



Materials I Need:

Legend:

- 2** = Option 1, Appropriate for 2yr olds - 3yr olds
- 4** = Option 2, Appropriate for 4yr olds - Kindergarten
-  = Option 1, Appropriate for 1st - 2nd Grade
-  = Option 2, Appropriate for 3rd - 6th Grade

Memory Work:

“The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want” (Psalm 23:1).

Aim Questions 2yr olds - Kindergarten:

1. Did David write Psalm 23? (Yes)
2. Did David say God is like a shepherd? (Yes)
3. Does God take care of us like a shepherd? (Yes)
4. What does a shepherd do for his sheep? (He feeds, protects, cares, finds, guides them)
5. Is God like a shepherd to us?(Yes) How? (He gives us food, clothing, shelter, protection, guidance)
6. What should we do when we are afraid? (We should pray and trust Him)
7. Why can we trust God? (Because He is always with us and always does what is right)



Aim Questions for 1st - 6th Grade:

1. Who wrote Psalm 23? (David)
2. What does David say God is like? (A Shepherd)
3. What does a shepherd do for his sheep? (He feeds, protects, cares, finds, guides them)
4. Is God like a shepherd to us?(Yes) How? (He gives us food, clothing, shelter, protection, guidance)
5. What should we do when we are afraid? (We should pray and trust Him)
6. Why can we trust God? (Because He is always with us and always does what is right)



 **Hook:**


Make a Meal (Activity). **2** Using a play kitchen, have the children set the table and make a meal for the teacher. In the same way God takes care of us and gives us what we need.

Bring in a Pet (Activity). Bring in a puppy, kitten, gerbil or other animal. Discuss what a pet needs. Ask children what people need to do to take care of a pet. Discuss why a pet needs someone to take care of it. Explain how we are like pets in a way and that God takes care of us.



I Really Want It (Object Lesson/Discussion). ,  Bring in a variety of items from home such as toys, candy, food, car keys, etc. Ask the children which things are wants and which things are needs. Explain the difference between wants and needs. Explain that because God is our

shepherd, He gives us what we need, but not always what we want. For older children, ask why it is not always good to get what we want.

Discipline Is Good for Us (Discussion).   Discuss with children why their parents discipline them. Ask them why their parents discipline them and what kinds of things they are disciplined for. Explain that discipline is more for our protection than for punishment. God loves us enough to discipline us. Tie this to the **Look** obstacle course.

Following the Shepherd (Obstacle Course). **4,**  Set up an obstacle course in the classroom and instruct the students to follow your instructions to work their way through it. Set it up so that there will be a variety of actions required to make it interesting for them. You might have them crawl under the table, climb over the chairs, walk along a balance beam, walk around the outside of a hula hoop, or crawl through a tunnel you have created from a large box. They can either follow you through this course, or you can give them verbal instructions to which they will need to listen very closely. It would be even more effective to pre-record someone's voice with the instructions (this will take a lot of preparation before class), therefore allowing you to follow along the course with the students. Tell them to move quietly and slowly so as not to bump or push the others. As they move through the course, caution them to be careful to avoid the dangerous portions where they might get hurt. If you have the time and the space, you may even consider having sections along the way where there is a choice to be made. They must listen to you to go the correct way, even though the other path may look interesting (put something at the end of that path to pique their curiosity). At the end of this exercise, tell them that in today's Bible Adventure, we will hear how King David wrote about the wonderful shepherd we have who leads and protects each one of us.

Playdough Guessing Game (Game). **2, 4** As the students arrive, have them sit at tables. For the younger ones, have the teacher make shapes of items that will be talked about in the Psalm we will learn today (ie. sheep, shepherd's crook, water, table, overflowing cup, love, house, etc.) See if they can guess what the shapes are. For the older ones, see if they can guess which Psalm they are from.

David Dolls (Craft). **2, 4,**   Use last week's **PSA01.GF 7**, to make paper dolls of David. The children can decorate him as a shepherd, a king, or a warrior. Put the doll clothes in a small paper or plastic bag to go home. Talk about David being a shepherd. For 2's, make one of the paper dolls and attach it to a craft stick.



Book:

Presentation Ideas –

King David (Role Play). Have someone dress up like King David and talk about what it was like to be a shepherd. During the story, have David add a crown when he becomes king. Even the king needs a shepherd.

Story Book 23rd Psalm (Book Idea). There are a variety of children's books and Bibles that have the 23rd Psalm.

Bible Adventure – 2's and 3's

Hello dear ones! I am King David. The Bible says I was one of the greatest kings in the land of Israel. But before being a great king, I was a child just like you. One thing I learned while tending my father's flock is that sheep need a lot of help.

Sheep can't run fast and they don't always know where to go. They easily get lost and will not stop and rest when they need to. Without a shepherd to protect and guide them, they would get lost.

I would find fields with good grass so they could eat. I would lead them to clean water to drink, and

protect them from lions and wolves. When a sheep ran away, I looked until I found him.

When I became king, I could still see that I needed a shepherd to help take care of me. We are a lot like sheep. God is a good shepherd. Here is what I wrote in the bible.

Note: Have the children come close if you have a large picture story Bible. You can read out of it or use the following. Use the pictures or flannel graph if you can.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I have all I need."
He makes me lie down in green fields,
He gives my heart strength when I am tired.
He helps me do what is right.
Even when I have to do scary things,
I am not afraid, because You with me;
Your rod and Your staff, protect me.
You will help me win against those who hate You.
You bless me.
I am glad that your goodness and love follow me.
I will live with you forever.

Let's look a little closer

The Lord is my shepherd, I have all I need." God is the one who takes care of me. He knows me so well that He even knows the number of hairs on my head! He is so big that I have everything I need. I have food, clothes, the bible, church, parents and much more.

"Even when I have to do scary things, I am not afraid, because You are with me." God knows everything that scares me. He even knows the things I'm afraid *might* happen to me. No matter what I face, He will never stop caring for me. When I sin, God disciplines me and keeps me close to Him. He loves me too much to allow me to stray long from His will.

"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." God will never leave me or quit loving me. He will never give up on me and I know I can confidently trust Him all the days of my life. Then one day I will experience no more sadness, no more worries or fears, no more good-byes or death. I will see my Good Shepherd face-to-face and live with Him forever. What a glorious hope!

I hope the words I wrote down in Psalms 23 will guide you and give you hope as you walk through this life. God cares for you and gives you what you need. Remember that He is the Good Shepherd and you are His precious sheep.

Prayer: Dear Lord, we thank You that You are our Good Shepherd. We thank you that you care for us and are with us always. Amen.

4's and 5's

Hello dear ones! I am King David. The Bible says I was one of the greatest kings in the land of Israel. But before being a great king, I was a child just like you. I was the youngest of eight brothers and was given the job of watching the sheep on the hills surrounding our home. I would play my harp and make up songs about my wonderful God. One of the most well known songs I wrote was Psalm 23. In it I talk about helpless sheep and their loving, protective shepherd.

One thing I learned while tending my father's flock is that sheep need a lot of help. They have fat little bodies and short legs which make them easy prey for wild animals. They easily get lost and will not stop and rest when they need to. Without a shepherd to protect and guide them, they would get lost.

I would find fields with good grass so they could eat. I would lead them to clean water to drink, and protect them from lions and wolves. When a sheep strayed from the flock, I looked until I found it.

We are a lot like sheep. God is a good shepherd. Here is what I wrote in the bible.

Note: Have the children come close if you have a large picture story bible. You can read out of it or use the following. Use the pictures or flannel graph if you can.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I have all I need."
He makes me lie down in green fields,
He gives my heart strength when I am tired.
He helps me do what is right.
Even when I have to do scary things,
I am not afraid, because You with me;
Your rod and Your staff, protect me.
You will help me win against those who hate You.
You bless me.
I am glad that your goodness and love follow me.
I will live with you forever.

Let's look a little closer

The Lord is my shepherd, I have all I need." God is the one who takes care of me. He knows me so well that He even knows the number of hairs on my head! He is so great that I have everything I need. I have food, clothes, the bible, church, parents and much more.

He makes me lie down in green fields, He gives my heart strength when I am tired." Because of God's loving care, I can relax and rest. He is as close to me as my very breath. When I am scared and upset, He quiets me. When I am down, He is always there to lift me up and give me new strength.

He helps me do what is right. " Even though I don't always want to do what I'm told, God helps me to choose to obey and do what is right. He does this to show how great He is.

Even when I have to do scary things, I am not afraid, because You with me; God knows everything that scares me. He even knows the things I'm afraid *might* happen to me. No matter what I face, He will never stop caring for me. When I sin, God disciplines me and keeps me close to Him. He loves me too much to allow me to stray long from His will.

"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows." God graciously provides for me even when people are against me. People who hate God will also hate me and may even mistreat and hurt me. But God will bless me so my enemies can see it. He gives me joy in abundance. The Good Shepherd delights in caring for me, His sheep.

"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." God will never leave me or quit loving me. He will never give up on me and I know I can confidently trust Him all the days of my life. Then one day I will experience no more sadness, no more worries or fears, no more good-byes or death. I will see my Good Shepherd face-to-face and live with Him forever. What a glorious hope!

Prayer: Dear Lord, we thank You that You are our Good Shepherd. We thank you that you care for us and are with us always. Amen.

1st - 6th Grade:

Hello dear ones! I am King David. The Bible says I was one of the greatest kings in the land of Israel. But before being a great king, I was a child just like you. I was the youngest of eight brothers and was given the lowly task of caring for my father's flock of sheep on the hills surrounding our home. This may sound like a terribly boring time in my life, but God used it to teach me many marvelous things about Himself. I would play my harp and make up songs about my wonderful God. One of the most well known songs I wrote was Psalm 23. In it I talk about helpless sheep and their loving, protective shepherd.

One thing I learned while tending my father's flock is that sheep are not very smart animals. They do not know how to find food and water for themselves, and are known to stay in the same area eating the grass

and greenery around them until there is nothing left but dirt. They have fat little bodies and short legs which make them easy prey for wild animals. They easily get lost and will not stop and rest when they need to. Without a shepherd to protect and guide them, they would wander aimlessly.

As the shepherd, it was my job to care for the flock. I would find pasture so my sheep could eat and rest. I would lead them to clean water to drink, and protect them from predators and thieves. When a sheep strayed from the flock, I searched until it was found. I nursed my sheep when they were sick or injured. I knew my sheep and they knew me.

It occurred to me during this time that God was like a faithful, loving shepherd, and we are like the helpless sheep. Listen to the words of the 23rd Psalm. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake. 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. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Let's look at the different lines of this Psalm and dig deeper into its meaning.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want." God is my personal and intimate caregiver. He knows me so well that He even knows the number of hairs on my head! He is so great that I have everything I need. Even when my worries and problems overwhelm me, I am certain God will take care of me.

"He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He restores my soul." Because of God's loving care, I can relax and rest. He is as close to me as my very breath. When I am scared and upset, He quiets me. When I am down, He is always there to lift me up and give me new strength.

"He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake." Even though I don't always want to do what I'm told, God helps me to choose to obey and do what is right. He does this to build His reputation as a glorious God.

"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." God knows everything that frightens me. He even knows the things I'm afraid *might* happen to me. No matter what I face, He will never stop caring for me. When I sin, God disciplines me and keeps me close to Him. He loves me too much to allow me to stray long from His will.

"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows." God graciously provides for me even when people are against me. People who hate God will also hate me and may even mistreat and hurt me. But God will bless me so my enemies can see it. He gives me joy in abundance. The Good Shepherd delights in caring for me, His sheep.

"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." God will never leave me or quit loving me. He will never give up on me and I know I can confidently trust Him all the days of my life. Then one day I will experience no more sadness, no more worries or fears, no more good-byes or death. I will see my Good Shepherd face-to-face and live with Him forever. What a glorious hope!

I hope the truths I have recorded in Psalms 23 will guide you and give you hope as you walk through this life. If you are a child of God you can rest in the care, love, and provision of your Father. Remember that He is the Good Shepherd and you are His precious sheep.





Look:



Rod and Staff (Obstacle Course).  Set up boxes and hang items from the ceiling

throughout the room. Label the obstacles as various kinds of temptations. Pair children up. Blindfold one of the children and have the second lead them through the maze. The one who leads them can only use a staff to help his partner through the course. They may gently tap the blindfolded child to help steer him through. Have the students change roles and repeat the game. Discuss how important God's use of discipline is to the believer.

Psalm 23 (Discussion).   Using Psalm 23 Preview in this curriculum as a guide and taking one verse at a time, discuss what this Psalm means ("What did the psalmist mean when he said, 'You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows?'" etc.). Use the white board to write down the meaning for each verse. Then, using **TOOK** time, come back to the definitions on the white board and ask the students how each verse applies to their lives today.

Pasture Scene Craft Page (Craft Activity). **2, 4** Using **PSA02.GF1**, complete this picture using a variety of materials. Consider using cotton balls for the sheep, chenille wire for shepherd's staff, rice for the clouds, markers and glitter for the water, green paper slivers for some of the grassy areas, etc. Be creative with the materials you provide in addition to the standard supplies available from Children's Ministry. Make sure you order your supplies early. Once completed, mount the entire picture on a piece of construction paper for a finished effect. You could have the student copy the Psalm 23 onto a piece of white paper which could be pasted on the back of their picture.



Thy Rod and Staff (Craft). **2, 4** Using **PSA02.GF2**, cut out the 23rd Psalm from the card stock sheet provided. Punch a hole in the top of the card, and tie a short piece of yarn through it. Taking three chenille wires, twist them together into one. Form these into a shepherd's staff, and attach the yarn from the Psalm card to the curved end of the staff. Insert the straight end of the staff into the bottom of an inverted styrofoam cup, or a lump of playdough to act as a stand. Send these home as table ornaments.

Memory Verse Game (Game). Before class, make up chenille wires in the shape of shepherd's staffs and attach the words from the memory verse to them. Hide them throughout the room in plain view. When you are ready, instruct the students to gather them up and see how fast they can assemble them in order.



Song Idea (Song Presentation Idea). Have a teacher bring in a 'harp' (guitar or some small instrument) to accompany the songs. The song leader pretends to be David and the children are his 'flock' or sheep.



Took:

Stay Don't Stray (Discussion).   As sheep, we have a tendency to wander or stray from the shepherd. Talk about what can happen if we stray too far, and what dangers may be lurking out there to lead us away from Him. What should we be doing to stay by the Shepherd? How can we help each other stay together in the flock? At the close of your brief discussion, you may want to pray for each other for strength this week to keep close to Jesus, and to have an awareness of those things we might consider to be like the wolves in the pasture.

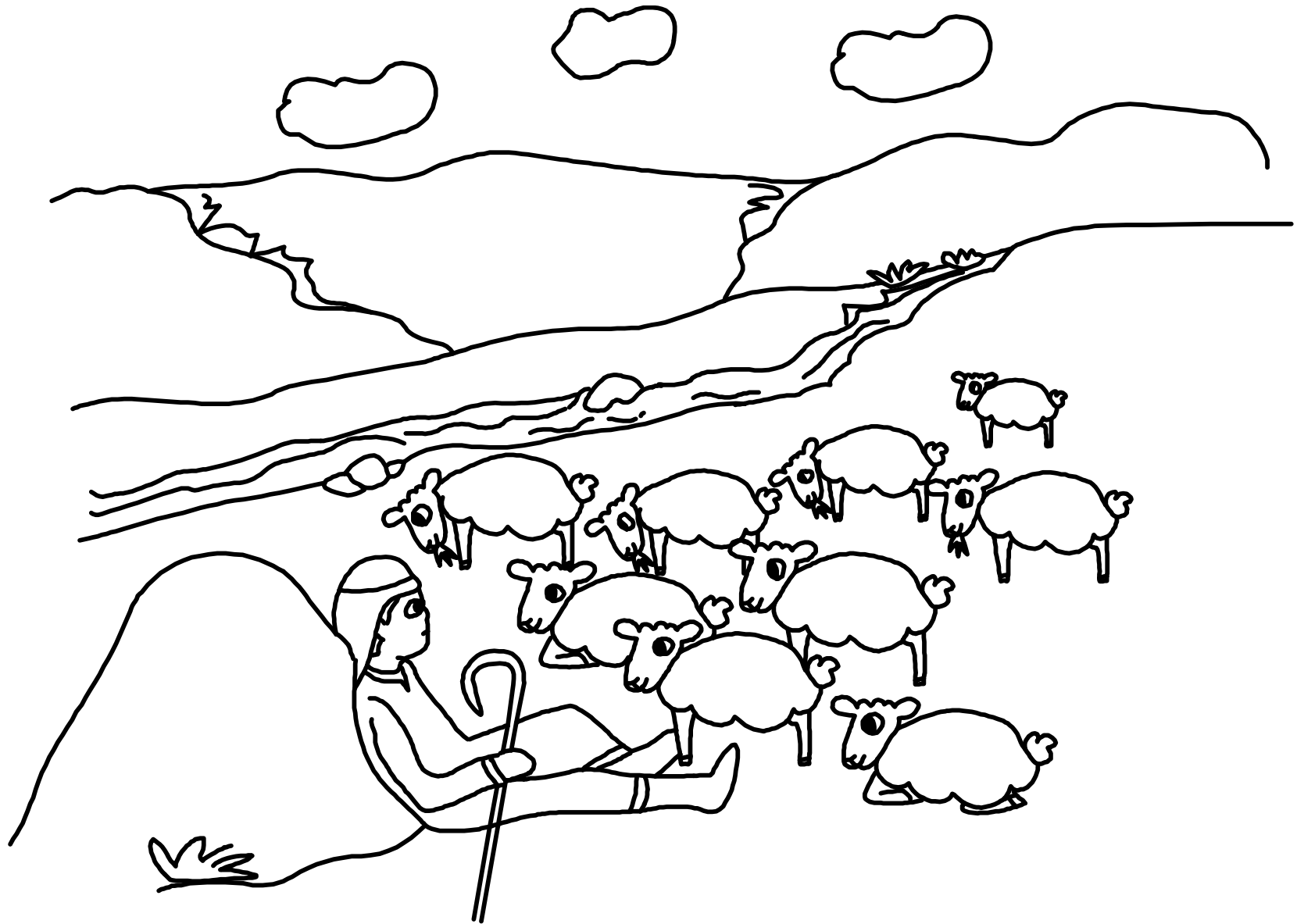
Make a Harp (Craft). **2, 4** Use small milk cartons to make play harps. Cut the top off of a small milk carton. Stretch rubber bands around the carton with the bands making strings across the opening. Cover the outside with colored paper. David played the harp to praise God and to soothe the sheep.

A Shepherd's Song (Word Search Puzzle).   Find the words listed from Psalm 23 in the puzzle, **PSA02.GF3**, answers are found on **Pg.2**.

Psalm 23 (Fill-In the Blank Puzzle). 🐛, 🦋 Fill in the missing words in Psalm 23 from the word list, **PSA02.GF4**.

David Dolls (Craft). 2, 4, 🐛, 🦋 Use last week's **PSA01.GF 7**, to make paper dolls of David. The children can decorate him as a shepherd, a king, or a warrior. Put the doll clothes in a small paper or plastic bag to go home. Talk about David being a shepherd. For 2's, make one of the paper dolls and attach it to a craft stick.

Pasture Scene with David and His Flock



PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
for His name's sake.
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.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
for His name's sake.
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.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
for His name's sake.
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.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

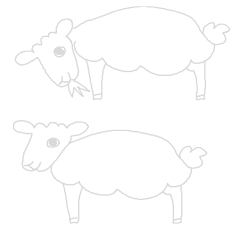
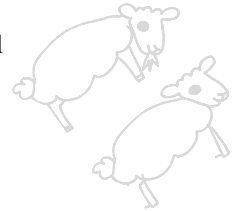
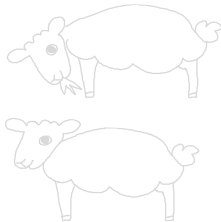
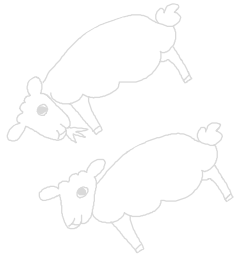
PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
He leads me beside quiet waters,
He restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
for His name's sake.
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.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

A Shepherd's Song

Psalm 23 :1 - 6

- 1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters,
- 3 He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
- 4 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.
- 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
- 6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will



D	S	C	N	U	Q	S	J	U	M	W	L	Y	Z	K
R	D	U	I	K	L	C	H	I	S	K	K	I	C	H
E	O	D	B	X	R	E	S	T	O	R	E	S	F	T
H	R	L	I	W	Q	S	R	N	D	Q	H	E	R	E
P	T	Y	M	F	U	A	W	A	X	A	I	V	N	M
E	L	S	S	E	N	S	U	O	E	T	H	G	I	R
H	P	E	R	A	P	E	R	P	L	F	F	L	R	C
S	G	R	L	A	G	S	U	T	S	F	S	Y	O	Z
D	O	E	E	K	N	A	E	E	W	E	R	M	N	S
O	O	V	A	S	B	O	D	I	R	R	F	E	T	O
Z	D	E	D	D	E	I	I	U	M	O	L	A	V	E
N	N	R	S	Z	U	N	T	N	R	E	F	C	V	O
C	E	O	I	G	H	S	C	T	T	F	N	O	F	X
M	S	F	I	D	A	Y	S	E	T	L	L	E	W	D
Q	S	S	V	P	S	H	A	D	O	W	C	H	Z	N

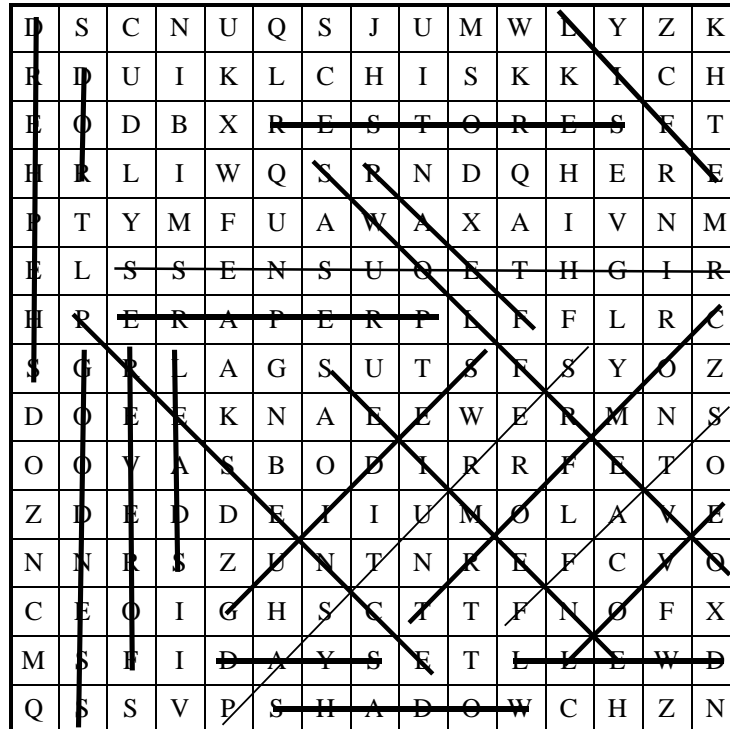
Find the 22 words below from Psalm 23 in the crossword puzzle above.

ANOINT
COMFORT
DAYS
DWELL
ENEMIES
FEAR
FOREVER
GOODNESS
GUIDES
LEADS
LIFE
LOVE

OVERFLOWS
PASTURES
PREPARE
PRESENCE
RESTORES
RIGHTEOUSNESS
ROD
SHADOW
SHEPHERD
STAFF



A Shepherd's Song puzzle Answer Key



(Over,Down,Direction)

ANOINT(5,8,SE)

COMFORT(15,7,SW)

DAYS(5,14,E)

DWELL(15,14,W)

ENEMIES(13,14,NW)

FEAR(11,7,NW)

FOREVER(3,14,N)

GOODNESS(2,8,S)

GUIDES(5,13,NE)

LEADS(4,8,S)

LIFE(12,1,SE)

LOVE(12,14,NE)

OVERFLOWS(15,12,NW)

PASTURES(5,15,NE)

PREPARE(9,7,W)

PRESENCE(2,7,SE)

RESTORES(6,3,E)

RIGHTEOUSNESS(15,6,W)

ROD(2,4,N)

SHADOW(6,15,E)

SHEPHERD(1,8,N)

STAFF(15,9,SW)

PSALM 23

The Lord is my _____, I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green _____,
He _____ me beside quite waters,
He _____ my soul.
He _____ me in paths of _____
for His name's sake.
Even though I walk
though the valley of the _____ of death,
I will _____ no evil,
for You are with me;
Your _____ and Your _____,
they _____ me.

You _____ a table before me
in the _____ of my _____.
You _____ my head with oil;
my cup _____.
Surely _____ and _____ will follow me
all the _____ of my _____,
and I will _____ in the house of the Lord _____.

These words will complete the verses above. Just fill in the blanks. The words have been mixed up. The starred (*) words may be new, but don't be afraid to ask what they mean. Write down any other words you don't know.

anoint *	shadow	prepare
fear	righteousness	shepherd
presence	rods *	enemies
pastures	staff *	overflows
restores *	comfort*	guides
leads	life	love