

# DAVID THE PSALMIST

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: PSALM 23



*There is rest in the presence of the Lord.*

## The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

### Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

**God satisfies my desires** – In 2 Samuel 7, all the enemies of Israel had been conquered, the Ark was back in Jerusalem, and David was at rest in his own house. This season of rest might have reminded David of a shepherd giving rest to his flock. David declared in the 23rd Psalm “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want”.

David’s biggest desire was to glorify God by building a new house for the Lord. In those days, the Ark was still dwelling in Moses’ tent (2 Samuel 7:1-17). God saw David’s righteous desire. So the Lord, spoke to the prophet Nathan who brought encouragement to David from the Lord. God told David that He had made him king and given him rest from his enemies. God then promised David that through him, God would establish his throne forever. When we want to glorify God, other earthly “wants” fade in comparison.

**God silences my fears** – In 1 Samuel 23:15-29, Saul hunted David and wanted to kill him. Just as David began to grow weaker God sent Jonathan to David. Jonathan comforted and encouraged David and spoke a prophetic word to him.

Saul conspired with the local Ziphites to find David. At one point Saul and his men were on one side of a mountain while David and his men were on the other. We are reminded of the 23rd Psalm again. David was walking through a valley – a valley of the shadow of death. Saul closed in on David, obviously aware of David’s location. Just when it appeared that David would be found, God sent the Philistines to attack the land of Israel. Saul was forced to return to his kingdom. Surely events like this served to strengthen David’s confidence and silence his fears. Even while he was fleeing Saul in the valley, God protected David.

**God saves me from my sin** – David ends his psalm with a faith-filled statement: He knows that God’s goodness will follow him all his life. Then David says something quite amazing. 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 and that is 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. David looked to a day of salvation that would come through David’s lineage. Notice the similarity between Psalm 23 and Psalm 27:1-4

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### WHERE IS JESUS?

*Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.*

Luke tell us about Zechariah's song in Luke 1:69-75. Like David, Zechariah (quoted here in the Luke's gospel) spoke of one who would save us from our enemies and redeem us. This salvation would come from the house of David and lead God's people into paths of righteousness.

The birth of Jesus was just but months away. He will come to shepherd His people. Jesus called Himself the good shepherd. He said,

"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep 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)

### ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

**Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.**

**Bible Passage: 2 Samuel 7:12-16**

#### **Connecting the passage to Christ:**

Jesus is the prophesied offspring of David whose throne will last forever. Jesus also established the church which is His body, where His Spirit lives in the hearts of all believers. In David and Jesus' day, a man made temple was God's house. Now, the new temple of God is in the hearts of Christians.

#### **Questions for reflection:**

- Although this passage points to Jesus, Who else is Nathan referring to in this passage? (Nathan, the prophet, is referring both to Solomon – who will build a house for God and be disciplined for his sin – and Jesus, who will be a King in the line of David forever.)
- What other hint do we have of Jesus in this prophecy of Solomon? (God will be a father to Solomon. This is a picture of God's relationship to Jesus.)

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### SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

#### BE A DOER OF THE WORD

*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.*

### ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

*Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?*

#### WHOM SHALL WE FEAR?

##### Supplies

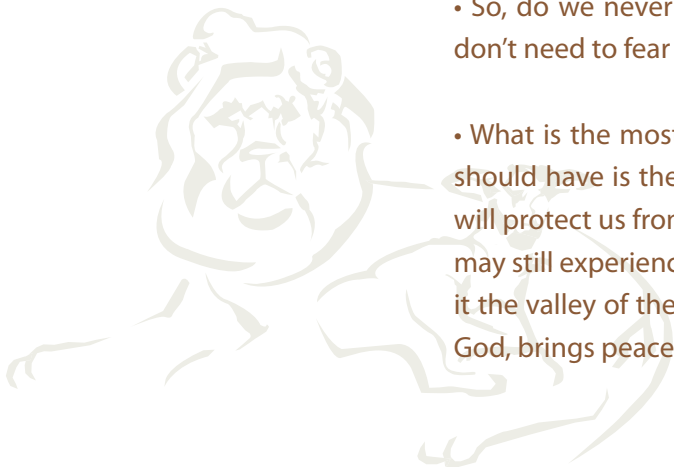
- hammer
- saw
- pliers

This exercise is to help the class place their fears appropriately and understand 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 to avoid getting hurt. A 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 us if we are not careful.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- When David writes, "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, brings peace to our lesser fears.)



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### HE CAPTURES OUR DESIRES

#### Supplies

- napkins
- soy nuts
- chocolate Kisses™
- enough cups of water for all students

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.

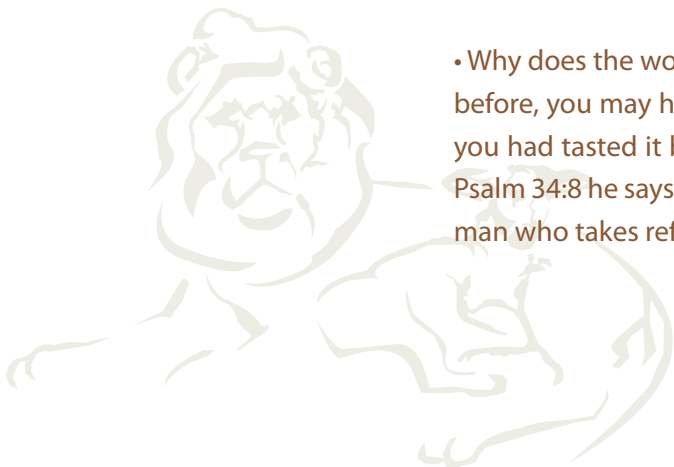
Hide the chocolate. Then pass out a napkin to each child with a small portion of soy nuts. Read Psalm 23 while the students eat.

After you finish reading, ask if anyone would like to trade their remaining soy nuts in for chocolate Kisses™. 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 desires 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 the blessing and care of God all of which affected David.)
- 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!")



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### MEMORIZE PSALM 23

**Supplies**

white board

Divide the boys from the girls. Then give them 15 minutes to memorize Psalm 23. At the end of the time, have the girls and boys offer 5 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.

## PRAYER

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

## IN CLASS PROJECT

The first and second grade children can use the preschool coloring sheet and questions. Have the older children draw a picture of a banquet table in the midst of an army of enemies. Have them write across the top, "The Lord is my shepherd I, shall not want".



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### FOR OLDER GRADES

A key line in Psalm 23 is at the end of verse 3 when 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, which means Abraham did not need to do anything. God alone 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. Revelation 19:11 says 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.

### 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 placed the responsibility to fulfill that covenant with Himself alone. Though Israel rebelled and God judged them, God obligated Himself out of love to save them. In the end of Revelation we see God's saving work portrayed in the name "faithful and true". God will save for His name's sake and so makes His name our surety out of love for us.