



## The Lord Is My Shepherd

(based on Psalm 23)

Long, long ago, before David was king of all Israel, he was a shepherd boy watching his flock on the hills outside Bethlehem. He spent many days and nights out in the fields. Often he would sing and pray to God, praising God, asking for help or protection, and giving thanks.

In one of his prayers, David recognized that God did the things that a shepherd does! “God takes care of all our needs just as a shepherd takes care of the sheep,” David thought.

Let’s add our voices to this psalm of David:

Leader: God is like a shepherd.

**All: I will have everything I need.**

Leader: A good shepherd takes care of the sheep.

A good shepherd makes sure they rest when they are tired.

The shepherd gives the sheep cool water to drink when they are thirsty.

God takes care of me as well.

Leader: God is like a shepherd.

**All: I will have everything I need.**

Leader: Just like a shepherd, God shows me the right way to go so that I don’t get lost.

A good shepherd watches over all the sheep.

A good shepherd makes sure that they are safe and pulls them out of trouble.

The shepherd walks beside them and protects the sheep from danger.

Leader: God is like a shepherd.

**All: I will have everything I need.**

Leader: Even in the middle of the night,

when things look dark and scary,

I will not be afraid,

because God is close by.

God is there even on terrible, awful days.

When trouble seems to be around every corner,

God is with me, always caring, always loving.

Leader: God is like a shepherd.

**All: I will have everything I need.**

Leader: God will love me forever.

God’s love will be with me all the days of my life.

This prayer is known as Psalm 23. When it is said or sung, people think about how a shepherd cares for all the sheep, making sure each one is fed, is given water, and is safe. This psalm is said in happy times and sad times, remembering God’s loving care at all times.



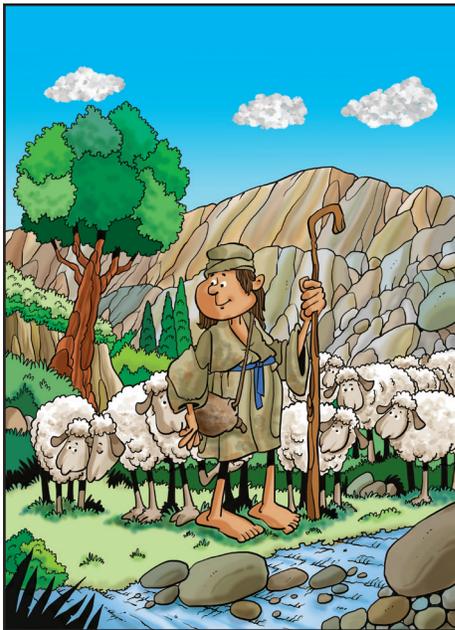
## The Lord Is My Shepherd

(based on Psalm 23)

Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

### Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Invite one person to be the good shepherd, pretending to care for everyone like their sheep. Let the good shepherd gather everyone and lead the group to get a drink of water, to walk an easy path, and to find a place to rest.
- When all the sheep are safely resting, take turns naming the ways family members show the kind of love and care that a good shepherd gives the sheep. Examples may be “My sister helps me reach things on a high shelf” or “My grandmother gives me good food to eat when I am hungry.”



### Responding to God's Grace

- Invite everyone to make caring kits to share with others. Provide blank notepaper, markers or pens, plastic bags, and a collection of small personal care items (such as pair of socks, shampoo, conditioner, hand soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, adhesive bandages, or ointment). Write “God cares for you” on notepaper and decorate. Place a note and a set of personal care items into each bag and seal. Deliver the kits to a shelter or other community service organization that cares for others daily.
- Help your children name ways to be caring and loving toward others like a good shepherd and the beloved community by playing an alphabet game. Sit in a circle and start the game by saying, “Today I am going to be like a good shepherd by . . .” and name something you can do to show kindness and care that starts with the letter A. Invite the next person to name something they can do that starts with the letter B, and so on through the alphabet. Help one another with difficult letters like Q and X.

### Celebrating in Gratitude

- In gratitude for God's care and love, gather ingredients and tools for making biscuits, a loaf of bread, or a simple cake. Invite your family to mix the ingredients, bake, and take your gift of love to someone who lives alone or needs a visit.
- Pray this prayer this week:

*Help us, God, to be always caring and sharing your love. Amen.*