomer turned her back on Hosea and ran away. Move the Lesson Picture of Gomer away from Hosea.

? How do you think this made Hosea feel? *Allow discussion.*

Hosea was very sad. His heart was broken. His wife had left him. She had sinned against Hosea by turning from him and running to other men. This was not good for Hosea.

But, at the same time, something was happening in Israel. The people were turning away from God like Gomer had turned away from her husband. The people were sinning against God! Remember, Hosea was a prophet of God. And God used Hosea to send a special message to His people.

Hosea 4:1–2

Now I am going to read something from the Bible. It tells us something about how the people of Israel were treating God! Listen carefully! I will ask you some questions about it. Read Hosea 4:1–2.

This says the Lord brought a charge against His people. That means God was accusing them. He was saying, you are not doing right!

? What was God accusing His people of? *Re-read Hosea 4:1 emphasizing the sins the people were committing against God. Allow discussion.*

Refer to the Flip Chart. The Bible says there was no truth, mercy, or knowledge in the land. The people were killing, lying, swearing, and more! The Israelites turned away from God just like Gomer turned away from her husband, Hosea. The people did not remember God. Gomer did not remember Hosea. God's people were turning to other gods. They were worshipping idols. They no longer were worshipping the one true and living God.

? How do you think this made God feel? *Allow discussion.*

God was sad. His heart was broken for His people. The Israelites left God to worship idols. But God was about to do something no one expected.

Refer to the Lesson Pictures and/or refer to the Flip Chart. Remember, God was using Hosea to teach His people a lesson. God told Hosea to take his wife back! But she had been so mean to him! Besides, Gomer did not love Hosea anymore. Why should he take her back? Because God said so! Hosea was going to forgive Gomer even though she had left him and treated him badly. Hosea was going to take his wife back and take care of her again!

Hmmm! So, what was God trying to teach His children? Remember, the people were sinning against God like Gomer was sinning against her husband. But God loved His people. And just like Hosea forgave Gomer and brought her back, God wanted to forgive His people and be their God.

God is so good! God loves His people. Remember, just one sin will separate us from God forever! But God was willing to forgive them for all their sins against Him if they would stop sinning and worship Him alone!

Hosea 11:1

Listen to what God said about His people. I'm going to read from Hosea again. Pay close attention! Read Hosea 11:1 emphasizing "a child" and "son."

? What did God call Israel? *A child.*

God loved His people. It says so right here in the Bible! God loved His people like a father loves his son. Even though the people sinned, God still loved them. And God will forgive His people if they ask for forgiveness.

God used Hosea and Gomer to teach His people a lesson about His love. Just like Hosea was willing to forgive his wife for all the sins she committed, God was willing to forgive the people He loved so much if they would just turn back to Him and turn away from their sins.

The same message is for us today! God must punish sin; it is true. But God is also patient with us, just as He was patient with the Israelites. God was willing to forgive His people. And He is willing to forgive us!

You see, God loved the world and sinners so much that He sent Jesus to die on the Cross so that whoever would believe in Him would be forgiven and have eternal life. God will forgive His children just like Hosea forgave his wife, Gomer.

SONG

- Musical instruments, marching, and motions can be added to this section to add interest. Lyrics to the songs can be found on the Flip Chart Song Page and on the Song Sheet at the back of the Teacher Guide.

When God told Hosea to take his wife back, what did Hosea do? He brought Gomer back home to love and care for her. Now I want us to learn a new song to remind us of the love story of Hosea and Gomer AND God and His people. Sing "God's Love" while using hand motions.

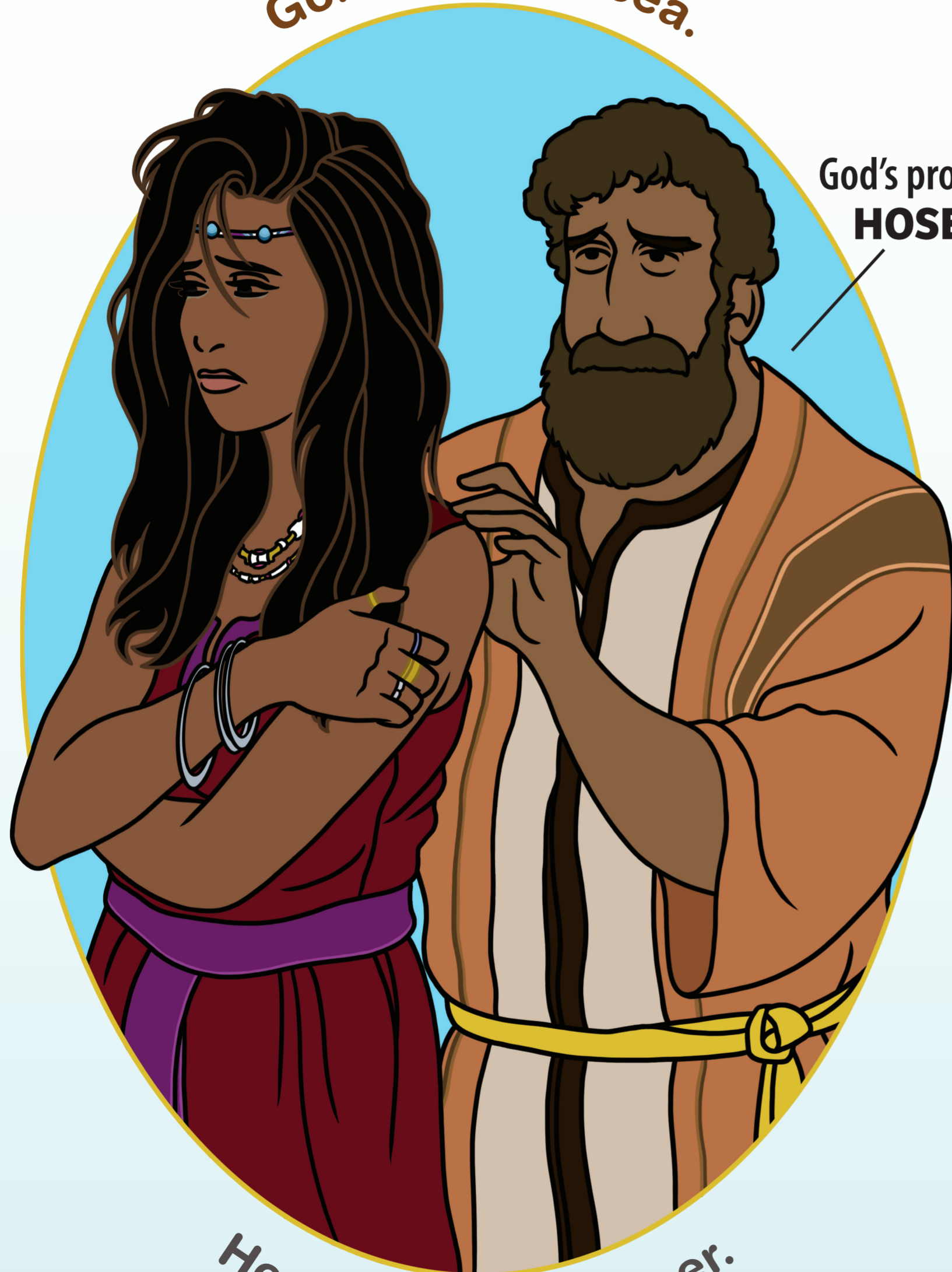
Great job! Let's sing the song we learned last week called "God's Mercy." Sing "God's Mercy."

Refer to the Flip Chart Memory Verse Page. God is the Lord. There is no other. He wants us to love and worship Him alone. Let's sing the Memory Verse Song. Sing "Isaiah 42:8" while marching around the room.

- Refer to the Teacher Guide for the activities to be continued in Circle Time.
- Oversee an orderly way to get the children back to their seats, especially if the chairs were moved for Circle Time.

God loves His people.

Gomer left Hosea.



God's prophet
HOSEA

Hosea forgave Gomer.

The Israelites disobeyed God.



God will forgive His people.