**LESSON 9: PSALM 23: DARK VALLEYS**

**Classroom: My One Room ClassroomLeader Guide for One Room**

05/24/2020

**Psalm 23:4; Exodus 13:17-22**

**Teachers Dig In**

**Dig In to the Bible**

* Read: Psalm 23:4; Exodus 13:17-22
* In This Passage: In this section of Psalm 23, things take a dark turn…into dark valleys. But God, our shepherd, is still there with us! One example of that in the Bible is when the Israelites escape from slavery in Egypt and wander through a desert. Though it’s a hard time, God shows he’s with them through a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire.
* Bible Point: God is with us in hard times.
* Summary Verse: “The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need” (Psalm 23:1).

**Dig Deeper**

* You’ll Be Teaching: *God is with us in hard times.*Kids in your class probably have experienced a range of difficulties. You may have kids who’ve dealt with really hard things like poverty, homelessness, abuse, or the loss of a parent. Other kids may not have had such traumatic struggles in life, but they’ll think of hard times such as being excluded at lunch or getting in a fight with their friends. The fact is, no one—not even kids—is exempt from hard times, so they all need to hear that God is with them!
* Think About: What’s the hardest thing you’ve ever gone through? Looking back, how can you see God was with you?

**Dig In to Prayer**

* Talk to God about any specific hard times you know the kids in your group are facing.

**Quick Tip**

* Sometimes when talking about hardship, if a child shares something especially difficult, other kids are hesitant to share. They may feel like their struggles aren’t worth talking about in comparison with what someone else has shared. Set an environment where everyone’s stories are welcome. Make sure you don’t make any comments—even as a joke—that minimize a child’s hard time. If you’re noticing kids are having a hard time speaking up, give examples like “Has anyone ever had a hard test in school?” to get the conversation flowing again.

**This Lesson at a Glance**

[**OPENING**](https://diginapp.group.com/User/Builder/Preview/1827742#opening)

**Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.**

**Supplies**

* Bible
* green plastic tablecloth from Week 7
* black construction paper
* glue sticks

**Easy Prep**

* Ensure that the green plastic tablecloth is still hanging on the wall.

[**TALK-ABOUT VIDEO**](https://diginapp.group.com/User/Builder/Preview/1827742#talk-about-video)

**Kids watch a video and discuss the Bible Point.**

**Supplies**

* “Bryan’s Story” teaching video (watch or download [here](https://vimeo.com/showcase/6359811/video/365090740))

[**CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY**](https://diginapp.group.com/User/Builder/Preview/1827742#core-bible-discovery)

**Kids go through a dark valley full of hard times.**

**Supplies**

* Bible
* chairs (at least 10)
* black trash bags (at least 10)
* white mailing labels (any size, 3-5 per child)
* pens
* craft sticks (4-6 per child)
* duct tape
* flashlight
* orange, red, and yellow streamers
* plain white paper

**Easy Prep**

* Cover any windows with black trash bags or dark bulletin-board paper so you can make your room really dark. You’ll need a dark room for several activities.
* Tape streamers to the end of a flashlight.
* Cut a large cloud out of paper.

[**MUSIC VIDEO**](https://diginapp.group.com/User/Builder/Preview/1827742#music-video)

**Kids sing songs of praise to God.**

**Supplies**

* “Never Let Go of Me” (watch or download [here](https://vimeo.com/showcase/6359811/video/365090446))
* “I Will Not Be Afraid” (watch or download [here](https://vimeo.com/showcase/6359811/video/365090425))
* “Shalom” (watch or download [here](https://vimeo.com/showcase/6359811/video/365090456))

[**LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP**](https://diginapp.group.com/User/Builder/Preview/1827742#life-application-wrap-up)

**Kids spend time with God in the valley from Core Bible Discovery**

**Supplies**

* valley setup from Core Bible Discovery

**Easy Prep**

* You’ll need your windows covered (from Core Bible Discovery) so you can make your room very dark.

*\*Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.

**OPENING[5 min]**

**Welcome**

**Supplies**

* Bible
* green plastic tablecloth from Week 7
* black construction paper
* glue sticks

**Easy Prep**

* Ensure that the green plastic tablecloth is still hanging on the wall.

**Welcome**

* Thank kids for coming.
* Make announcements.
* Introduce new kids.
* Collect the offering.

**Introduce the Lesson**

            Say: **We’re learning a chapter of the Bible called Psalm 23. Psalm 23 is the most often quoted psalm! One thing it says sheep had to do was travel through dark valleys. But their shepherd was always with them, and God is with us in hard times.**

* Have kids each tear a small piece of black paper and glue all their pieces near each other somewhere on your green tablecloth to make a dark valley patch.
* You’ll continue to add to the field for one more week, so leave it hanging.

**Share**

* Tell kids who *you*would pick to be with you if you could choose one person to be with you*always*.
* Have kids form pairs. Ask kids to share who *they*would want with them all the time.
* After partners have shared, ask two or three kids to share with the whole group.

**Summarize**

            Open a Bible to Psalm 23, and say: **There’s no human who can be with us all the time. But God is! God is with us in hard times, even if we feel sad, scared, or alone. Let’s find out what the Bible has to say about that! We’ll see how God is like a shepherd with his sheep in dark valleys. The Bible is one way God shows us he’s here! And he’s here with us right now, so let’s talk with him.**

            Pray, thanking God for being with us in hard times.

**TALK-ABOUT VIDEO**