



PSALMS OF TRUST

BIBLE PASSAGE: Psalm 23

FOCUS VERSES: John 10:27–28; Isaiah 40:11; Isaiah 26:3;
John 14:27

Summary: The psalms of trust highlight God's protection and care and encourage trust in Him. Psalm 23 was written by David. It compares God to a shepherd who guides, comforts and provides for His people. David described how God protects us even in fearful times. We can have peace because we can trust Him. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, laid down His life for us, offering forgiveness and eternal life through His death and resurrection.



MONTHLY *Memory Verse*

*The LORD is good to all, and His mercy is
over all that He has made.*

(PSALM 145:9)



God is our Good Shepherd.

HE

HOW IS GOD LIKE A SHEPHERD?

God lovingly provides for us,
guides us, protects us, and
comforts us.

WE

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR US THAT GOD IS OUR SHEPHERD?

We can live in peace, trusting
that God is taking care of us.

ME

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?

Kids will be given the
opportunity to reflect on the
truth they learned about God
and respond accordingly.

Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS

As our relationship grows with a kid, we are better able to meet their needs and anticipate where they may need extra support.

- **Identify their favorites.** Every kid has unique interests and favorites. We show our interest in kids by showing an interest in the things that are important to them. If you have some of a kid's favorite things in your space, point them out to them as they arrive.
- **Know their strengths and challenges.** Kids who are neurodivergent are often identified by their challenges. As we're all fearfully and wonderfully made, we each have amazing strengths. Identify those strengths and give kids opportunities to use them.
- **Identify their triggers.** A kid who is neurodivergent will respond to the world around them differently than a neurotypical person. Lights, sounds or transitions that don't bother others may cause a meltdown with them. When we identify potential triggers, we can be proactive in meeting their needs and communicating to the kid that they are known, loved and will be cared for.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: LONELINESS

In 2023, the surgeon general declared our nation was facing an "epidemic of loneliness," citing research that over 20 percent of adults said they were suffering from loneliness.* Our kids are growing up in a very lonely culture. Many spent a portion of the pandemic isolated from others, and it has been a difficult recovery. Today kids will learn God desires to dwell with His people. They are never truly alone. You can help your group be a place where kids do not feel lonely. Be intentional to connect kids together. Watch for kids who tend to isolate, and work to build relationships with them. Utilize the Belong activities to get to know kids and pay attention to things they share about themselves. Help kids feel known. Most importantly, emphasize God is always near to them, loving them, helping them, and dwelling with them.

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

The Good Shepherd: the One who guides, comforts, and provides for His people

Trust: confidence someone or something is reliable and will do what is expected

*For more resources on this topic, check out: britecurriculum.com/resources.

Bible TEACHING

PSALMS OF TRUST

PSALM 23



PRAY: God, You are good and You lead and protect us every day. Help the words of Psalm 23 draw our focus to Your great care and attention today. Amen.

SUPPLIES:

Bible, teaching slides, printable pages, painter's tape

PREP:

Print the printable pages and tape them to the walls all around your space.

LEADER TIP:

Adhere the pages at places easily accessible on the wall.



As you tell the story, select one kid at a time to follow you to specific signs placed around your space. When it is time, approach a kid and say, "Follow me." Lead them to the correct sign and have the child read the sign for the group. Each kid will stay with you and be your "flock."

Say: Psalms of trust proclaim the safety God provides for us and encourage trust in Him. The most well-known psalm of trust is Psalm 23. This psalm describes God as our Shepherd. King David paints a beautiful picture of how God lovingly provides for us, guides us, protects us and comforts us.

Select a kid to stand and follow you to the "Father's Fields" sign by approaching them and saying, "Follow me." Instruct them to read the sign to the group and then stay by your side.

Say: Before David killed the giant Goliath and became king, he was a shepherd boy in his father's fields. As he wrote Psalm 23, he could have been thinking about his time as a shepherd and all he did to care for his sheep.

Show teaching illustration: Good Shepherd

Say: David begins the psalm by saying: The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. David saw that he had what he needed because God provided for him.

Select another kid to join your flock and follow you to the "Green Pastures" sign by approaching them and saying, "Follow me." Instruct them to read the sign to the group and then stay with you and the flock.

Bible TEACHING CONTINUED

Say: Sheep need grass to eat and they don't drink from flowing streams. So David wrote: The Lord... makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

Select another kid to join your flock and follow you to the "Still Waters" sign by approaching them and saying, "Follow me." Instruct them to read the sign to the group and then stay with you and the flock.

Say: God is the perfect Shepherd and knows exactly what we need.

The psalm continues, saying: He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Select another kid to join your flock and follow you to the "Paths of Righteousness" sign by approaching them and saying, "Follow me." Instruct them to read the sign to the group and then stay with you and the flock.

Say: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

Say: Shepherds used their rods to protect the sheep from enemies, and they used their staffs to help sheep who were in trouble. God protects us and helps us, even in the scariest times.

Say: After a day of travel, shepherds would care for the tired sheep by spreading out food in a place where they could be protected from dangerous animals or thieves. The shepherd would also provide water for the sheep's thirst and put oil on their heads to protect them from bugs or other pests. David describes how God takes care of us like this.

Select another kid to join your flock and follow you to the "Prepared Table" sign by approaching them and saying, "Follow me." Instruct them to read the sign to the group and then stay with you and the flock.

Read Psalm 23:5 directly from your Bible: *You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.*

Say: He gives us what we need, even more than we need, while keeping us safe. Because God is such a Good Shepherd, we can live in peace, trusting that God is taking care of us.

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(CONTINUED)

Bible TEACHING CONTINUED

Show teaching illustration: David Peace

Say: The end of the psalm says:

Read Psalm 23:6 directly from your Bible: *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

Have the volunteers return to their seats.

Show teaching slide: Point to Jesus



POINT TO JESUS

Say: In John 10:11, Jesus said: *"I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep."* God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to lay down His life for us. When Jesus died on the cross and rose again, He provided a way for our sins to be forgiven and for us to have eternal life.



FATHER'S FIELDS



STILL WATERS



GREEN PASTURES



PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS



PREPARED TABLE

Small Group ROADMAP

1

BELONG (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to experience God's love through a welcoming community

HERD THE SHEEP

SUPPLIES: 20 white balloons, 2 trash cans, timer

OR

HEAR THE SHEEP

SUPPLIES: Blindfold

2

BELIEVE (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to discover who God is by engaging with the Bible

FIND THE SHEEP

SUPPLIES: Bibles, teaching slide, printable pages, scissors

OR

SHEPHERD MOTIONS

SUPPLIES: Bible

3



DISCIPLESHIP DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES)

Goal: To engage kids in faith conversations that help them navigate a broken world with biblical wisdom

4

BECOME (10 MINUTES)

Goal: For kids to learn to follow Jesus by applying faith to their lives

OUR SHEPHERD'S PEACE

SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, water, 3 tablespoons of salt, cup, food coloring, spoon, paper towels

OR

SHEEP PRAYER

SUPPLIES: Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, printable pages, cotton balls (10 per kid), glue sticks (1 per kid)

5



SMALL GROUP WRAP-UP (5 MINUTES)

SUPPLIES: Take-Home page, coloring supplies



HERD THE SHEEP

SUPPLIES:

20 white balloons, 2 trash cans, timer

PREP:

Inflate the balloons. Place the trash cans on either side of your space.

LEADER TIP: Store the inflated balloons in large trash bags until you are ready to release them.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Kids with sensory sensitivities may be afraid of balloons popping. Have noise-cancelling headphones to provide a sound barrier.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Welcome each kid by name and welcome any new kids to the group.*
2. **Discuss:** What were the best and worst parts of your week?
3. **Discuss:** This month we are learning that God is good. How have you seen this week that God is good?
4. **Say:** Today we are learning about shepherds and sheep!
5. **Say:** Let's play a game to herd the sheep.
6. **Say:** I will throw 20 balloons into the air. You will have to bop them into their pens (trash cans). You can't catch them and carry them. You can only tap them with your hands, directing them to the pens. Let's see how long it takes to herd the sheep!
7. *Release all the balloons into the air and start the timer.*
8. *Play the game a couple of times, trying to get faster each time.*
9. **Discuss:** What do you know about sheep?

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Sheep need a lot of care. When King David was young, he was a shepherd. He knew the kind of care that sheep required. Today we will hear a psalm David wrote about how God is our Good Shepherd.



HEAR THE SHEEP

SUPPLIES:

Blindfold

PREP:

None

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Some kids might not do well being blindfolded. Use a pair of sunglasses with black paper in the lenses in place of a blindfold.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. *Welcome each kid by name and welcome any new kids to the group.*
2. **Discuss:** What were the best and worst parts of your week?
3. **Discuss:** This month we are learning that God is good. How have you seen this week that God is good?
4. *Gather kids in a circle.*
5. **Say:** Today we are learning about sheep and shepherds.
6. **Discuss:** What do you know about sheep and shepherds?
7. **Say:** Shepherds care for and know their sheep.
8. **Say:** Let's play a game to see how well a shepherd knows the sheep. To play, I will choose one person to be the "shepherd" and stand in the middle of our circle blindfolded. Then I will tap one person in the circle to "baaa" like a sheep. The shepherd will have to guess who made the noise.
9. *Choose one kid to be the shepherd and blindfold them.*
10. *Once the kid is blindfolded, quietly tap another kid in the circle to "baaa."*
11. *Allow the shepherd to make three guesses to try to learn the identity of the sheep.*
12. *Choose a new shepherd and sheep.*
13. *Continue until everyone has had a turn to be the shepherd.*

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

When King David was young, he was a shepherd. He knew the kind of care that sheep required. Today we are hearing a psalm David wrote about how God is our Good Shepherd.



FIND THE SHEEP

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, teaching slide, printable pages, scissors

PREP:

Print or show the Memory Verse teaching slide.
Print the printable pages and cut them out.
Hide the cards around your space.

LEADER TIP: In order to prevent one kid from finding all the sheep, have kids return to the circle once they have found a card.

ADAPTATION FOR DIFFERENT LEARNERS: Consider the needs of your group and make sure there are sheep where each kid can access them.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Say:** Today we are learning how we are like sheep and God is our Good Shepherd.
2. **Discuss:** In Psalm 23, how is God like a shepherd to us?
3. *Lead kids to find Psalm 145:9 in their Bibles. Read it aloud together.*
4. **Discuss:** How does this verse describe God's goodness?
5. **Say:** God is our Good Shepherd. A good shepherd loves and cares for his sheep. God's love will last forever. He will always love and care for us.
6. **Say:** Let's play a game to remember our verse.
7. **Say:** I've hidden sheep with the words of the verse on them around our space. Good shepherds love their sheep and always find them. You will go around, find the sheep and bring them back to our circle. Then we will put them in order of the verse.
8. *Start the game and cheer kids on.*
9. *When all the sheep are found, help kids put the words of the verse in order. They can use the number of sheep on each card to help put the verse in order.*
10. *Recite the verse together several times.*
11. *Mix up the cards and, as a group, put the verse in order a few more times, reciting it together each time.*

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

God is our Good Shepherd. He cares for us, protects and provides for us, and is always with us when we face struggles.



SHEPHERD MOTIONS

SUPPLIES:

Bible

PREP:

None

LEADER TIP: Come up with motions you will easily remember to go along with the words *guidance, comfort, provide and protect*. Practice them so you can quickly switch between them.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** How did David describe God as our Shepherd?
2. **Say:** Let's play a game to learn about how God is our Good Shepherd!
3. *Teach kids the motions you came up with for the words: guide, comfort, provide and protect. Do the motions slowly, one at a time, until kids are comfortable with them.*
4. *Play the game by calling out a motion for kids to do. Try to have kids go as quickly as possible from motion to motion.*
5. *Play as long as you have time for and then read the verses and discuss each motion.*
6. *Motions and questions:*
 - **Guides:** Read Isaiah 48:17. How can we find God's guidance?
 - **Comforts:** Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-4. How does God comfort us?
 - **Provides:** Read Philippians 4:19. How does God provide for us?
 - **Protects:** Read Nahum 1:7. How does God protect us?
7. **Say:** God is our Good Shepherd. Just like sheep need guidance and care, we do too!
8. **Read:** John 10:27.
9. **Discuss:** What does God do for us, His sheep?

ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

God is our Good Shepherd. He lovingly provides for us, guides us, protects us and comforts us. He even laid down His life for us!



Discipleship DISCUSSION

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

Discuss: How does this story show us God is a promise keeper?

Say: God promises to provide for His people. Psalm 23 is a great reminder of the way God lovingly cares for us, providing what we need. He is our Good Shepherd!

BUT WHAT ABOUT ... LONELINESS?

Discuss: Can you share about a time that you felt lonely?

Discuss: Who can you talk to when you feel lonely?

Discuss: What do you think God has to say about that?

Say: A lot of people feel lonely these days. It may sometimes feel hard to make friends or hang out with others. We spend a lot of time on screens, but this isn't the same as having real friendships with people. God wants us to connect with other people. Maybe this week you can make a point to talk to someone new, especially someone who might be lonely. The Bible shows us that when we feel lonely, we can talk to God. David talked to God when he was lonely and you can too. Psalm 25:16 says: *Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted.*



OUR SHEPHERD'S PEACE

SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, water, 3 tablespoons of salt, cup, food coloring, spoon, paper towels

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).

LEADER TIP: Check out this link to see an example: britecurriculum.com/resources

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. **Discuss:** How do you think David felt knowing that God was his Good Shepherd? What happened in David's life that he needed a shepherd?
2. *Pour water into the cup.*
3. **Say:** Imagine this is you. I will add salt to this cup. This salt is like God in our life. He is our Shepherd and we are His sheep. That means He cares for us, guides us, protects us and provides for us.
4. *Stir a few tablespoons of salt into the water.*
5. **Say:** Now imagine that this food coloring is all of the hard things in our lives—situations that might make us sad, anxious, angry or confused. Let's see what happens when we add it to the water.
6. *Add drops of food coloring into the salty water.*
7. **Discuss:** What happened?
8. **Say:** With God in our lives, like the salt in the water, we can experience God's peace and comfort, just like David did when he was going through hard things.
9. **Read:** Isaiah 26:3 and John 14:27.
10. **Discuss:** What happens when we trust in God as our Shepherd?
11. **Say:** Things can be hard, sad and confusing in our lives, but we can remember that God is our Good Shepherd. That means we can live in peace, trusting that God is taking care of us.

**ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:**

Today we learned God is our Good Shepherd. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages and discuss possible responses. Have kids choose a prompt and write/draw their response.



SHEEP PRAYER

SUPPLIES:

Bible, Take-Home page, coloring supplies, printable pages, cotton balls (10 per kid), glue sticks (1 per kid)

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).
Print the printable pages (1 sheep per kid.) Keep the Prayer Guide with you.

LEADER TIP: Make an example craft for kids to look at during prayer time so they aren't distracted by all their craft supplies.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Discuss:** How do you think David felt knowing that God was his Good Shepherd? What happened in David's life where he needed a shepherd?
2. **Discuss:** What does it mean to us that God is our Good Shepherd?
3. **Read:** Isaiah 26:3 and John 14:27.
4. **Discuss:** What does God give us when we trust in Him as our Good Shepherd?
5. **Say:** God gives us His peace. With God, we can live in peace, trusting that He is taking care of us. Sometimes it is hard to have peace when we are anxious, worried, confused or sad. But the Bible promises that as we trust in God's care for us, we can have peace.
6. **Say:** Let's pray to God about some hard situations we are facing and ask Him to help. To do that, I will give you a sheep and cotton balls. I will guide you in prayer time, and you can glue on a cotton ball as you talk to God about situations in which you need His peace.
7. *Lead kids in the prayer time using the printable prayer guide.*
8. *After the prayer time, give kids time to decorate their sheep.*
9. **Say:** Take your sheep home as a reminder that we can trust God, our Good Shepherd, and live in peace.



ACTIVITY WRAP-UP:

Today we learned God is our Good Shepherd. As we learn truths about God, we can respond to Him. We can tell Him our feelings, we can pray or we can decide to do something or change something.

Lead kids to the "Me Question" box on their Take-Home pages and discuss possible responses. Have kids choose a prompt and write/draw their response.



Wrap-Up

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

Say: We want to respond to God and remember what He has taught us today. We also want to use what He's taught us during the coming week. As we become more like Jesus, our lives change!

Read the challenges from the Take-Home page aloud. Ask kids to mark which one they want to choose for this week.

SUPPLIES:

Take-Home page, coloring supplies

PREP:

Print the Take-Home page (1 per kid).



PRAYER

God, thank You for being our Good Shepherd. You guide, protect, provide and care for us. Help us to trust You and give us Your peace. Amen.



SAY GOODBYE!

Tell kids goodbye and thank them for being a part of your group.

As kids wait to be picked up, encourage them to complete the activities on the back of the Take-Home page. As kids work, ask relationship-building questions, such as, "What are you looking forward to this week?" or "What do you do for fun?"

As parents arrive at pickup, look for opportunities to connect with them, pointing out the Take-Home page their kid is bringing home.

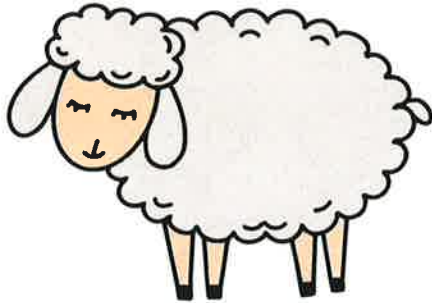


FIND THE SHEEP

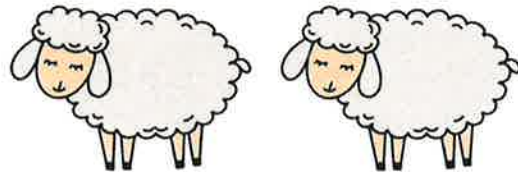
YOUNGER ELEMENTARY SMALL GROUP
PSALMS OF TRUST

PAGE 1 OF 2

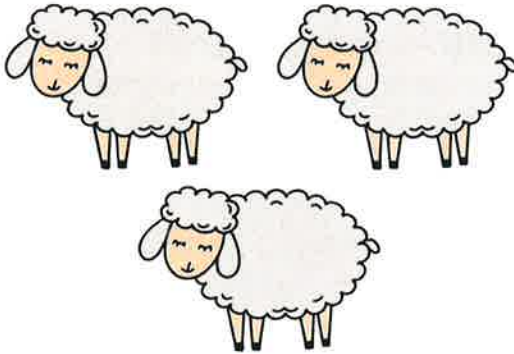
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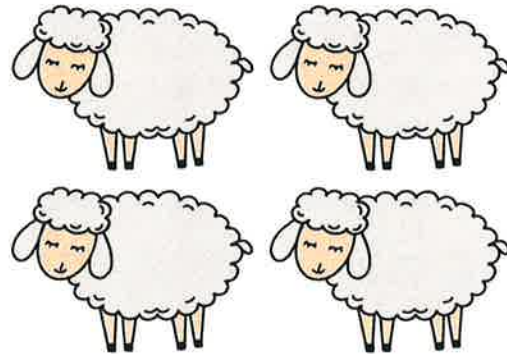
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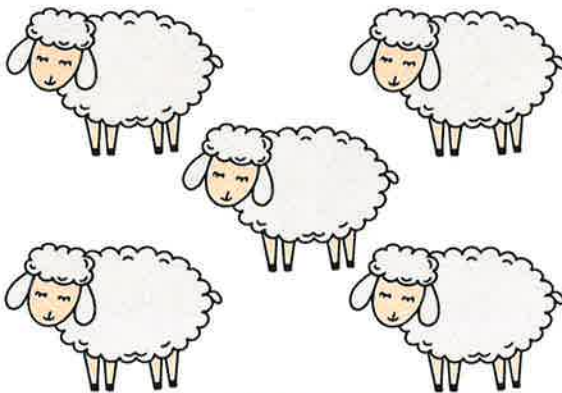
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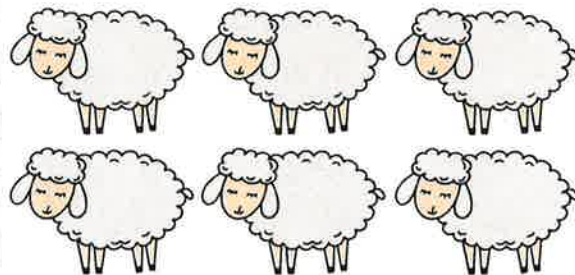
IS GOOD



TO ALL,



AND



HIS

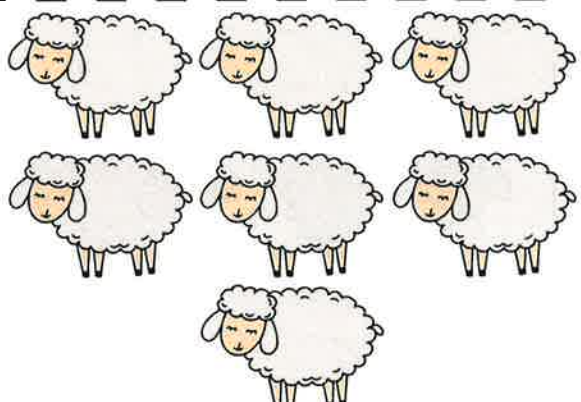
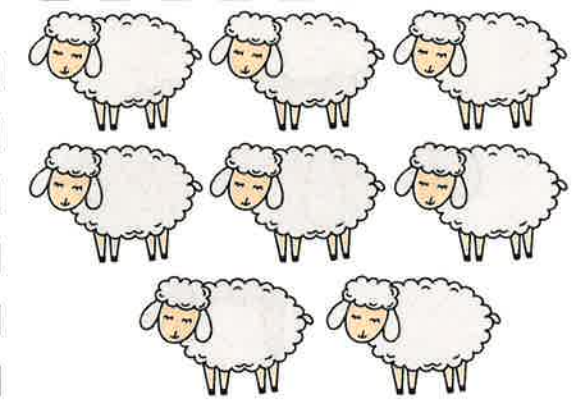
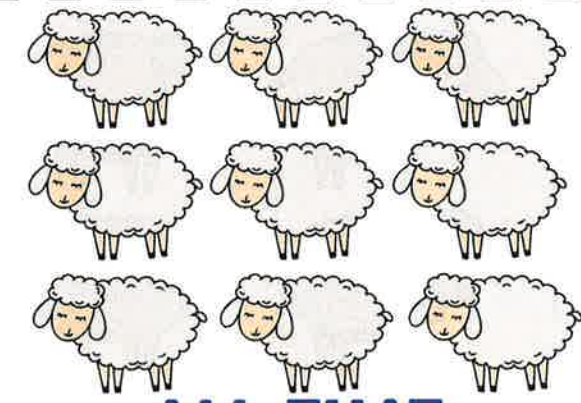
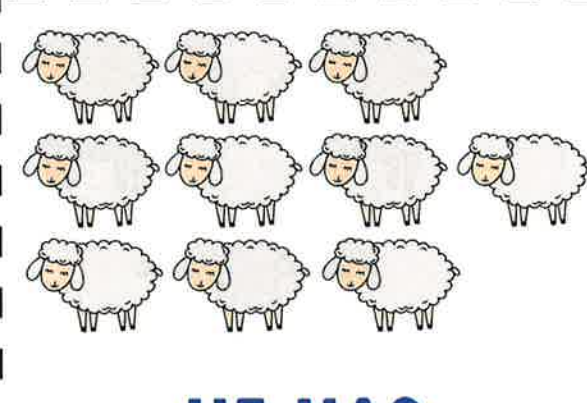
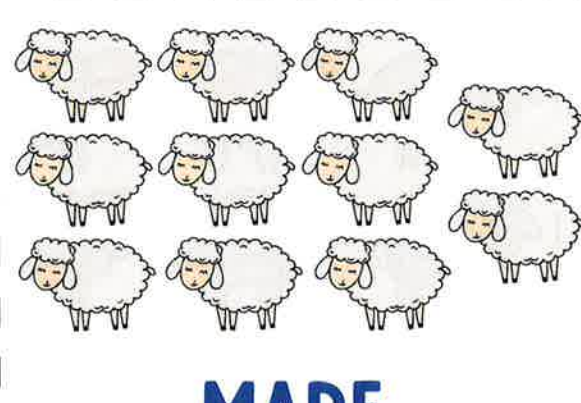
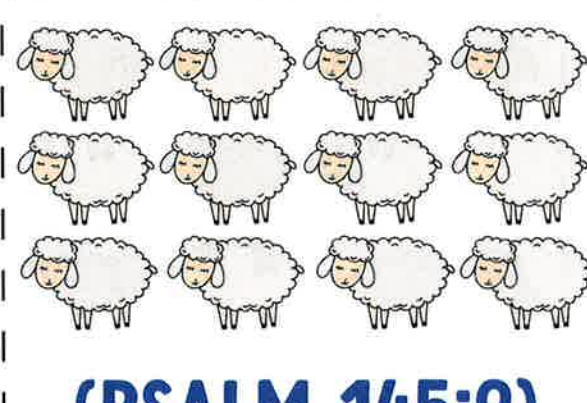


FIND THE SHEEP

YOUNGER ELEMENTARY SMALL GROUP
PSALMS OF TRUST

PAGE 2 OF 2

PREP: Print the printable pages and cut out.

 MERCY	 IS OVER
 ALL THAT	 HE HAS
 MADE.	 (PSALM 145:9)

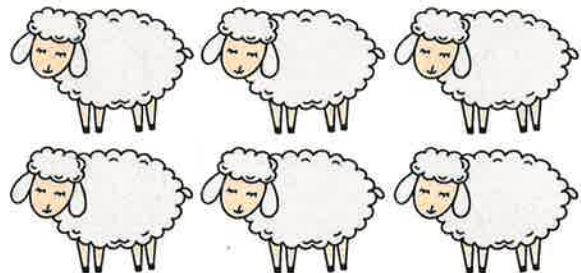
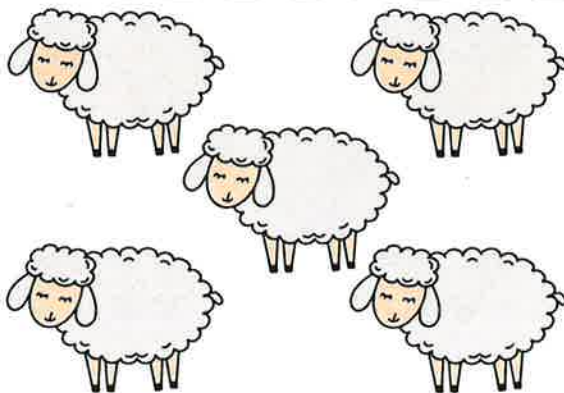
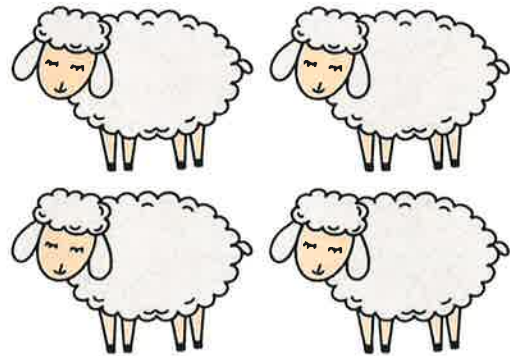
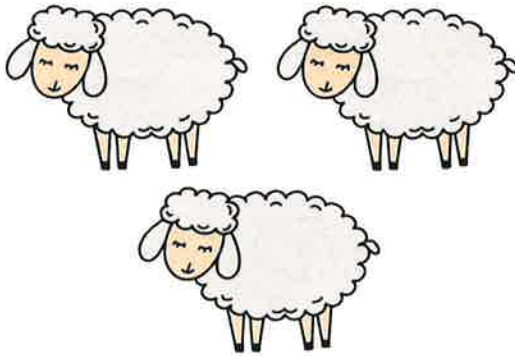
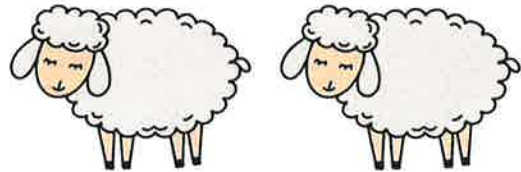
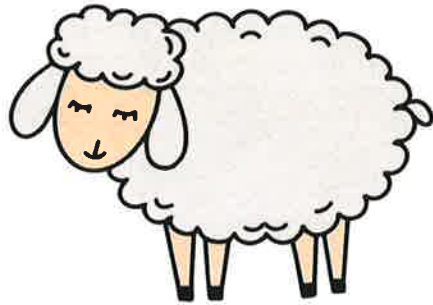


FIND THE SHEEP

YOUNGER ELEMENTARY SMALL GROUP
PSALMS OF TRUST

CUSTOMIZABLE
1 OF 2

PREP: Print the printable pages and cut out.





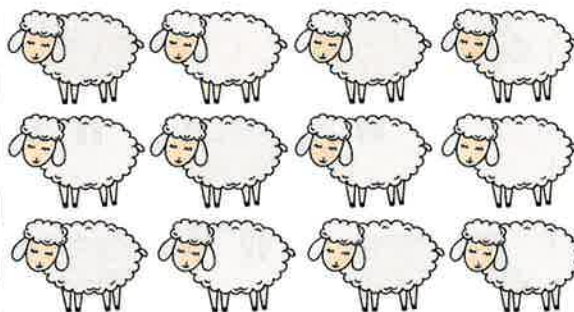
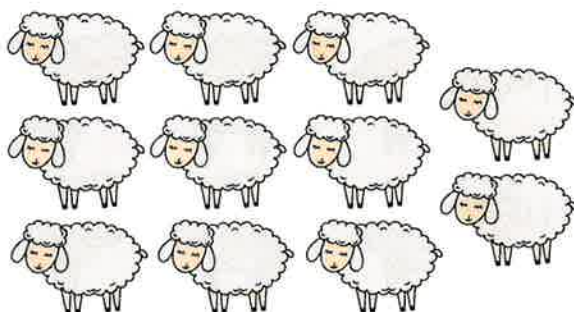
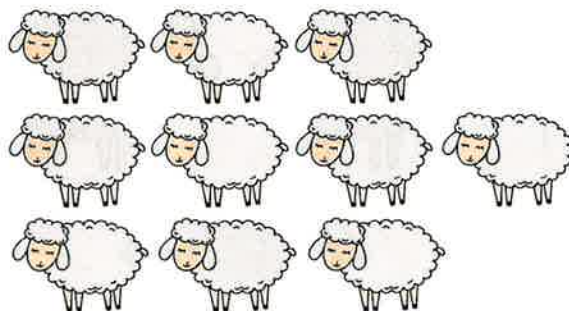
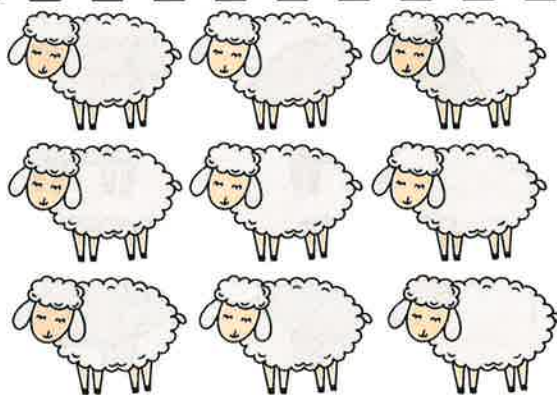
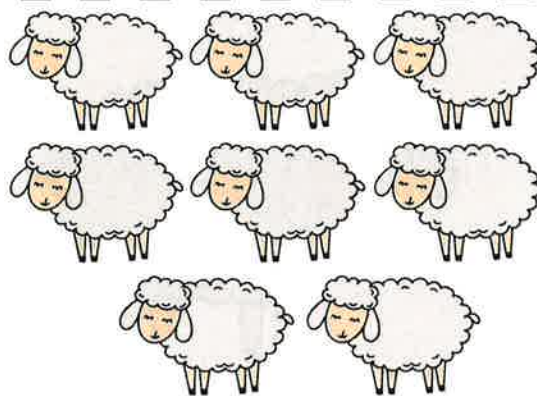
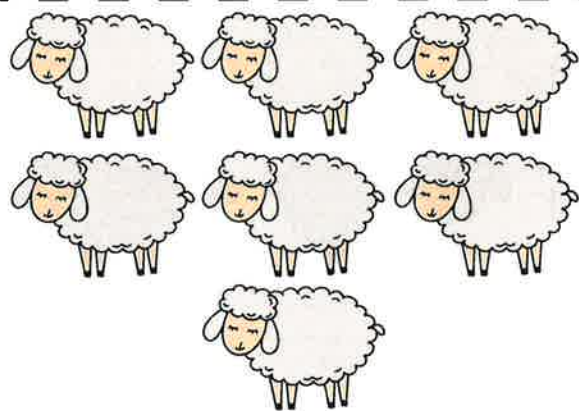
FIND THE SHEEP

YOUNGER ELEMENTARY SMALL GROUP
PSALMS OF TRUST

CUSTOMIZABLE

PREP: Print the printable pages and cut out.

2 OF 2



(PSALM 145:9)

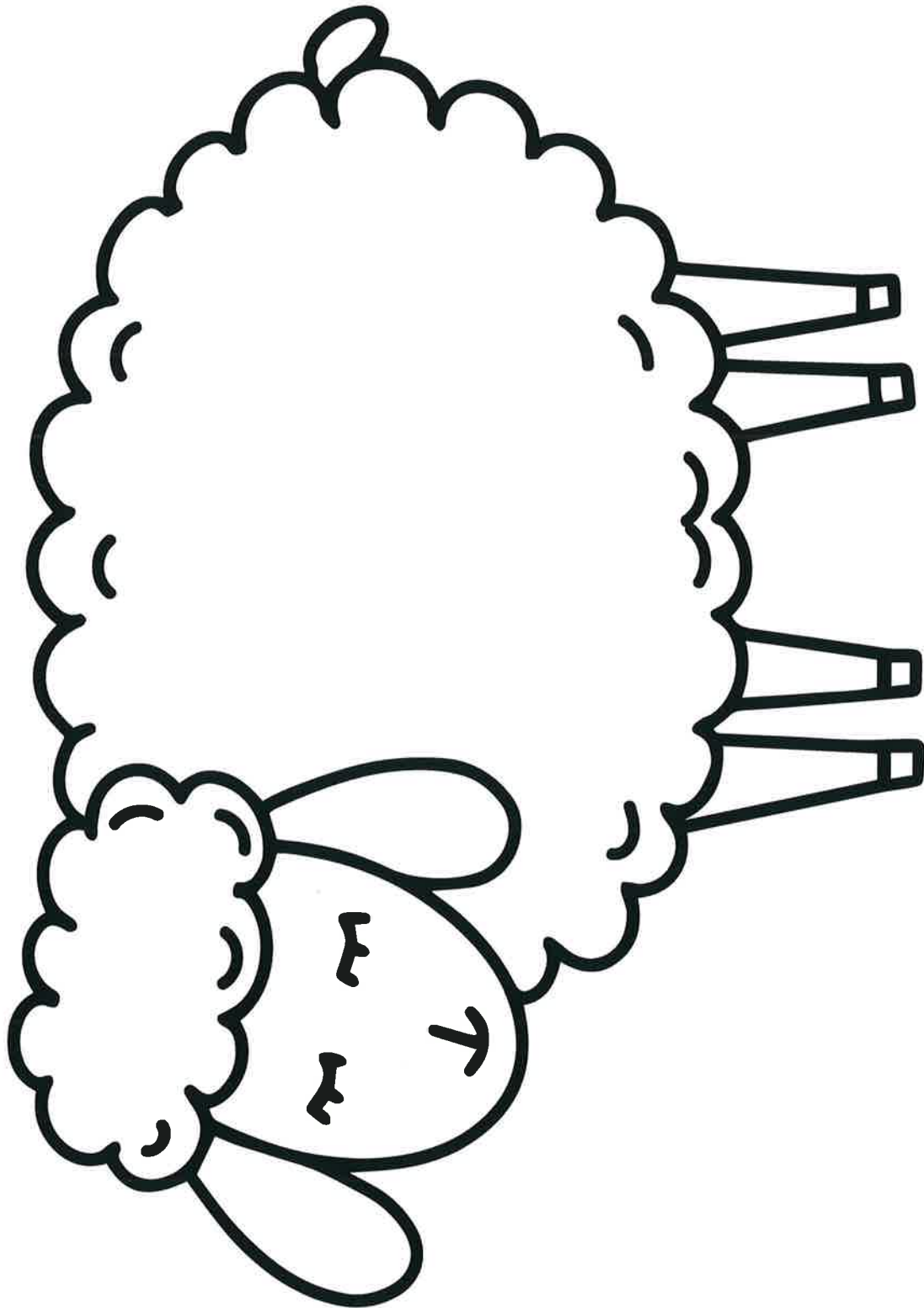


SHEEP PRAYER

YOUNGER ELEMENTARY SMALL GROUP
PSALMS OF TRUST

PAGE 1 OF 2

PREP: Print the printable pages (1 sheep per kid.)





PRAYER GUIDE

Say: Pray silently as you cover the sheep in cotton balls. Imagine that God is caring for you like a shepherd cares for His sheep.

1. Pray about a hard situation you are facing. Talk to God about how you are feeling. Ask Him for help.
2. Pray about something you are worried about. Talk to God about your worries. Ask Him for help.
3. Thank God for being your Good Shepherd. Thank Him for how He loves you, knows you, protects you, provides for you and cares for you. Tell Him you trust Him and thank Him for His peace.
4. *Close the prayer time by praying this prayer:* "God, thank You for being our Good Shepherd. You know us, love us and care for us. We have hard situations in our lives, but help us to remember and trust You as our Good Shepherd. Amen."



TAKE-HOME

YOUNGER ELEMENTARY
PSALMS OF TRUST

PSALMS OF TRUST

Psalm 23



God is our Good Shepherd.



MONTHLY Memory Verse

The Lord is good to all, and His mercy is
over all that He has made.

(PSALM 145:9)

HE

HOW IS GOD LIKE A SHEPHERD?

God lovingly provides for us,
guides us, protects us, and
comforts us.

WE

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR US THAT GOD IS OUR SHEPHERD?

We can live in peace, trusting that God
is taking care of us.

HOW IS GOD INVITING

ME

TO RESPOND?



DRAW OR WRITE YOUR RESPONSE

CHOOSE YOUR Challenge

- ☐ Memorize Psalm 145:9 by putting it to a melody.
- ☐ Make a list of what a Good Shepherd is.
- ☐ Memorize Psalm 23:1-2 and recite it as a prayer.

SCAN ME!

FOR AT-HOME DISCIPLESHIP
DISCUSSION



NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD

Loneliness can be a tough topic for kids. We can help kids view this topic through the lens of Scripture. Learn more about this and how to have a conversation at home here:

Britecurriculum.com/tough-topics



TAKE-HOME

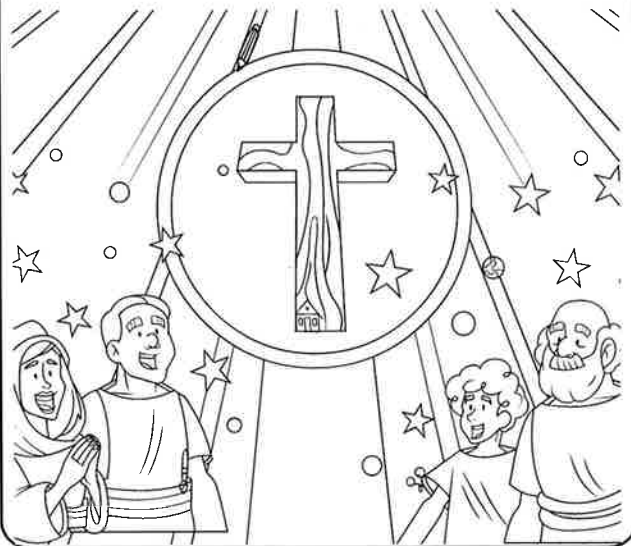
YOUNGER ELEMENTARY
PSALMS OF TRUST



ILLUSTRATION TO COLOR

FIND THE ITEMS

Find the Items in the picture:
pencil, cherries, house, paintbrush, world



FINISH THE PICTURE

Instructions:
Draw one line and then pass to a friend.
They will add a line and pass it back.
Continue until you have drawn a whole picture!





TAKE-HOME CUSTOMIZABLE

YOUNGER ELEMENTARY
PSALMS OF TRUST

PSALMS OF TRUST

Psalm 23

BRITE Idea

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MONTHLY Memory Verse

(PSALM 145:9)

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PSALMS 23

PSALMS OF TRUST

