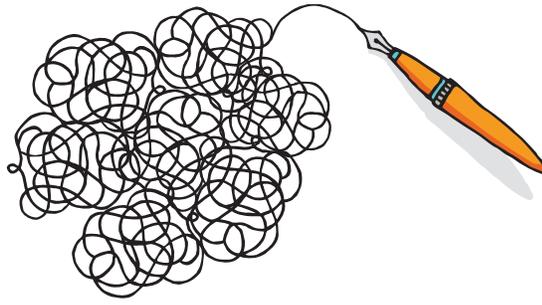


**BOOKS OF THE BIBLE
CHILDREN'S CURRICULUM**

Early Elementary
The Writings





THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

Lesson 1 - Early Elementary

Bible Basis: Psalm 23 found in *The Books of the Bible for Kids, The Writings*, page 16
Key Verse: Psalm 23:6a (NIRV): "...your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life."
Key Idea: God gives me everything I need.

Master Supplies List

- stuffed animal dog or cat
- David illustrations
- self-stick flip chart paper
- markers
- Bible
- *The Books of the Bible for Kids, The Writings*
- Family Page (1 per child)

Optional Supplies

You will need the following supplies based on which option(s) you choose in Step 3 | Explore More.

- Option 1: Psalm 23 Word Find or Scroll sheet (1 per child), Psalm 23 flip chart pages from Hear the Story, scissors, glue sticks, pencils, Bibles
- Option 2: cord, scissors, beads, metal spring hooks (1 per child), super glue
- Option 3: butcher paper, marker, magazines, scissors, glue sticks, index cards



- Option 4: audiovisual equipment to play music or project a video
- Option 5: Life of David script (6 copies), Psalm 23 flip chart pages from Hear the Story

STEP 1 | Come Together (10 min)

Supplies: stuffed animal dog or cat

Note: This activity is written as if speaking about your own dog. Adjust the wording as necessary.

- ASK: Do any of you have a pet? *(take responses)*
- SAY: It's a lot of fun to have a pet, but it's also a big responsibility. You are in charge of making sure your pet has everything it needs. I have a pet dog named Scraps.
- SHOW the stuffed dog *(and, if you like, a picture of your own pet)*. Allow the children to pass the stuffed dog from one to another whenever they respond to a question.
- ASK: What are some things Scraps needs that I can give him? *(food, water, shelter, exercise, attention, chew toys, veterinary care)*
- COMMENT: I love Scraps, and I want to give him everything he needs. That means I give him all of those good things you mentioned.
- ASK: Do you think Scraps wants food, water, exercise, and toys? *(Yes, of course)*
- EXPLAIN: I can't just give Scraps everything he wants. The other day he wanted some chocolate off the counter. It would've made him sick, so I couldn't give it to him. He wants to run free, but I live near a busy street. I can't give him what he wants. Instead, I put up a fence to protect him because I give him what he needs.
- ASK: Who knows better what Scraps needs, me or him? *(you know better)*
- SAY: Today we'll learn that God gives us everything we *need*. That doesn't mean he always gives us everything we *want*. God is good and loving. We can trust him to know what's best for us.

KEY VERSE

- INTRODUCE this week's Key Verse. Repeat the verse slowly a few times until the children are able to say the verse from memory or along with the hand motions. (Note: You also may choose to review last week's Key Verse together.)

Psalm 23:6a

...your goodness and love
will follow me all the days of my life.

(cross arms over chest)
(spread hands from palms together to wide apart)



STEP 2 | Hear the Story (20 min)

Supplies: David illustrations, self-stick flip chart paper, markers, Bible

Teacher Prep: Print the David illustrations. Write the verses of Psalm 23 on the flip chart paper, one verse per page.

DAVID

- SHOW the picture of David fighting Goliath.
- ASK: Who is this? What is he doing? (*it's David about to defeat the giant Goliath*)
- SAY: David was too small and weak even to wear a soldier's armor, but he trusted God. He fought Goliath when all of the other soldiers were too afraid to do it. David knew about being afraid and trusting God anyway.
- SHOW the picture of David as king.
- ASK: Who is this? (*take responses*)
- EXPLAIN: David grew up to be king of Israel. God chose David when he was a young boy. David had to wait a long time to become king. He was a good king who loved God. He won many battles.
- SHOW the picture of David as a musician.
- SAY: David also was a writer, a poet, and a musician. He loved to praise God. He wrote many songs and poems. They're in the Bible in the book of Psalms. Let's read one of David's psalms.

PSALM 23

- READ aloud verse 1 from the flip chart.
- SHOW the picture of David as a shepherd.
- COMMENT: David took care of his father's sheep. He knew a shepherd had to make sure the sheep had everything they need. For David, it made sense to think of God as a shepherd, taking care of his every need.
- TAPE the picture on the page below verse 1.
- ASK: What are some other ways we think of God? (*a loving father, a righteous judge, a best friend, a wise teacher*)
- REREAD verse 1 aloud, along with the children.
- CONTINUE through the psalm one verse at a time. Turn the flip chart to the page with the next verse on it, read it aloud, give some background information about David, and ask the children to share their own life applications. After each one, have the children read the verse aloud with you. (The following chart provides guidelines for this discussion, and is not meant to be written out for the class.)



Verse	Background	Application Question
1	David knew a shepherd had to make sure the sheep had everything they need. It made sense for him to think of God as a shepherd.	What are some other ways we think of God? <i>(a loving father, a righteous judge, a best friend, a wise teacher)</i>
2	David cared for his sheep in the desert. It was probably hot and dry. He thought of green grass and still waters as comfort.	What comfort can God give you? <i>(peace, joy, a loving family)</i>
3	David had older brothers who picked on him. A king tried to kill him. But David trusted God to help him do the right thing.	When do you need God's help to do the right thing? <i>(take responses)</i>
4	David trusted God to protect him, just as he protected his sheep. He killed a lion and a bear all by himself. As a shepherd, he found a rod and staff comforting tools of protection.	What do you find comforting? <i>(praying, reading the Bible, singing worship songs, talking to parents)</i>
5	God chose David to become king of Israel. A prophet came to his house and poured oil on his head to show God had chosen him. Years later, David became a great king.	What has God done for you? <i>(take responses)</i>
6	David loved and served the Lord his whole life. As an old man about to die, he told his son Solomon what he thought was most important. He said, "Obey the Lord."	How can you be sure you will "live in the house of the LORD forever"? <i>(by trusting in Jesus)</i>

- READ the entire psalm aloud together.

STEP 3 | Explore More

Choose from these activity options to help children explore the lesson further.

Option 1: Psalm 23 Word Find or Scroll (20 min)

Supplies: Psalm 23 sheet (1 per child), Psalm 23 flip chart pages from Hear the Story, scissors, glue sticks, pencils, Bibles

Teacher Prep: Print and photocopy the Psalm 23 Word Find or Scroll sheet. Note there are two options - the word find for younger children who prefer to cut and paste, and the scroll for older children to fill in the words of the psalm.

- DISPLAY the Psalm 23 flip chart pages from Hear the Story where children can refer to them easily.
- GIVE each child a Psalm 23 sheet.
- ASSIST children in referring to the psalm to match up words. Help older children find Psalm 23 in their Bible to make copying easier.
- READ the psalm aloud together once everyone is finished.



Option 2: Psalm 23 Zipper Pull (20 min)

Supplies: cord, scissors, beads, metal spring hooks as pictured, (1 per child), super glue

Teacher Prep: Cut the cord into 8-inch lengths (1 per child). Tie one end of each cord through a metal clip and double knot. Secure the knot with super glue and let dry. Sort through your beads to ensure you have the required number of each color.



- GIVE each child a cord and beads.
- GUIDE them to string colored beads onto the cord, working in this order from top to bottom. As you string each bead, explain how its color will help them remember part of Psalm 23.
 - white - The Lord (pure, sinless)
 - green - green grass
 - blue - quiet waters
 - gray - right paths
 - black - darkest valley
 - brown - rod and staff
 - “F” alphabet bead - feast (or a bead made of porcelain - dishes at a feast)
 - yellow - oil
 - red or heart-shaped - goodness and love
 - gold - house of the Lord
- HELP children tie a sturdy double knot under the last bead. Secure both knots with super glue and set aside to dry.
- ENCOURAGE children to clip their zipper pull to a bag or jacket where it will remind them to recite the words of Psalm 23 or spark a conversation with a friend.

Option 3: Wants and Needs (20 min)

Supplies: butcher paper, marker, magazines, scissors, glue sticks, index cards

Teacher Prep: Divide the paper into three large sections labeled Spiritual Needs, Earthly Needs, and Wants. Write the following words on separate index cards: joy, peace, love, hope, eternal life, forgiveness. Preview magazines for appropriateness.

- SAY: We can bring all our cares to God and know he'll always give us what we need. Often, he also gives us what we want.
- ASK: What is the difference between a want and a need? (*take responses*)
- EXPLAIN: Actually, there are different kinds of needs. Earthly needs are ones our bodies need to survive. They're usually things we can buy at a store, like food or blankets. But spiritual needs can be met only by God. Being best friends with Jesus fulfills spiritual needs.
- SHOW children the index cards with the spiritual needs listed.
- INFORM children they will look in magazines for examples of spiritual needs and earthly needs and wants to cut out and glue to a class mural. They can use images, words, and even letters to create words.
- GIVE pairs of children an index card with a spiritual need. Encourage them to work together to find all of the letters to create that word and add it to the mural.



- ASSIST children in coming up with ideas and categorizing them correctly (but expect some debate over things like a car or education).
- HANG the mural where others can appreciate it.

Option 4: Praise and Worship (15 min)

Recommended song: “Good Shepherd (Psalm 23)” by VeggieTales®

© 2005 by Big Idea Entertainment

Potential sources: YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EpgsGi2tlhl> and <http://www.veggietales.com/>

Purpose for this song: Favorite characters bring to life Psalm 23 for your “little sheep.”

Recommended song: “Psalm 23” by GodsKids Worship (Bob Singleton)

© 2012 by Agnes Day Music, BMI

Potential sources: YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0Doxv2ZG30> and CCLI #6281162

Purpose for this song: This lovely song leads children in singing the words of Psalm 23.

Option 5: Act it Out (15 min)

Supplies: Life of David script (6 copies), Psalm 23 flip chart pages from Hear the Story

Teacher Prep: Print and photocopy the Life of David script.

- HANG the Psalm 23 flip chart pages where children can refer to them.
- ASSIGN the six David roles to children (possibly taking one or more yourself) and act out the skit. Help the rest of the children recite the Chorus, using the flip chart pages to prompt them.

STEP 4 | Going Home (5 min)

Supplies: Family Page (1 per child)

Teacher Prep: Print and photocopy the Family Page.

- THANK God for loving us, guiding us, and giving us everything we need.
- GIVE each child a copy of this week’s Family Page.
- SAY: Give this page to your family when they pick you up. It will remind you to tell your family about God our shepherd.
- INVITE children to practice telling you what they remember about the 23rd Psalm.
- REVIEW today’s story and Key Idea as you wait for the children to get picked up.
- HELP children practice saying today’s Key Verse from memory or with the hand motions.
- REMIND children to prepare for next week’s lesson by reading *The Books of the Bible for Kids, The Writings*, Days 6-10, or by doing *The Writings Week 2* in *My Bible Story Coloring Book* with their parents.
- REMIND each child to take home any activity sheets or craft projects and the Family Page.

FAMILY PAGE

Lesson 1: The Lord Is My Shepherd

Bible Basis: Psalm 23 found in *The Books of the Bible for Kids, The Writings*, page 16

Key Verse: Psalm 23:6 (NIRV): "I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the LORD forever."

Key Idea: God gives me everything I need.

How to Use This Page

This week, your family can read the Bible Basis passage from page 16 in *The Books of the Bible for Kids, The Writings* to help your child remember the lesson. Use the *Table Talk* questions to start a discussion around the dinner table, while driving in the car, or just about anywhere. The Living Faith activity is designed to remind your child of the Bible lesson through a drama or other engaging activity. The Extra Mile idea provides interactive ways for your child to connect with the story.

Table Talk

1. Tell me about a time when you didn't get what you wanted. How did it turn out?
2. How is God like a shepherd?
3. What do you do when you are afraid or need comfort?
4. How can you be sure you will live in the house of the Lord forever?

Living Faith

Option 1

From fighting bears and lions, to defeating a giant, to escaping a mad king, David certainly lived an exciting life. Help your child choose some favorite scenes from David's life to act out, either in person or using action figures. Get creative with props - perhaps the family dog is a bear attacking stuffed sheep, or a giant pillow pile is Goliath. After each victory, read a psalm or sing a praise song.

Option 2

There are so many ways to praise the Lord! Write a poem. Sing a song. Play an instrument. Dance to worship music. Follow David's example and use your talents (or at least your enthusiasm) to worship the Lord. Invite a few friends or relatives to join you and turn it into a praise party!

Extra Mile

- Enjoy a family movie night. Choose a cartoon or live-action version of David's life. Pop some popcorn and enjoy reliving the life of a "man after God's own heart."
- Remember to thank God for giving you everything you need. Every day this week, spend time sharing as a family something God has given you. It can be something tangible, like the food on your table, or intangible, like the courage to speak up for what's right. You may find you like this exercise enough to make it a regular routine.
- Look for opportunities this week to talk as a family about wants versus earthly needs versus spiritual needs. Your children constantly are bombarded by media messages that appeal to their "wants." Make sure you counter this influence by pointing out how God provides for all of our needs.

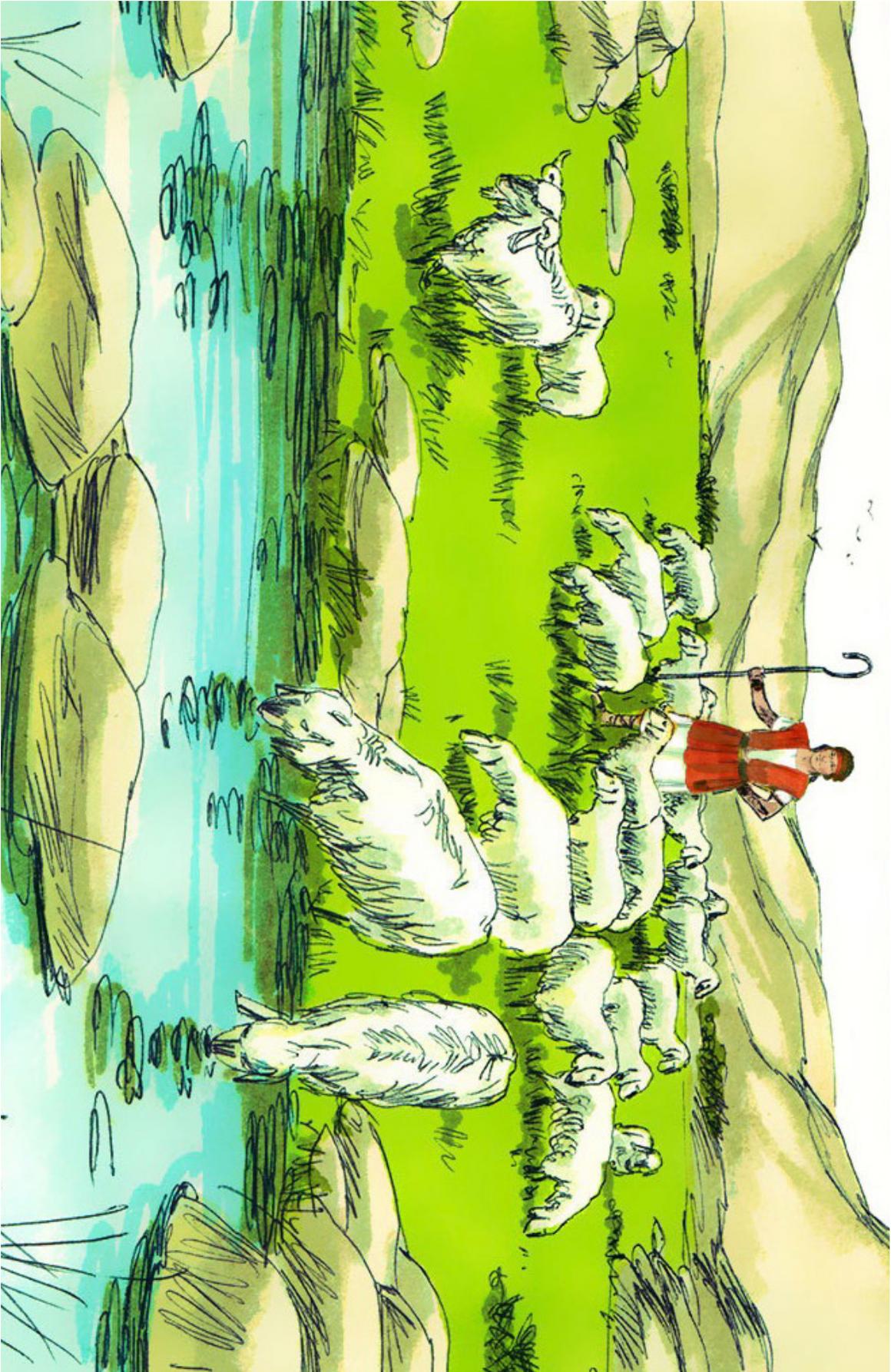
Prepare for Next Week

Help your child prepare for next week's lesson by reading together and encouraging your child to respond with coloring or journaling:

- For early readers, *My Bible Story Coloring Book*, *The Writings Week 2*
- For older readers, *The Books of the Bible for Kids*, *The Writings*, Days 6-10

If you are reading *The Books of the Bible*, *The Writings* with your small group, you are discussing your questions and insights with them from week to week. Include your family in the conversation about this week's reading, using the following discussion-starters:

- What did you read that you never knew about before?
- Was there anything you wondered about?
- What did you learn about loving God?
- What did you learn about loving others?



DAVID







Name _____ Date _____

PSALM 23 WORD FIND

THE LORD IS MY . HE GIVES ME EVERYTHING I NEED.

HE LETS ME LIE DOWN IN FIELDS OF GRASS.
HE LEADS ME BESIDE QUIET .

HE GIVES ME NEW . HE GUIDES ME IN THE RIGHT PATHS FOR THE HONOR OF HIS NAME.

EVEN THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE DARKEST VALLEY, I WILL NOT BE . YOU ARE WITH ME. YOUR SHEPHERD'S ROD AND STAFF ME.

YOU PREPARE A FOR ME RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY ENEMIES.

YOU POUR OIL ON MY HEAD. MY CUP RUNS OVER.

I AM SURE THAT YOUR GOODNESS AND WILL FOLLOW ME ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE. AND I WILL LIVE IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD .

STRENGTH

COMFORT

SHEPHERD

WATERS

LOVE

AFRAID

FEAST

GREEN

FOREVER

Name _____ Date _____

PSALM 23 SCROLL

¹ THE LORD IS MY _____, HE GIVES
ME EVERYTHING I NEED.

² HE LETS ME _____
_____, HE LEADS ME _____
_____.

³ HE GIVES ME _____, HE GUIDES
ME IN THE RIGHT PATHS FOR THE HONOR OF HIS NAME.

⁴ EVEN THOUGH _____,
I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. YOU ARE WITH ME. YOUR _____
AND _____ COMFORT ME.

⁵ YOU PREPARE A FEAST FOR ME RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY
ENEMIES. YOU _____
_____, MY CUP RUNS OVER.

⁶ I AM SURE THAT YOUR GOODNESS AND LOVE WILL FOLLOW ME
ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE. AND I WILL LIVE IN THE HOUSE OF
THE LORD FOREVER.

SKIT: LIFE OF DAVID

Characters

Chorus	Shepherd David	Author David
Ancestor David	Fugitive David	King David
Warrior David		

Chorus: The LORD is my shepherd. He gives me everything I need.

Shepherd David: I am the youngest of my father's eight sons. I watch over our sheep. The prophet Samuel came to our house looking for the Lord's chosen one. At first, my father didn't even call me in from the field.

Chorus: He lets me lie down in fields of green grass. He leads me beside quiet waters.

Author David: I spent many long, lonely days out in the desert with the sheep. Maybe that's when I first started writing songs. In those quiet moments with the Lord, I learned to love him. Eventually, I wrote more than 70 psalms.

Chorus: He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths for the honor of his name.

Fugitive David: King Saul tried to kill me, but the Lord helped me do what was right. I easily could have killed Saul in the cave where I was hiding, but I didn't do it. I cut off a corner of Saul's robe to show him I could have killed him. But I would not harm the Lord's chosen king.

Chorus: Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid. You are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff comfort me.

Warrior David: As a young shepherd, I killed a lion and a bear. As a boy too small to wear armor, I struck down a mighty giant. As a soldier, I led my men against enemy armies. I was not afraid because I knew the Lord was with me. He gave me victory.

Chorus: You prepare a feast for me right in front of my enemies. You pour oil on my head. My cup runs over.

King David: The Lord chose me as king when I was still young. After many years of patiently

waiting, and even being abused by King Saul, I took the throne. I united the people of Israel and brought the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem.

Chorus: I am sure that your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

Ancestor David: Hundreds of years after my death, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He is called the "son of David" and traces his family tree back to me. I am remembered as a man after God's own heart.