

DAVID'S PSALM

BIBLE PASSAGE: Psalm 23

STORY POINT: David wrote a psalm to praise God.

Large plastic tub

Smaller containers

Water

Towels

Activity – experiment with overflow

Provide a large, shallow plastic tub of water, a plastic pitcher, and several small plastic containers. Allow children to experiment pouring water from one container to another over the plastic tub. Demonstrate what happens when you pour too much water into a small container. Place towels around the plastic tub for any spills and provide extra towels to dry wet hands.

i SAY

Playing with water can be fun! What happened when we tried to pour too much water into the containers? That's right! The water came out over the sides. When that happens, we say that it overflows. In the song David wrote in today's Bible story, he said God gave him so many good things, he felt like he was overflowing.

Bible

Tell or watch the Bible story

Show the video or tell the Bible story.

i SAY

In this psalm, David talks about God giving us the things we need. A green pasture means healthy grass for sheep to eat. Quiet waters means a safe place to drink water. A rod and a staff were tools a shepherd used to guide sheep and fend off predators who might want to kill and eat sheep.

So how is God like that for us? Well, in the New Testament, Jesus said that He gives us living water. Jesus also calls himself the bread of life. [See John 4:10; 6:35.] Jesus gives us the spiritual food and water we need to survive.

When Jesus died for our sin and rose again, He defeated sin and death, our greatest enemies. Then Jesus sent the Holy

Spirit, who provides us with the power and wisdom we need to follow Jesus.

Tape
Blindfold

Activity - minefield

Use tape to mark Xs on the floor. Form pair. Instruct one kid in each pair to wear a blindfold and the other to study the layout of the Xs on the floor. Direct the blindfolded person to stand at different places around the room. Non-blindfolded kids should offer instructions to their blindfolded partners about how to walk through the “minefield” to reach the opposite sides from where they started. If this proves too difficult, ask the pairs to take turns working together to navigate the “minefield.”

i SAY

Jesus said that He is the Good Shepherd. Jesus told us that His sheep would hear His voice and know Him.

In our game, it might have been hard to pick out your partner’s voice over the voices of all the other kids speaking. In life, we have to listen to God and tune out the voices of people who might— whether on purpose or by accident—lead us away from God.

The Bible is God’s Word, and it contains the definitive commands of God. It is the clearest way we can hear from God to obey Him today.

Discussion

Explain that Psalms is in the Poetry and Wisdom division of the Old Testament. Remind kids that David wrote many Psalms, including this one, but not all of them.

1. According to Psalm 23, why didn’t David fear danger?

(God was with him, God’s rod and staff comforted him; Ps. 23:4)

2. Where did David say he would live?

(in the house of the Lord, Ps. 23:6)

3. What are some ways Jesus is like a good shepherd?

Guide kids to think about the ways Jesus gives us what we need. Help kids see that Jesus provides us with protection from our greatest enemies, sin and death. Invite the kids to share ways or times that Jesus has led them to love and obey God.

4. What are some ways we are like sheep?

Discuss the idea that people are “herd” animals. We often want to follow the crowd even if the crowd is going the wrong way. Help kids understand that sheep tend to be animals that are not good at defending themselves against predators. Compare a sheep’s helplessness without a shepherd to our helplessness without Jesus.

5. How do you feel about God when you hear the words of this psalm?

Guide kids to speak openly and honestly about what they think and feel. If kids seem stuck or hesitant, offer up your own feelings about Psalm 23. Encourage kids that there are no wrong answers and remind them that God would rather they speak honestly than pretend to love Him if they do not yet love Him.

Prayer

Dear God, without Your loving guidance and protection, we would have no hope. Thank You for sending Jesus, our Good Shepherd and perfect King of kings. Help us trust in Him for salvation. Amen.

The BIBLE Story

David's Psalm

Psalm 23

In Bible times, people wrote songs called psalms to praise God. **David loved God with all his heart, and he wrote many of the psalms in the Bible.** Before David was a king, he was a shepherd. He fought off lions and bears to protect the sheep. When David thought about God, he realized that God is

like a shepherd. **This is a psalm that**

David wrote about God:

“The LORD is my shepherd.

I have everything I need.

He lets me rest in green pastures;

He leads me beside quiet waters.

He gives me strength, and

He leads me along the

right paths

for His name's sake.

Even when I go through the darkest valley,

I do not fear danger,

for You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff

comfort me.

“You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

You anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

Only goodness and faithful love will be with me

all the days of my life,

and I will live in the house of the LORD forever.”

Christ Connection: David compared God's love, protection, and guidance for His people to that provided by a shepherd for his sheep. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He laid down His life to save people from sin. Because of Jesus, we have hope that one day we will live with God forever.



Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Sing it out:** Set the words of Psalm 23 to music, and when reading that part of the story, sing them to emphasize the original purpose of psalms.
- **Use sound effects:** Play the sounds of sheep bleating, a gentle breeze, and a babbling brook during the first part of the story. Use a spooky owl or animal growl while talking about God's protection from enemies and evil.