

E28. Psalm 23

Psalm 23:1-6

Learning Objectives

1. The children will explore the 23rd Psalm and its meaning.
2. The children will identify ways they can spend quiet time with God each day and stay focused on Him.
3. The children will identify ways that they can show Jesus that He is their shepherd.
4. The children will examine the concept of God's mercy and how they can extend it to others.

Memory Verse: *“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.” --Psalm 23:1*

Getting Started

Choose One Activity

All Ages

“Perfect Place”

You will need to provide white paper and coloring utensils (crayons, pencils, markers, etc.) for this activity. If possible, play peaceful and calm music softly as the children enter class. Ask the children to use the paper and materials to draw a picture of a place that they consider to be calm and peaceful, a place that reminds them of peace and contentment. As you proceed with the lesson, share how their drawing relates to the verses in today's lesson.

“Brainstorm” Activity

You will need chart paper or a dry erase board for this activity. Draw a vertical line down the middle of the board or paper and write “sheep” over the left column and “people” over the right column. On the left side, have the children brainstorm and write on the board what they would need if they were actual sheep. (food, water, protection, love, a place to sleep, etc.) On the right side of the paper or board, make a list of things that we need as people. Note the similarities between the two columns. Then continue with the lesson.

“Shepherd’s Staff”

See www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Crafts → “Shepherd’s Staff”

The children will make a shepherd's staff using cardboard (or poster board) and scissors. You will want to make a sample before class. Also, trace the outline of the staff (about 2 feet long) onto the cardboard before class for younger children, or partner them with older children to help with the cutting, OR cut them out before class to save time. Use the template attached at the end of this lesson as a guide. The children will write (or glue) “The Lord is My Shepherd, Psalm 23” on their staff. They can also use markers (etc.) to decorate their staff as time allows.

“Prepare Me a Table” Activity

See www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Crafts → Shepherd’s Table

You will need toasted bread, stick pretzels, large marshmallows, round snack crackers, gold fish crackers, marshmallow cream, raisins, grapes and small pieces of fruit for this activity. **Make sure you follow any food allergy guidelines as needed according to the children in your class.** Please see the above website for detailed instructions. You will also need bags for the children to take their tables home in rather than eating them during the snack (application to real life) time.

Bible Lesson with Discussion Questions

Message:

Keep your eyes on Jesus, the good shepherd.

Psalm 23:1-3 (NKJV)

The LORD *is* my shepherd;

I shall not want.

² He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside the still waters.

³ He restores my soul;

He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil;

For You *are* with me;

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

You anoint my head with oil;

My cup runs over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;

And I will dwell^a in the house of the LORD Forever.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does a shepherd do? (*takes care of sheep, keeps them safe, helps them find food and water, etc.*)
2. Why do you think David called the Lord his shepherd? (*Discuss together. God provided for David and kept him safe.*)
3. What do you think it means when it says, "I shall not want"? (*Just as the shepherd provides everything the sheep need, God will also give us (just like David), everything we NEED.*)
4. How do you think water restores our souls? (*Explain that Jesus is the living water, and that when we "drink" from what He provides for us, our thirst for God is taken care of.*)
5. What kind of paths should we travel that will bring glory to Jesus? (*Paths of righteousness.*)
6. What do you think righteousness means? (*"In a way that is right according to the ways of God."*)
7. Do you think it is important to spend time with God each day? Why or why not? (*Discuss.*)
8. If the "good shepherd" is with you when you walk through the "valley of the shadow of death", would you feel safe? Why or why not? (*Discuss together.*)
9. Who do we need protection from each day? (*Satan.*)
10. How can a rod and a staff be a comfort to the sheep? (*They can be used to guide the sheep, fight wild animals, or grab a wandering sheep.*)
11. David was not afraid of evil because he knew God was with Him. Do you think God is with you? Why or why not? (*Discuss together. Answers will vary.*)
12. What are some things you can do each day to stay close to God and show Him that Jesus is our shepherd? (*Discuss. Read the Bible, pray, quiet time with God, attend divine services, etc.*)
13. When you eat from a table with a lot of good food and drinks, do you feel full or empty? (*Full.*)
14. Who prepared the table for David? (*God.*) Where was it prepared? (*In the presence of his enemies.*)
15. What kind of blessing might follow you all the days of your life? (*Discuss together and make a list.*)
16. How long can we live in God's house? (*Forever.*)
17. If we only seek things that are of this world, will we feel full too? (*Discuss together.*)

Application to Real Life

Enjoy a healthy snack together. While you do, remind the children that Jesus is our Lord and Shepherd. He gave His own life to save us from the evil one. If we follow Him, then we are considered one of His sheep and we have nothing to be afraid of if we stay close to Him.

Look up Isaiah 41:10 and read it together. Then talk about and make a list of ways that we can let Jesus be our Shepherd. See the list below for ideas should you need to help guide the discussion. When you are finished, review the message statement with the children.

How Can We Let Jesus be Our Shepherd?

Read the Bible

Sing songs of praise

Choose good friends

Be careful what I watch on TV

Pray

Obey my parents

Do good deeds

Help others

Go to church

Etc.

Memory Work Fun

5 minutes

1. Name the two main parts of the Bible and tell what the difference is. (Old Testament – before Jesus, New Testament – Jesus & After Jesus)
2. Where is the book of Exodus located? In the Old or New Testament? Practice finding it together. (Added challenge: find the memory verse together.)
3. Review the first commandment: *I am the Lord your God. You shall have NO other gods before Me.*
4. Recite the memory verse.

Activity Ideas

Choose One

All Ages

“God’s Many Blessings”

See www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade school → Object Talks → “God’s many blessings.”

You will need a water glass, a pitcher of water, a spoon, some cheerios cereal, and 10-20 marbles or large coins for this object talk. Use this activity to show the children that God overflows our cup with goodness and mercy, and many other blessings. Please see the above website for detailed instructions.

“Psalm 23” Book

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Activities → “The Lord is My Shepherd (Psalm 23)”

You will need paper (your choice of what kind), a stapler, scissors, glue sticks, and writing utensils for this activity. Make a sample before class so the children will know what they are working on. Each book will need 18 pages. If you choose to add to this book in the other Psalm 23 lessons, you can add those pages at that time. You will also need to print “Picture Card 1” from the above website and have one copy for each child.

The children will make a book with pictures 1-18 from “Picture card 1”. One picture will be glued on each page of the book. Then have the children write the corresponding portion of Psalm 23 that is illustrated in the picture on the corresponding page as follows (you may want to have the writing done before class for younger children):

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Picture #1 | “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want”. |
| Picture #2 | “He makes me to lie down in green pastures” |
| Picture #3 | “He leads me beside the still waters.” |
| Picture #4 | “He restores my soul.” |
| Picture #5 | “He leads me in the paths of righteousness...” |
| Picture #6 | “For His name’s sake.” |
| Picture #7 | “Yea, though I walk through the valley...”. |
| Picture #8 | “...of the shadow of death,” |
| Picture #9 | “I will fear no evil;” |
| Picture #10 | “For You are with me;” |
| Picture #11 | “Your rod and Your staff,” |
| Picture #12 | “they comfort me.” |
| Picture #13 | “You prepare a table before me...”. |
| Picture #14 | “...in the presence of my enemies;” |
| Picture #15 | “You anoint my head with oil;” |
| Picture #16 | “My cup runs over.” |
| Picture #17 | “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;” |
| Picture #18 | “and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” |

Note: If the words are pre-written on the pages, or written first, the children can always finish the pictures later at home or after church.

“Shepherd’s Staff” – Continued

Use the “Names of Jesus” list (see attached at the end of the lesson). Provide copies of the “Names of Jesus” sheet for the children, along with scissors and glue sticks for this activity. Read through the names and allow children to select which ones to add to their staff. They can either cut and paste the names onto their staff (the one they made in the “getting started” activity) or they can write them with a black marker (or something that would stand out). Pair older children with younger children and modify the activity as necessary.

After the children complete their staff (give them a set amount of time and set a timer if needed), go back to the list you made of things that we are afraid of from the “Getting Started” activity section. Use items from the list and then find a “Name of Jesus” from the staff that would bring comfort and calm. For example, I’m afraid of ____, BUT because Jesus is my friend and a comforter, etc. I KNOW He is always with me, so I never have to be afraid. And if I do feel afraid, I can call out to Him and He will help me. Use the list and the “Names of Jesus” to guide the discussion. Reinforce that God is always with me. (Message Statement).

Grades K-2**“Calm, Peaceful Environment”**

See www.kidssundayschool.com → Preschool → Activities → “Calm, Peaceful Environment”

You will need a small bell and two pencils for this activity. The children will sit quietly with their eyes closed while the teacher makes soft noises. This will facilitate a discussion about why it is important to have quiet time with the Lord each day.

“Sheep Cup Craft”

See www.daniellesplace.com → Enter the Resource Room → Old Testament Lessons → Psalms → Scroll down to Psalm 23:2 → Scroll down to #4 “He maketh me lie down in green pastures”.

You will need 9oz white party cups, pink pompoms, cotton balls, green paper (optional), white colored pencils, glue, card stock and tape for this craft activity. Please see the above website for detailed instructions. Keep the conversation going while you work, and talk about what you are doing and why, referring to Psalm 23.

“Know Your Sheep”

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Games → “Know Your Sheep”

This is a listening game that will help children learn about how well shepherds know their sheep. You will need a bandana or fabric to use as a blindfold. Please see the above website for detailed instructions. After playing the game, remind the children that Jesus knows us too because we are His sheep. If we stay close to Him, we have nothing to fear. Review the message statement.

Grades 3-5**“Listening for God”**

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade school → Object Talks → “Listening for God”

You will need 4 radios (or items that produce sound), a power cord (to plug everything in), and a copy of the jokes and riddles from the above website. You will also need some volunteers to help with this activity. This activity will reinforce how difficult it is for us to hear God’s voice when we have so many things and “noise” going on around us. Talk about also finding quiet time each day with God, and the importance of spending time with Him in prayer.

Psalm 23 Review

See: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Puzzles → “Psalm 23”

This is a crossword puzzle with Bible verse references, so children can also practice their Bible skills to find the correct answers. Please print out one puzzle for each child, and provide pencils to complete the activity. Children can work individually or with a partner.

Journal*Optional***Grades K-2**

Draw a picture of Jesus as your good shepherd, watching over you. How does that make you feel? Write about it.

Grades 3-5

How can you show goodness and mercy to others? Be specific and write about it.

Homework Ideas

- Read at home with a grownup the lesson titled: **Solomon's Wisdom** (1 Kings 1:28-40; 3:3-28; 4:29-34).
- Learn the memory verse: *"...Because that is what you have asked for...I will give you a wise and understanding heart.... --1 Kings 3:11-12 (NIRV)*
- Work on memorizing commandment #_____.
- Color the "**Solomon's Wisdom**" coloring sheet as your parents read you the Sunday School Lesson. Return your coloring page for a sticker.
- If you could ask God for anything in the world, what would you ask for? Think about it. Write it down or draw a picture of it. Bring it to class and be ready to share.

Other Resources

www.daniellesplace.com → Resource Room → Search "Psalm 23"

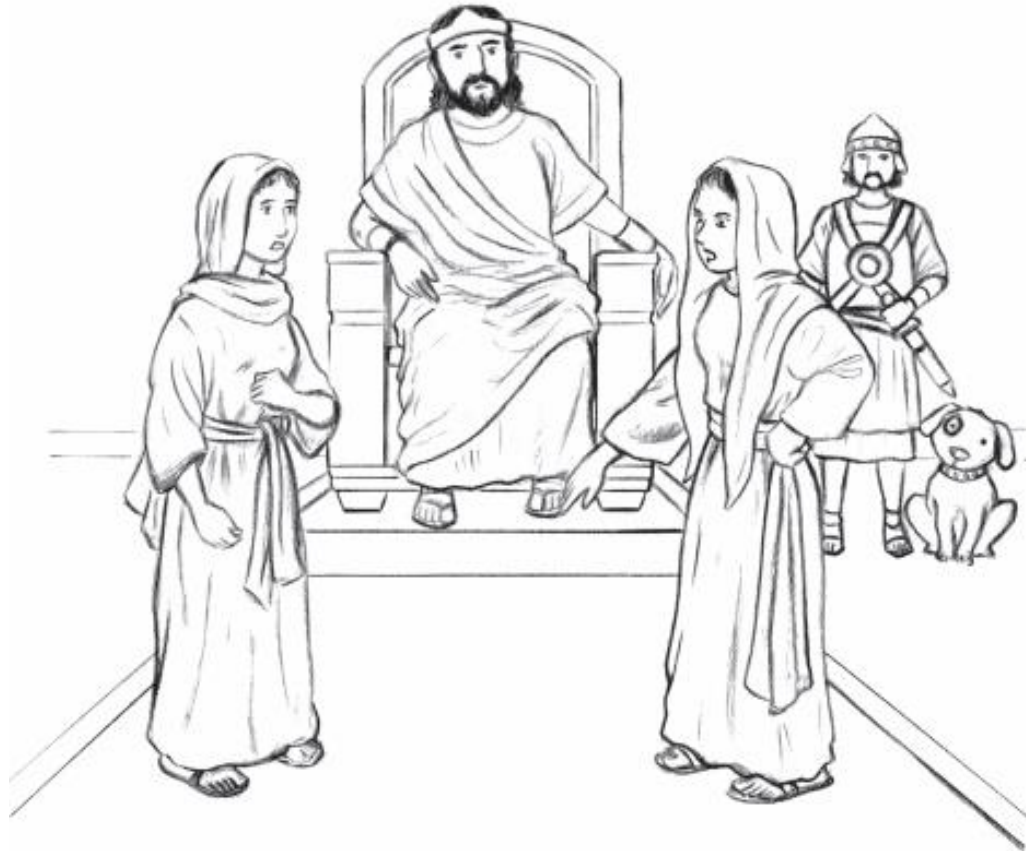
<http://children.ccm.com/curriculum/> → OT Support Curriculum → Page 15 → "A Shepherd's Psalm"

www.kidssundayschool.com → Old Testament → Psalm 23 lessons



Name: _____

Solomon's Wisdom



"...Because that is what you have asked for...
...I will give you a wise and understanding heart..."
-1 Kings 3:11-12 (NIRV)

Take Home Page: E28. Psalm 23

Today I learned...

Today your child learned that God wants us to **keep our eyes on Jesus, the good shepherd**. Children explored the 23rd Psalm in the Bible. They also talked about ways they can spend quiet time with God each day and stay focused on Him during the week.

Help me learn my memory verse...

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." --Psalm 23:1

Ask me...

1. Why did David call the Lord his Shepherd?
2. Do you think it is important to spend time with God each day? Why or why not?
3. How will you spend time with God this week?

Live Your Faith...

Play a game of "which cup is it?" together. You will need three plastic cups and a small object (button for example). Place the object underneath one of the three cups (the cups should be upside down with the "open" side directly on the table). Encourage your child to watch closely as you mix up the order of the cups. Then have him guess which one has the object under it. Take turns being the "mixer" and have some fun together. When you are finished, talk about what it means to keep your eyes on Jesus, and why that is so important for us each day. Decide how your family will work on doing that this week.

