

The Lion and the Bear

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

If you wanted to know more about sheep, where would you look? TV? The Internet? A book? 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.

Every night he slept outside with them.

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 shall not be in want" (Psalm 23:1, NIV).

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 near its ear. Then David fought the lion with his bare hands. The lion roared, and finally fell back into the thicket where it had come from. Quickly, David laid down

his sling and walked among the sheep, counting them carefully. They were all there,



The Message

*I can't save myself;
Jesus saves me.*

Memory Verse

*"The Lord is my
shepherd, I shall not
be in want. He makes
me lie down in green
pastures"*

(Psalm 23:1, 2, NIV).

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 valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me" (Psalm 23:4, NIV).

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 bear moved in the grass near the lambs. Suddenly, it rushed forward and caught a lamb in its mouth!

Quickly David loaded his sling, swung it, and let go. The stone hit the bear so hard that the bear grunted. But the great beast did not let go of the lamb. David ran as fast as he could. He grabbed the lamb, then fought the bear until it fell over. Once again God had helped David save his sheep.

That evening, as David led the sheep home, he might have sung, "Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Psalm 23:6, NIV).

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





S A B B A T H

DO 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.

READ 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.

Shepherds use their sling as weapons to protect the sheep. They also use them to land rocks right in front of a straying sheep so it will turn back.



S U N D A Y

SHARE 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.

DO Draw a sheep shape. Cut it out and add cotton balls to make it feel "wooly."

M O N D A Y

READ 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 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.

DO Memorize and draw a picture of Psalm 23:3 for your "Psalm 23" booklet.

T U E S D A Y

READ 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.

SING Sing a "Thank-You, Lord" song, then thank God for helping you when you were in trouble.

DO Memorize and draw a picture of Psalm 23:4 for your "Psalm 23" booklet.

W E D N E S D A Y

READ 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.

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

T H U R S D A Y

READ During worship read Psalm 23 with your family. Ask them to help you match the words below by drawing a line to the words that mean the same thing.*

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| pastures | sorrow |
| be in want | doing right |
| righteousness | thick stick |
| valley of the shadow | fields |
| rod | walking stick |
| staff | need something |

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

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



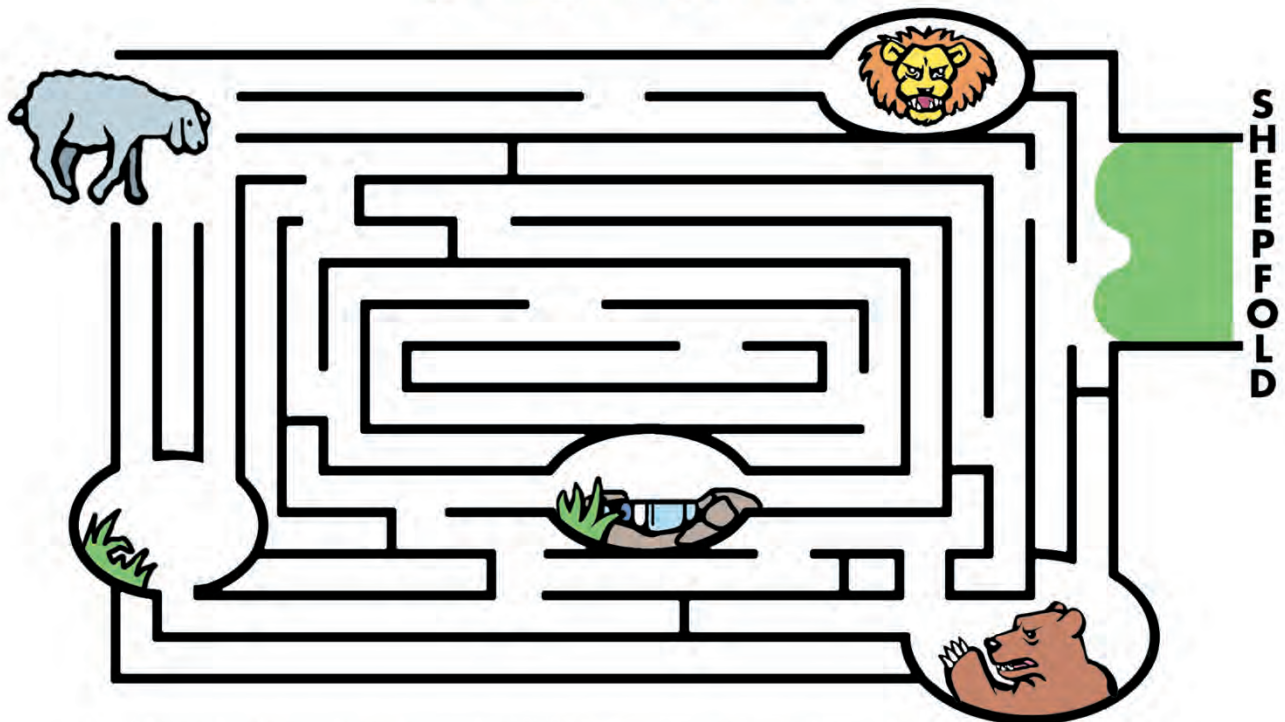
F R I D A Y

DO 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.

SHARE 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?

PRAY Thank Jesus for keeping your family safe and happy.

PUZZLE



Directions: Help David protect the sheep while traveling to the sheepfold.