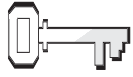


The Lion and the Bear



References

1 Samuel 16; 17:33-36;
Psalm 23; *Patriarchs
and Prophets*, pp. 637-648



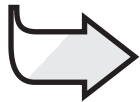
Memory Verse

“The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures” (Psalm 23:1, 2).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that they cannot save themselves from sin.
Feel assured that Jesus can save them.
Respond by praising God for saving them.



The Message

I can't save myself;
Jesus saves me.

Monthly Theme

God's grace is good news for us.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

David, the shepherd boy, cares for his father's sheep full-time—guiding them, caring for their needs, and protecting them from danger. He often plays his harp and sings praises to God, who helps him to save his helpless sheep from a lion and a bear. He fears no evil, for he knows that God is with him.

This is a lesson about grace.

God's people are like sheep, helpless and wayward. Like a shepherd, Jesus provides for their needs. He willingly and lovingly puts His life on the line to save them from the roaring lion, Satan. Without the Good Shepherd, His human sheep would perish, for they cannot save themselves.

Teacher Enrichment

In Bible times many wild animals came from the dense growth surrounding the Jordan River. Bears and lions were common. Shepherds used a heavy club and a sling for weapons. The club is called a “rod” in Psalm 23:4. Flints or nails were often embedded into its heavy “working end” to make it more effective. Shepherds also had a staff (about six feet [two meters] long, sometimes with a crook) that was used to help the shepherd get around in hilly country, and to control the sheep. (See Ralph Gower, *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*, pp. 135–138.)

Room Decorations

See Lesson 5.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Rescue Mission</i> B. <i>Sheep Make</i> C. <i>The Banquet Table</i>	Bibles, two pairs of sandals Bible, sheep pattern (see p. 141), glue, fiberfill or cotton balls Bible, table setting for one (tablecloth, fork, knife, cup, plate, etc.), drawing paper, pencils, crayons, scissors
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy, Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> bowl or basket covered with wool material none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	adult in Bible-times costume, shepherd's staff, sling, smooth round stones Bibles Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>A Way Out</i>	Bible, large cardboard box, wide tape
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Hope Rocks</i>	smooth rocks or rock shapes cut from construction paper, spray paint, markers

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome children at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they're pleased/troubled about. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- two pairs of sandals

A. Rescue Mission

Form two teams for a relay race. The child at the front of each line puts on the sandals, runs to a given place in the room and back, removes the sandals, giving them to the next person in line. Say: **This contest is for silence as well as speed. Real shepherds were both silent and fast.**

Debriefing

Ask: **Why do you think shepherds had to be quiet?** (because of lions, bears, etc.) **What enemy is like a lion that wants to hurt us?** Accept reasonable answers. **In your Bibles, find 1 Peter 5:8.** Read the text with the children. **"Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."**

Ask: **Can you save yourself from a lion's attack?** (no) **Can you save yourself from the devil or from sin?** (no) **Are you scared?** (Accept reasonable answers.) **But the good news of God's grace is this . . .**



I CAN'T SAVE MYSELF; JESUS SAVES ME.

Say that with me.

B. Sheep Make

Have the children glue fiberfill or cotton balls to the pattern provided to make their own sheep.

After children write their names on their sheep, collect and save them for the lesson study.

Debriefing

Invite a child to read Psalm 23:1, 2. "The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures."

Ask: **Who takes care of sheep?** (a shepherd) **What does he do to care for them?** (He protects them, makes sure they have food, etc.) **Why do sheep like green pastures?** (There is plenty of grass to eat; they can lie down and rest there.) **From what does the shepherd protect his sheep?** (wild animals, bad weather, etc.) **Who is our Shepherd?** (God, Jesus, the Lord) **From whom does God protect us?** (Satan) **We call that God's grace. The good news about God's grace is this: Jesus saves us. How do you feel about that?** Allow response time. **Our message for today tells us:**



I CAN'T SAVE MYSELF; JESUS SAVES ME.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bible
- sheep pattern (see p. 141)
- glue
- fiberfill or cotton balls

C. The Banquet Table

On a table where all can see, arrange one table setting (tablecloth, fork, knife, cup, plate, etc.). Ask the children to draw, color, and cut out pictures of food they would want to eat and drink at a fancy feast. Let them put their food cutouts on the plate or in the cup and name the food each picture represents.

Debriefing

Read aloud Psalm 23:5, first part. Say: **Sheep usually do not eat when an enemy is near, because they are afraid. So what might David be trying to say when he says that he will eat in the presence of enemies?** (He is not afraid of his enemies because God is near.) **Jesus is your Shepherd, too; He saves you from Satan. Isn't that good news! Today's message is:**



I CAN'T SAVE MYSELF; JESUS SAVES ME.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bible
- table setting
- art supplies
- scissors
- old magazines

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the children's joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review last week's memory verse. Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. Give a special, warm greeting to visitors and introduce each by name. Acknowledge birthdays or special events.



Suggested Songs

"Trust and Obey" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 113)

"Deep and Wide" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 64)

"The Lord's My Shepherd" (Brother James' Air) (*Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, no. 546)

"The Lord Is My Shepherd" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 48)

"Thank You, Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 101)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Use an offering basket or bowl covered with wool material to collect the offering. Invite a child to tell how the money will be used to help God take care of His "sheep" all over the world.

You Need:

- offering basket or bowl covered with wool material



Prayer

Try a popcorn prayer. Form a circle. Ask the children to close their eyes and say one word to tell God what they think of Him as a shepherd (kind, caring, loving, etc.). Have them do this like popcorn popping—speaking out from anywhere in the circle at any time. In closing, pray that the children will stay safe in the Shepherd's care.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- adult in Bible-times costume
- shepherd's staff
- a real sling
- smooth round stones

Experiencing the Story

Children act the part of sheep as you tell the story. An adult can play the part of David.

Read or tell the story.

David was a shepherd boy. He looked over the flock of sheep that dotted the field. *(Have the children crouch like sheep around the shepherd.)* These woolly animals were his friends. Every night David slept outside *(shiver)* with them. During the day he led them in green fields of grass and beside quiet pools of water where they could drink in safety. *(Touch the sheep protectively.)*

David did not feel afraid or alone, because God was there with him. Just as David took good care of the sheep *(touch the sheep)* and knew them by name, God, the Great Shepherd, was taking special care of David.

"I must stay alert!" David told himself when he felt like napping. "A little lamb might stray from the flock if I sleep." *(Signal two or three children to move away from the flock.)*

To keep himself awake, David often sat on a high rock and strummed softly on the harp he carried with him. *(Pretend to play a harp.)* With a clear voice he sang, "The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing" (Psalm 23:1).

If David saw a movement out of the corner of his eye, he dropped his harp and grabbed his sling. *(Show the sling-shot.)* He had smooth round stones *(show stones)*, ready for anything that might threaten the sheep.

One day David saw a golden-brown lion crouching in the thicket at the edge

of the water. The huge animal had a lamb in its mouth. Chasing after the lion, David released a stone from his sling.

Zing! The stone flew through the air, hitting the lion. Then David fought the lion with his bare hands until he knew the lion could no longer hurt the sheep.

Quickly David cared for the wounded lamb. He tucked his sling into his shepherd's pouch and walked among the sheep, counting them carefully *(count the sheep)* and making sure that everything was all right. David was glad that the Lord had helped him to rescue the sheep from the lion.

Soon David sat on his rock again, playing his harp. This time he sang, "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me" (verse 4).

Another day David decided to lead the sheep into the hills to find new grass. But danger lurked in the hills. Bears living in hidden dens often wandered out in search of food.

David, carefully watching the lambs, noticed movement in the tall grass nearby. Instantly he was alert! A huge brown beast was approaching one of his lambs. A paw reached forward and scooped up the woolly bundle.

"Oh, no!" David cried as he quickly loaded his sling, took aim, and let go.

Wham! The stone hit the bear so hard that it fell and never got up again. Once again the Lord had helped David to save his sheep.

That evening as David led the sheep home to the sheepfold, he might have sung, "Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (verse 6).

Debriefing

Ask: **Who is the Good Shepherd in the Bible?** (God) **Who are God's lambs?** (We are.) **Where do you fit in this story?** (I am God's lamb—or God's child.) Some primaries may not see themselves in the story, but other children will. **What is the good news about God's love and grace in this story?** (Jesus saves us and takes care of us.) **Let's say our message together:**



**I CANNOT SAVE MYSELF;
JESUS SAVES ME.**

Memory Verse

Help the children find and read together Psalm 23:1. Then form four groups and have them stand or sit in a square formation. Assign one phrase of the memory verse as outlined below to each group. Allow time for each group to become familiar with their phrase. Then have each group call out their phrase in the correct order, going around the square as fast as possible. The entire group then calls out the reference. After four times around the square, reassign the phrases and repeat the activity. Continue reassigning phrases until all can say the complete verse, including the reference. (Small class: Assign a phrase to each child.)

**The LORD is my shepherd,
I lack nothing.
He makes me lie down
in green pastures.**

All together, say: **Psalm 23:1, 2.**

Bible Study

Say: **The Bible has many verses that compare us with sheep. Let's look in our Bibles to find some of them.**

Use the list below and help the children find and read the same verse silently. Ask for volunteers to read each verse aloud. Discuss the meaning of each verse as it is read.

Psalm 100:3

Isaiah 53:6

Ezekiel 34:11

John 10:27

1 Peter 2:25

You Need:

• Bibles

Debriefing

Ask: **What do these verses tell us about how God feels about us?** (He loves us. He cares for us. Nothing can separate us from Him. He has done everything so that we can be happy and be with Him.) **How does it make you feel to know that God loves you so much?** (happy, safe, etc.) **How can this help us when we are tempted to do wrong or when we are in trouble?** (We know that God has already found a way out for us; He is with us in all things, at all times.) **Let's remember our message:**



**I CANNOT SAVE MYSELF;
JESUS SAVES ME.**

Say that with me.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- Bible
- a large cardboard box (for example, an appliance box)
- wide tape

A Way Out

Ask for a volunteer who is not afraid of being in a small space or the dark. Have the child climb into the box. Ahead of time you may put a small hole in each side for air circulation. Explain to the child that you are going to close the lid and put some tape on it but that you will be standing by the box the whole time. Gently close the lid, then put some wide tape across the flap or just press gently on the flaps with your hands. Then ask the child to get out. After the child has pushed on the lid a few times, three to five seconds, ask the class how will their classmate get out. (Somebody has to help him.) At that point, tear away the tape (or remove your hand) and help him or her out. Have one or two other children try, if time permits.

Debriefing

Ask the class: **What happened?** (He couldn't get out.) Ask the child: **How did you feel?** (helpless, frustrated, OK) **What is the only way you could get out?** (Somebody had to help me.) **Who in today's Bible story needed help?** (the sheep, David) **When might you need to call for help?** (in distress, every day, not only when trouble comes) **Why can we be sure that God is ready to help us?** (Have someone read Isaiah 65:24.) **The good news is that God is always ready to help.**



I CAN'T SAVE MYSELF; JESUS SAVES ME.

Say that with me.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Hope Rocks

In advance, spray-paint the top of the rocks. (Do not have children spray them.) Have the students use markers to write one word of their choice, such as "Trust," "Faith," "Saved," "Safe," etc., on the rock or rock shape.

Debriefing

Ask the children to show their rock and tell why they chose the word they wrote. Challenge the children to share a

rock with somebody and tell them the good news that Jesus saves them from Satan and sin. Encourage them to tell the person a personal experience about a time Jesus helped them. Remind them to share the message:



I CAN'T SAVE MYSELF; JESUS SAVES ME.

Closing

Ask a child to pray and thank God for saving us. Sing "Thank You, Lord" or another song of thanks after the prayer.

You Need:

- smooth rocks or rock shapes cut from construction paper, more than one per child
- spray paint for tops of rocks
- markers

The Lion and the Bear

References

1 Samuel 16;
17:33-36; Psalm
23; *Patriarchs and
Prophets*, pp. 637-
648

Memory Verse

“The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures” (Psalm 23:1, 2).

The Message

I can’t save myself;
Jesus saves me.

When he had to write a report about sheep, Jamie remembered something his mother had read to him from the Bible. This is what he recalled . . .

David looked over the flock of sheep that dotted the field. These woolly animals were his friends, and he was their shepherd. He walked with the sheep by the still pools of water in the heat of the day. He led them to green fields of grass. He was usually by himself, but David did not feel afraid or alone. He knew that God was with him. Just as David took good care of the sheep, God, his Shepherd, was taking special care of him.

“I must stay alert!” David reminded himself when he felt like napping. “A little lamb might stray from the flock while I sleep.” To keep himself awake, he often sat on a high rock and strummed softly on the harp he carried with him. Then in a clear voice he sang, “The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing” (Psalm 23:1).

One day David saw a movement out of the corner of his eye. He dropped his harp and grabbed his sling. He always carried smooth round stones, ready for anything

that might try to hurt the sheep.

A golden-brown lion crouched in a thicket at the edge of the water. Just as the huge lion was ready to spring on a sheep, David released the stone. *Zing!* The stone flew through the air and hit the lion. Then David fought the lion until he knew the lion could no longer hurt the sheep. Quickly David laid down his sling and walked among the sheep, counting them carefully. They were all there, and none were hurt! The Lord had helped him protect the sheep.

Soon David sat on his rock again, playing his harp. This time he sang, “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me” (verse 4).

Another day David decided to lead the sheep into the hills. Here the sheep could graze on new grass. But danger lurked in the hills. Bears lived in dens in the hillsides and often wandered out searching for food.

David carefully watched the lambs. Suddenly he saw something move in the tall grass nearby. Instantly, he was alert! A huge brown beast moved in the grass near the lambs. Suddenly it rushed forward!

Quickly David loaded his sling, swung it, and let go. The stone hit the bear so hard that it fell and never got up again. Once more God had helped David save his sheep.

That evening, as David led the sheep home, he might have sung, “Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (verse 6).

Like the sheep, we need someone to watch over us. We need Jesus, the Good Shepherd. We can’t save ourselves, but Jesus can. Only Jesus saves us.



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family, find a grassy place near a quiet river, pond, or lake, if possible. Imagine David and his sheep all around you while you read your lesson story together. Thank God for giving you people to look after you.
- Find and read Psalm 23:1, then draw a picture about it. Use it to begin a "Psalm 23" booklet. Add a picture to your booklet each day this week.

Sunday

- During family worship, read all of Psalm 23 together. Memorize and draw a picture of Psalm 23:2 for your "Psalm 23" booklet. Ask God to bless people who take care of animals.
- Draw a sheep shape. Cut it out and add cotton balls to make it feel "woolly."

Monday

- Read Psalm 23 with your family for worship today. As you read, count the good things the Shepherd does for His sheep. Write the number here: _____. Tell about two good things Jesus has done for you. Then thank Him for it.
- Make a cutout shaped like a shepherd's staff and write your memory verse on it. Use it to teach the verse to your family.
- Memorize and draw a picture of Psalm 23:3 for your "Psalm 23" booklet.

Tuesday

- With your family, read and discuss 1 Samuel 17:34-37. Who is the "Philistine" that David is talking about? Tell about a time God helped you when you were in trouble. Add this to the memory book from lesson 2.
- Sing a "Thank-You, Lord" song, then thank God for helping you when you were in trouble.
- Memorize and draw a picture of Psalm 23:4 for your "Psalm 23" booklet.

Wednesday

- Read Psalm 23:5 and Luke 10:34 during

family worship. What did you learn about oil? In Bible times, olive oil was used on sheep's wounds. Also, Israel's kings were anointed with oil to show that they were chosen by God. Read Exodus 30:22-25 for a recipe for anointing oil. Ask if you may smell some olive oil—if there is some in your house.

- Ask an adult to anoint your forehead as you tell God that you want to be His child.

Thursday

- During worship, read Psalm 23 with your family. Ask them to help you match the words below by drawing a line to the word(s) that mean the same thing:

pastures	sorrow
be in want	doing right
righteousness	thick stick
darkest valley	fields
rod	walking stick
staff	need something

- Memorize and draw a picture of Psalm 23:6 for your "Psalm 23" booklet.

Friday

- Make a cover for your "Psalm 23" booklet and put it together. Be ready to show it during worship. Say the verses for or with your family. Then tell the lesson story in your own words.
- Review Psalm 23:4 together. Then turn off the lights and hug together as a family. Talk about how you feel in the dark. Read Psalm 32:7; Psalm 34:4, 6, 7, 17, 19 together. What do these verses mean to you and your family?
- Thank Jesus for keeping your family safe and happy.

Answers:

Answers: pastures—fields; be in want—need something; righteousness—doing right; darkest valley—sorrow; rod—thick stick; staff—walking stick