

LESSON 59

David the Psalmist

PSALM 23



BIBLE TRUTH

THERE IS REST IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. **OPENING REVIEW** **5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
2. **BIBLE STORY** **10 MIN**
Read Psalm 23 from the Scriptures or read story 59, “David the Psalmist,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
3. **OBJECT LESSON 1** **10 MIN**
Whom Shall We Fear?
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ hammer
 - ✓ saw
 - ✓ pliers
4. **TEACHING/DISCUSSION** **10 MIN**
5. **OBJECT LESSON 2** **10 MIN**
He Captures Our Desires
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ napkins
 - ✓ soy nuts
 - ✓ individually wrapped chocolate candy
6. **WORD BIBLE MEMORY** **5 MIN**
7. **ACTIVITY TIME** **10 MIN**
Coloring Activity
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ coloring page 59—one copy for each child
8. **CLOSING PRAYER** **5 MIN**
9. **BONUS OBJECT LESSON** **15 MIN**
Memorize Psalm 23
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ whiteboard and dry-erase marker (optional)

TOTAL 80 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

The Lord is our shepherd—Psalms are the lyrics of songs that were once sung in Israel to God. King David was the greatest of the psalm writers. From what we know about David’s life, we can sometimes guess how a particular psalm related to his life.

For instance, as a young boy, David was himself a shepherd who watched over his father’s flocks. He knew that a shepherd carefully watches over the sheep to protect them. When a shepherd is there, the sheep have no fear of wolves or other enemies. The shepherd also leads the sheep to the best pastures and streams.

So, in Psalm 23, when David compares God to a shepherd watching over his life, we can make the connection back to his shepherding days. David’s peace came from God’s shepherdlike protection and provision. In all of David’s life, God always provided for him.

The Lord calms our fears—Even though Saul originally loved and trusted David, later he became jealous. Saul tried many times to hunt David down and kill him. There was a time when Saul came very close to capturing David. In Psalm 23, there are two famous verses that David wrote about how God is faithful to protect us, even when things look bad.

Surely events like this helped strengthen David’s confidence and calm his fears. The protection God gave to David is the same protection he gives us. Sometimes God protects us in unexpected ways like when Saul was just about to capture David but then had to stop hunting him because the Philistines had attacked.

The Lord saves us from our sin—David ends Psalm 23 with a statement that is full of faith. He knows that God’s goodness will follow him all his life. Then he proclaims that he will dwell in the house of the Lord *forever*. There is only one way anyone can live with God in his most holy place forever—if his sins are taken away. David looked forward to a day when all cares, all enemies, and all sin would be wiped away and we would dwell with God forever.

WHERE IS JESUS? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read Psalm 23:6.

There is only one way any of us could enjoy God's mercy and live in heaven with him forever. God sent Jesus, his only Son, to die on the cross for our sin. Now all those who trust in Jesus are forgiven and get to live in the house of God (in heaven) forever. Jesus is the way God kept the promises David sang about. If we trust in Jesus we can live forever in heaven. One day, everyone who goes to heaven will meet David, the man who wrote Psalm 23.

When David sang, "The LORD is my shepherd," he was exactly right. Hundreds of years later, when Jesus began his ministry, he said, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:14–15).

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Psalm 23 from the Scriptures or read story 59, "David the Psalmist," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Whom Shall We Fear?

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ hammer
- ✓ saw
- ✓ pliers

The purpose of this exercise is to help the class understand their fears appropriately and see that they need not fear evil, but fear the Lord.

Ask the class which of the three tools they fear the most. Ask them why. Help them understand that a healthy fear of a tool can help us avoid getting hurt. Healthy fear can be understood as respect for what the tool can do. A hammer can drive a nail, but it can also smash a finger; a saw can cut a board, but it can also slice a finger; a pair of pliers can pull out a bent nail, but it can also pinch a finger if we are not careful.

Then ask the class the following questions:

When David writes in Psalm 23, "I will fear no evil," does he mean we do not have anything to fear at all?

(No, fear is a good emotion when we fear the right things.)

So, do we never have to worry about fearing evil?

(If we are following God, we don't need to fear evil for God will protect and provide for us.)

What is the most important fear we should have?

(The most important fear we should have is the fear of the Lord. If we fear the Lord, then we can trust that he will protect us from evil. Therefore, the fear of the Lord negates the fear of evil. We may still experience scary things—when his enemies surrounded him, David called it the valley of the shadow of death—but God can protect us. Our greater fear of God allays our lesser fears.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

He Captures Our Desires

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ napkins
- ✓ soy nuts
- ✓ individually wrapped chocolate candy

Be aware of food allergies before beginning this activity.

The object of the lesson is to show how the desire for something excellent takes away our desire for lesser things. The literal meaning of David's words "I shall not want" are "I shall have no lack." When we delight ourselves in the Lord we have no lack—no desire can capture us for we have no need.

Hide the chocolate. Then pass out a napkin to each child with a small portion of soy nuts. Read Psalm 23 while the students eat.

After you finish reading, ask if anyone would like to trade their remaining soy nuts in for chocolate. The response should be overwhelming. If some have no soy nuts left, tell them they can have their choice, more soy nuts or chocolate.

Distribute the chocolate. Then ask the class the following questions:

How did your desire for the soy nuts fade when you discovered the chocolate?

(We know that chocolate tastes better than soy nuts, so when the chocolate was offered to us, our desire for the soy nuts faded.)

Read Psalm 23:1. What has captured David's desires?

(The Lord has captured David's desires.)

What has David discovered about God that has caused his desire for the world to fade?

(The rest of the psalm talks about God's blessing and care.)

Why does the world still capture our affection?

(If you had never tasted chocolate before, you may have opted to keep the nuts. You desired the chocolate because you had tasted it before and knew it to be good. David has done just that and in Psalm 34:8 he says it this way, "Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!")

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page 59—one copy for each child

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

What is the shepherd doing in the picture?

(He is protecting the sheep from the wolf.)

Are the sheep safe?

(Yes, the sheep are safe.)

What if one of the sheep wandered away from the flock on its own?

(The sheep would be in serious danger from the wolf.)

Since we are like sheep and God is our shepherd, do we need to be careful to keep from wandering?

(Yes, we need to draw near to the Lord for his protection. The devil and our own sin would like to attack us and lead us away from the safety of God's flock, the church.)

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN

Memorize Psalm 23

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ whiteboard and dry-erase marker (optional)

Divide the class into two teams. Give them 15 minutes to memorize Psalm 23. You can use a helper to work with one group while you work with the other. At the end of the time, have the teams choose five volunteers to recite the psalm. Give them one point for each verse they get correct and in the proper order. The team with the most points wins.

If you write the psalm on a whiteboard, you can leave a few words up to help them while erasing others, forcing them to memorize the blanks.

LESSON 59 - DAVID THE PSALMIST

