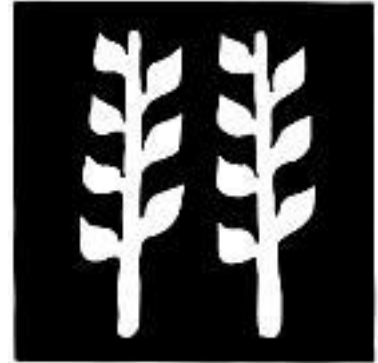


Bible Lessons Year 1

God is a Caring Provider 5 weeks



Outcomes

At the completion of this module students will understand:

- That God cares for us like a shepherd in Bible times.
- The qualities of the shepherd, the job description of the shepherd, and the way in which they looked after sheep in Bible times in the land of Israel.
- That it is right to say ‘thank you’ to God for all that he has provided for us.

Related classroom topics for Science, Social Studies and Health:

Clothes

Link between “God is Provider” and classroom topics:

God provides food and clothes for me because He loves and cares for me. He cares for me like a shepherd cares for his sheep. He provides for all my needs.

Values:

Fijian national curriculum values: Faith; environmental sustainability; peace and prosperity

Other related values: generosity, thankfulness

God is Provider

Week 1

Jesus is the shepherd and I belong to Him.

Jesus knows my name.

Bible References

John 10 The Good Shepherd

The sheep hear His voice. He calls His own sheep by name. The sheep follow Him because they know His voice.

Picture Discussion

Show pictures of sheep farmers and sheep. Compare these with any pictures of shepherds and sheep in Biblical times. Explain that a shepherd in Jesus' day travelled around with his sheep looking for the best grass. The sheep were not kept inside fences during the day, but at night they were led into their special wooden sheep pen where they would be safe for the night.

Bible lesson: The Good Shepherd

Jesus sometimes told stories about sheep and shepherds. In Israel, the land where Jesus lived, a shepherd was a person who looked after the sheep. He always carried a crook with him as well as a sling shot, in case wild animals tried to run off with one of the sheep. A shepherd had to be very brave. If a wolf or a lion or a bear came along, he would protect the sheep. He would use the sling-shot to hurl a stone at the animal and his crook to fight it off.

A shepherd also helped a sheep out of trouble. Sometimes a sheep wandered into thick prickly bushes and couldn't get out. Then the shepherd would gently lift the sheep out of the bushes and put it back with the others. Sometimes sheep were troublesome. They wouldn't go where they were meant to. Then the shepherd used his crook to make them go the right way.

A shepherd loved his sheep very much. He even had a name for every sheep. What do you think some of their names might be? The sheep knew the shepherd too. They knew the sound of his voice and could pick it out amongst other voices. Can you recognise the voice of your Mum or Dad.....even when you can't see them? You know their voices very, very well, and that's how it was with the shepherd and his sheep.

Sometimes bad men came along to the sheep-fold and tried to steal the sheep. The bad men didn't go through the gate, but crept under the fence and hid behind a bush. Then they called to one of the sheep to come to them. But the sheep wouldn't come. It didn't know the stranger's voice. Instead, the sheep ran to the shepherd knowing that the shepherd would protect it.

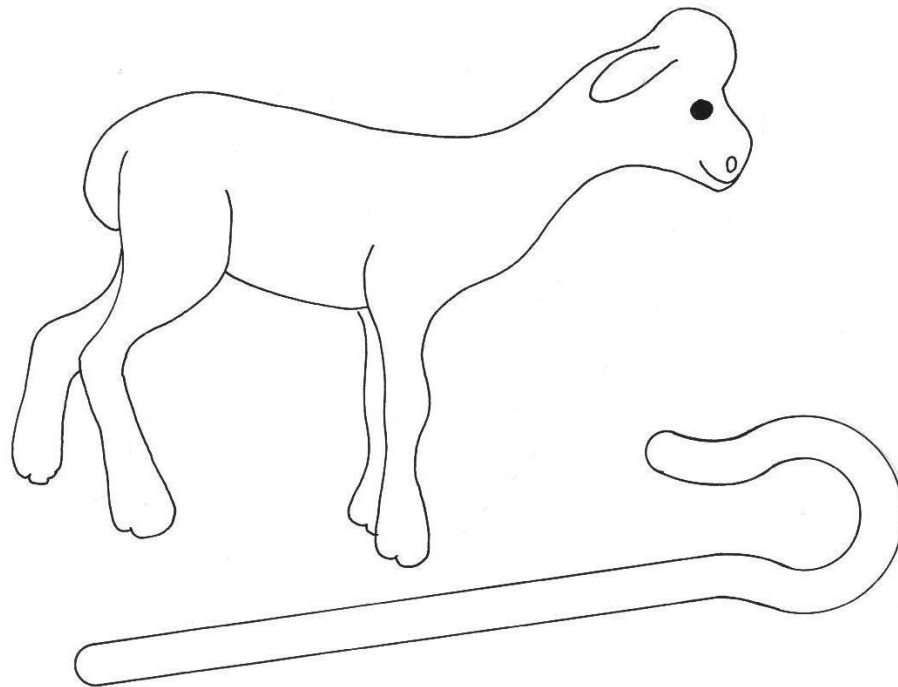
Jesus told this story about the shepherd and the sheep because He wants us to love Him just as the sheep love their shepherd. Jesus is like our shepherd because He loves us. He protects us from danger and always cares for us. Jesus wants us to follow Him, just like the sheep follow the shepherd. They wouldn't follow anyone else because they only know the voice of the shepherd.

Game

Do you know this voice when you can't see the person? (i.e. "Who am I?") This game relates to the fact that the sheep know the voice of the shepherd.

Activity

Make paper sheep and a shepherd's crook. Attach cotton wool to the sheep using glue.



God is Provider

Week 2

God looks after me like a shepherd

Bible reference:

Psalm 23 The Lord is my shepherd.

Visual aids:

Show a picture/s of shepherds in Bible times. If you don't have one, draw the shepherd with his long clothing, head-dress and crook.

Bible lesson: The Lord is my shepherd

A shepherd is a person who looks after sheep. He takes the sheep to a place where they have plenty to eat and drink. By making sure they have good food and water we say that he *provides* for the sheep. He also *protects* the sheep. He keeps them away from danger and watches them at all times.

There was a teenage boy in Bible times called David. He was a shepherd who loved God. He wrote songs for God and these songs are written in the Bible, although we don't know the tunes, just the words. These songs are called the Psalms. Here is one that he wrote about a shepherd. Pretend that you are a sheep and think about how the shepherd looks after you in this psalm.

God is like a shepherd.

He takes me to where the greenest grass is.

He takes me to the river to drink. He does not take me to where the river is flowing too fast. He takes me to the still water.

He shows me the things to do that are right.

Even though I go through tough times He is still with me.

He has a stick called a rod and he uses it to keep the wolves and foxes away. I feel safe when I know that he has his rod.

He gives me happy times.

He loves me very much.

When I stay with the shepherd, I know that he will provide for me and protect me for my whole life.

I want to stay with him forever.

Discussion:

How does the shepherd provide for the sheep?

How does God provide for us?

How does the shepherd protect the sheep?

How does God protect us?

What would happen if one of the sheep decided not to stay with the shepherd?

What could happen if we decided to forget about God?

How does God show us what is the right things to do?

God is Provider

Week 3

God cares for me when I'm in trouble.

Bible Reference

Luke 15:1-7 The Lost Sheep.

Suppose someone has 100 sheep and loses one of them, what does he do? He leaves the other 99 sheep in the pasture and goes looking for the lost one until he finds it. When he finds it, he is so happy that he puts it on his shoulders and carries it back home. Then he calls his friends and neighbours together and says, "I am so happy I have found my lost sheep. Let us celebrate!" (GNB)

Bible lesson: The Lost Sheep

Puppet Play and Craft Activity

Using the drawings on the next page, colour the drawings of shepherd, sheep and fence. Glue these to cardboard, then cut them out. Tape a pop-stick or straw to the back of each cut-out. Hold the pop-stick figures to help tell the story.

A play for pop-stick puppets

NARRATOR: Jesus once told a story about a shepherd who had 100 sheep.

Once upon a time there was a shepherd. (Enter shepherd). He carried a crook to help take care of the sheep. He took very good care of the sheep. He showed them where the best grass was and where the coolest water was. He knew the name of every sheep.

SHEPHERD: "Here Brown Face ... over here Sam..."

(Enter two sheep making sheep noises.)

NARRATOR: Every night the shepherd would take the sheep to their pen. A sheep-pen is a special paddock surrounded by a fence, to keep the sheep safe from wild animals during the night. As they went through the gate into the pen, the shepherd would count the sheep....

SHEPHERD: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight

NARRATOR: and so on, right up to 100.

(All sheep enter. Fence placed in front of them.) When the shepherd had counted all the sheep he would close the gate for the night. But one night, the shepherd was counting....

SHEPHERD: 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99.... Only 99. One is missing. Let me count them again. 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99... Still only 99. I'll have to go and find that missing sheep. Which one is it now... Yes, that's who it is...It's Jumper. (The shepherd goes and looks for Jumper.)

Is he down by the river? Perhaps he's fallen in...

No, not there.

Is he stuck in the prickly bush?...Yes, there he is, over there.

NARRATOR: The shepherd gently lifted Jumper out of the prickly bush and carried him home over his shoulders.

(Enter shepherd carrying sheep.)

He put Jumper safely in the pen with the other sheep and closed the gate. When Jumper went missing, the shepherd had been very unhappy, but now he was very happy because he had found his lost sheep. Just think...if Jumper had stayed in that prickly bush all night, a lion or a bear or a wolf might have killed him. Now the shepherd was so happy he decided to have a big party and invite all his friends.

Discussion

Jesus said that this story had a special meaning.

God is like the shepherd. Who do you think the sheep are like?

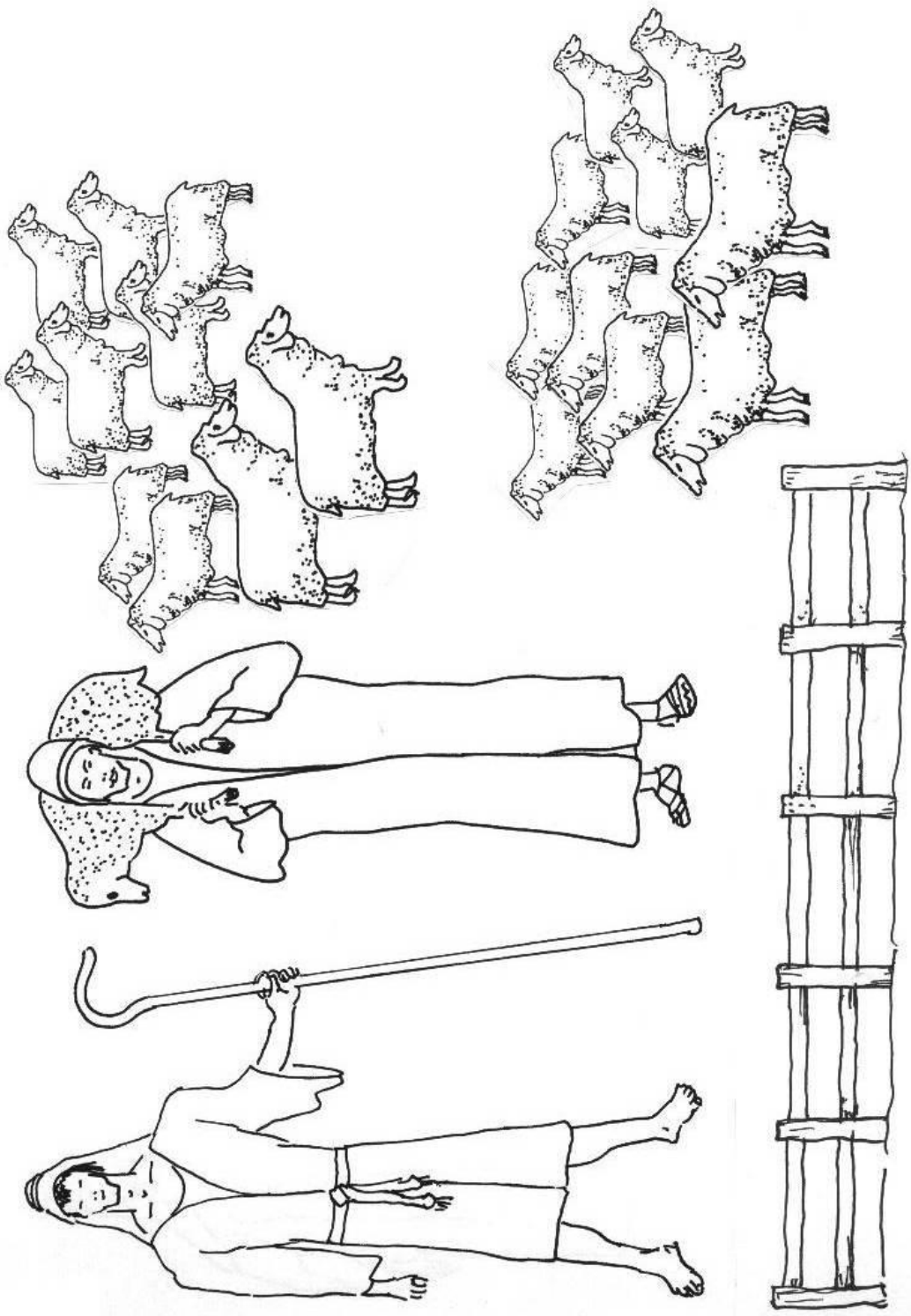
Sometimes people are like sheep. They don't obey God. But when they say sorry and decide to do what God wants, then God will forgive them. God is very, very happy, just like the shepherd who was happy when he found the lost sheep.

How do we know that God loves us?

How does God provide for us?

Note

For very young children, the teacher can take the roles of both Narrator and Shepherd while the children take the role of sheep. They can be encouraged to make sheep sounds at appropriate times.



God is Provider

Week 4

God is a generous provider. God is good to us.

Bible Reference

John 6:1-14 The loaves and fishes

Bible Lesson: Jesus feeds five thousand people

"Here is your lunch," said Mum. "Five little bread rolls and two little fish."

"Thank you," said the boy. "I am going to see Jesus."

The boy ran to see Jesus. There were many people. The boy sat down with his friends. They listened to Jesus. Then it was lunch time.

Many people did not have lunch.

"Can anyone give me their lunch?" asked Jesus.

"I can," said the boy. The boy gave his lunch to Jesus.

Jesus took the lunch and made more and more lunch...lots and lots of bread ... lots and lots of fish. He made lots of lunch out of one little lunch!

The friends of Jesus gave lunch to all the people. There were many, many people. They all got to eat some lunch. The boy was happy. Jesus was his friend.

Discussion

In this story Jesus provided bread and fish for many people. There was so much food that there were baskets full left over. God provided *more* than enough.

Discuss favourite foods. Use pictures of food or real food. Discuss different tastes: sweet, salty, sour, spicy.

Before we eat our food, we usually say thankyou to God for giving it to us. How does God provide food? Think of plant foods that grow in the soil or on trees. Think of animal foods. Why is it important to eat healthy food and not junk food?

Definition

Discuss the meaning of the word *provide*.

Prayer

Thank God for everything He has provided.

Activities

- Make loaves and fishes from white play dough, or make cut-out loaves and fish and draw a basket to put them in.
- Bring a basket of bread and share it out.

God is Provider

Week 5

God provides for all our needs.

Bible Reference

John 2:1-11 The Wedding at Cana.

Discussion

Ask the children to tell the class about a special time they have had with their family or friends.

Parties are special times. What special things do you do at birthday parties? Weddings are special times too. Has your family ever been to a wedding? There is a story in the Bible about the time when Jesus' family went to a big wedding party.

Bible Lesson: The Wedding at Cana

There was a wedding. Jesus was at the wedding. So was Mary.

Everyone was having a good time. Then something happened. There were no more drinks left. There was only water.

"This will not do," said Mary. "The people must have some drinks. Can Jesus help? He is a good helper."

Mary asked Jesus to help.

Jesus said, "Get some water in some big pots." Then Jesus said, "Now drink the water from the pots."

The people got a big surprise. The water in the pots had been made into wine! Jesus had done this by His great power.

"Something amazing has happened!" they all said. "Thank you, Jesus!"

When the drinks ran out Jesus provided the very best. Jesus provided something very special for His friends and family. No one else could change water into a special tasting drink, but Jesus could do it because He is the Son of God.

Discussion: How did Jesus turn the water into wine? Why did He do this? Would He care for you and help you if you really needed something?

Prayer

Thank you, Jesus, for providing the things I need.