

FAITH AT HOME 3: THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

Perhaps you saw some grass on your walk – maybe in someone’s garden or in a park. If you live near fields or hills, perhaps you saw some sheep too.



In the Old Testament part of the Bible there is a book called the **PSALMS**. These are like poems or songs, some of them were written by King David. The people who wrote the Psalms were very honest about how they were feeling. Some are sad, some are angry, some ask God questions about why life seems unfair at times. Some are thankful, like this famous one that we are going to look at. This Psalm, number 23, imagines that God is a shepherd and that we are his sheep. Most people think that King David wrote this Psalm because when he was young, he had been a shepherd. He was also a musician and played an instrument called the harp or the lyre. It might have looked like this.



ACTIVITY 1

If you can listen to some music on a phone or another device, use some calm, quiet music and then read the Psalm out loud. If there are different people with you who would like to do this, you could take it in turns to read a verse.

When you have finished reading, leave the music on for a couple of minutes and, without talking try to imagine the pictures that the words in the Psalm make. Can you imagine the pools of water, or the meal that God prepares? Can you imagine the dark valley?

If you would like to, talk about your favourite image from the Psalm

Psalm 23 International Children’s Bible

The Lord is my shepherd.

I have everything I need.

²He gives me rest in green pastures.

He leads me to calm water.

³He gives me new strength.

For the good of his name,

he leads me on paths that are right.

⁴Even if I walk

through a very dark valley,

I will not be afraid

because you are with me.

Your rod and your shepherd’s staff comfort me.

⁵You prepare a meal for me

in front of my enemies.

You pour oil of blessing on my head.^[a]

You give me more than I can hold.

⁶Surely your goodness and love will be with me

all my life.
And I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

ACTIVITY 2

THANKFUL PLAYDOUGH (if you don't have any playdough you could use plasticine or any other kind of modelling clay – even blutak would work! If you have none of these, you could draw the things you are thankful for)

The writer of the 23rd Psalm lists some things he is thankful for – for example, the calm water, for protection when things seem frightening and for knowing that we will be with God for ever.

What things are you thankful for?

Have a think, then see if you can make a model of the thing you are thinking of (or draw a picture) You might need to give the other people doing this activity some clues if they can't guess what you've made!

Now be quiet for a moment... you could use this prayer and each person could add the things they are thankful for.

Dear God,
You look after us and give us everything that we need.
Thank you so much for (mention the things that you are thankful for)
Help us always to remember to say thank you for your love for us,
Amen

ACTIVITY 3

Find the sheep!

If you have a little model or toy sheep you could use that, alternatively you could make a sheep out of lego or duplo, or find a piece of card (like part of a cereal box) and draw a sheep on it.

Take it in turns to follow each clue to hide the sheep. All but the person hiding closes their eyes.

1. The first person must hide the sheep under or near something green.

When the sheep is hidden, they give this clue to everyone else, "God gives me rest in green pastures".

Everyone hunts near or under anything green until the sheep is found. The person who finds the sheep hides it next.

2. The second hiding place must be under or near something blue.

Once it is hidden, give the clue, "God leads me to calm water".

3. The third hiding place must be under or near something black

Once it is hidden, give the clue, "God stops us feeling afraid in a dark valley".

4. The fourth hiding place must be under or near something you can eat!

Once it is hidden, give the clue, "God prepares a meal for us".

5. The fourth hiding place must be under or near something you wear on your head, or put your head on.

Once it is hidden, give the clue, “God pours oil of blessing on our head”,

6. The sixth hiding place is also the hardest! The sheep can be hidden anywhere in the place that you live!

Once it is hidden, give the clue, “We can live in God’s house for ever”.