

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**
He Captures Our Desires
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ napkins
 - ✓ soy nuts
 - ✓ individually wrapped chocolate candy
- 4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN**
- 5. OBJECT LESSON 2 15 MIN**
For His Name’s Sake
- 6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN**
- 7. ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN**
Banquet in the Battle
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper
- 8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN**
- 9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN**
Another Psalm Story
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ Bible that includes the notation at the head of Psalm 18 describing what David is singing about

TOTAL 90 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.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Name's Sake

Our name is defined by our actions. Often in the Bible a person is named for who they are or in many cases their name is changed to match who they have become.

In God’s economy, names are important. God’s actions affect the credibility of a name. When God entered into a covenant with Abraham, he assumed total responsibility for fulfilling that covenant. Though Israel rebelled and God judged them, God obligated himself out of love to save them. At the end of Revelation we see God’s saving work portrayed in the name “Faithful and True” (Revelation 19:11). God will save for his name’s sake—his name is our guarantee.

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**

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 any 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!”)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

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

OBJECT LESSON 2 15 MIN

For His Name’s Sake

A key line in Psalm 23 is at the end of verse 3 where it says, “for his name’s sake.” Ask the children to look up the following passages and relate them to this amazing statement.

- Genesis 15:8–17—God made his covenant with Abram. He alone passed between the animal pieces (verse 17), which means that Abraham did nothing. God was holding himself responsible for keeping the covenant.
- Psalm 106:7–10—God saved Israel from the hand of Pharaoh to keep his name from being dishonored and to make his power known. If God had not saved them, his name would have been dishonored because he failed to fulfill his promise.
- Psalm 143:11—Here, David prays this truth and adds an interesting twist, God can preserve us because of his righteousness, certainly a look forward to Christ.
- Ezekiel 20:44—God’s mercy and faithfulness distinguishes him. Keeping his word is who God is. His faithfulness defines him. In Revelation 19:11 we learn that Jesus’ very name is “Faithful and True.”
- Romans 1:5–6—God saves us because he told Abraham that all the peoples of the earth would be blessed through him. God is faithful and must keep his promises. If not, his name would be defiled.

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 15 MIN

Banquet in the Battle

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper

Have the children draw a picture of a banquet table in the midst of an army of enemies. Have them write across the top, “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.”

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

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

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 15 MIN

Another Psalm Story

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ Bible that includes the notation at the head of Psalm 18 describing what David is singing about

Read 1 Samuel 23:23—24:11. Then read the introduction to Psalm 18. Tell the children to compare the words of Psalm 18 to the story. Give them a few minutes to give you verses that match up with the story from 1 Samuel.

Explain that David was writing a song about what God did for him, just as he did in Psalm 23. Today, we often sing songs about the cross of Jesus Christ. Ask the class if anyone can give you an example of a song that talks about what Jesus did on the cross.