



“YHWH is My Shepherd” Lesson for Toddlers

This is the first lesson (1st) plan in our series titled, “Little Ones Knowing YHWH.” Each of these studies is designed to help children age 18-24 months better understand the character & nature of YHWH (God) or which ever Holy Name you use).

This particular lesson is based on Psalm 23 and John 10. In very simple language, it shows how YHWH (God) is like a shepherd that cares for us.

Bible Passage: Psalm 23, John 10:1-18

Bible Lesson Title: YHWH (God) is our Good Shepherd

Target Age Group: Toddlers, age 18-24 months

Original Teaching Context: Toddler

Main Idea: YHWH (God) is our good Shepherd. We are His sheep. He takes care of us.

Supplies: Bible, picture of shepherd and sheep. (See additional activities below for supply list.)

With toddlers, you want to keep your lesson simple. If your child or class is able, get them to sit together on floor in front of you. Show them the picture of a shepherd. Hold up your Bible.

SAY: The Bible tells us YHWH (God) is our good Shepherd. The Bible is His Word.

SAY: YHWH (God) is our good Shepherd. We are His sheep. He takes care of us. (Repeat three times.)

The following activities are designed to reinforce the simple Scripture truth, encourage their development, and engage their imaginations and creativity. Choose the ones that will work best for your classroom.

Learning Activities

Follow the Shepherd

SUPPLIES: Shepherd staff, healthy snack for toddlers, water to drink. Optional: costume, bells for your sheep, room décor to make it look like a field (using butcher paper, make rocks, grassy places, ponds, etc.)

ASK: What does a sheep say? (Baaaa.) YHWH (God) is our Shepherd. We are His sheep. He takes care of us. I will pretend to be your shepherd. You are my sheep. Follow me, and I will care for you.

DO: Get on the ground and act like a sheep to encourage your toddler(s) to do the same. Lead your sheep to water. Encourage them to drink. Lead them to food. Encourage them to eat.

SAY: YHWH (God) is our Shepherd. He provides us with food and water. He cares for us. (While they are eating, count your sheep.)

SAY: All of my sheep are here. I am a shepherd and I protect my sheep. YHWH (God) is our good Shepherd. He protects us. (Lead them to a resting place such as a mat or blanket on the floor.)

SAY: When we are tired, YHWH (God) gives us rest. Can you pretend to rest (sleep)? YHWH (God) is our good Shepherd. He takes care of us. (While they are resting, count your sheep.)

SAY: All of my sheep are here. I am a shepherd and I protect my sheep. YHWH (God) is our good Shepherd. He protects us.

If they get distracted or have trouble following you during this activity,



SAY: Sheep follow their shepherd! I need (child's name) to follow me! YHWH (God) is your good Shepherd. He knows your name and calls you to follow Him!

ACTIVITIES

BOX PULL

SUPPLIES: Shoes boxes with a hole punched near the top of one small side; tie a string long enough for a toddler to pull the box around behind them; stuffed lambs, blankies

SAY: Here is a sheep for you to take care of. Can you tuck them in and keep them safe? The Bible says YHWH (God) is our good Shepherd. We are His sheep. He takes care of us.

DO: Show them how they can pull the boxes behind them and lead their sheep. Repeat the main idea as much as you can.

COTTON BALL DISCOVERY

SUPPLIES: Medium or large box/container, cotton balls, small Bible, toy sheep, toy shepherd, small books about sheep, or any other small items that might go along with the lesson theme. Fill your box with cotton balls. Hide the items throughout.

SAY: Sheep are soft, like these cotton balls. Can you feel the cotton balls? (Let them handle a few cotton balls. Show them how to touch them to their faces to feel the softness.) There are some things hidden in these cotton balls! (Pull one small item out.) Let's see what you can find!

TOUCH AND FEEL

Bring real wool to class. Let them touch it and describe the texture. Repeat the main idea as they touch the wool.

SHEEP EXPERIENCE

If this is an option for you, take your child(ren) to see a real sheep/lamb. Let your toddler(s) pet the sheep. Talk to them about what sheep are like (behavior, eating, etc.). Repeat the main idea as they are discovering new things about sheep.

PICTURE DISCOVERY

Print out various pictures of sheep and shepherds. Put them in random places around your room where your toddler(s) will be playing. When they are in that area, talk to them about the pictures. Ask them what they see. Repeat the main idea.

STRING DISCOVERY

SUPPLIES: String, small, square pictures of sheep/shepherds, small sheep/shepherd toys/figurines or puzzle pieces, anything small you can tie or tape to a string.

This activity works well on a table. Tape the string to the table, close enough to the chairs so a toddler could pull it up. Make it long enough so it dangles close to the ground on the other side. Tie/tape your items to that end. Have your toddler(s) sit opposite of the items. Show them how they can pull up on the string and discover fun things! Repeat the main idea as they play.



READ TOGETHER

There are many children's books that are based on Psalm 23. Read them a picture book like this. Or you could read a story about David when he was a shepherd or Yeshua's lesson about being the Good Shepherd in John 10. Or if these are unavailable to you, make your own little picture book based on Psalm 23 or John 10!

Pray: Hold hands or bow your heads together. Say a short prayer like the following: Dear YHWH (God), you are our good Shepherd. We are your sheep. You take care of us. Help us to follow you. We love you. Thank you for loving us. Amen.

We pray that this lesson will be a blessing to you and your children and that they will be a blessing to others.

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