

ANIMAL LESSONS FROM THE BIBLE

by Laura Sweet

Fours and Fives

Year 1

Quarter 3

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INTRODUCTION -

ANIMAL LESSONS FROM THE BIBLE

This quarter we will be looking at the characteristics of different animals in God's world and the special spiritual lessons the Bible teaches about each of them. It is a wonderful quarter for examining the design and creativity of our heavenly Father, and these lessons will also be an opportunity for you to use your own creativity and the resources you may have to bring these lessons alive to your students.

For that reason, these lessons are laid out a bit differently from the first two quarters of this material. Instead of a suggested focus activity and project, you will find a list of suggested projects and activities at the end of the lesson from which to choose. While we still encourage you to have the Focus Activity, Story Time, and Project Time in their usual order, you can choose the ones that work best for you.

There is also a special "fact" section in each lesson that contains interesting information about the animal you are studying that particular week. You may use this information any time during the lesson when it seems natural to do so. For example, if you bring in pictures or models of horses for the Focus Activity on the horse lesson, you may wish to share facts about the horse as your students look at these things, while during another lesson it may be more natural to share the information as the students work on their projects.

Story Area

You will probably not have pictures of most of these animals on file or on flannelgraph. We suggest numerous resources to find illustrations, including encyclopedias, Bible dictionaries, the Internet, and picture books. In some cases you may have usable illustrations on hand; pictures of horses and chariots will be helpful with the horse lesson, for example, and the lion lesson could use flannelgraph from the story of Daniel and the Lion's Den.

You will find the Bible story written out for each lesson. These are meant to be used as a guide; feel free to add details, etc., as you adapt the story to your class.

Projects and Activities

We suggest you look ahead at the project and activity list for each lesson so you can choose what you would like to do and gather the materials ahead of time. Most of the projects and activities call for items

readily available, but in some cases you may choose one that needs special preparation. For example, you will probably need to visit the craft store for foam sheets and stick-on magnets if you wish to make the lion refrigerator magnets in Lesson 10.

Suggested Songs

The following songs will work well with some of the lessons this quarter:

The Butterfly Song (“If I were a butterfly, I’d thank you, Lord,” etc.)

Surely Goodness and Mercy (the chorus)

As the Deer

They That Wait Upon the Lord

We Trust in the Name of the Lord our God

Lion of Judah

Wonderfully Made

This is My Father’s World (#111 in *Trinity Hymnal*)

CONSIDER THE ANT

Proverbs 6:6-11; 30:25

Lesson Aim

To learn about ants and how hard they work. To honor God by doing our work for His glory.

Memory Verse

Psalms 23:1 - "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want."

Lesson Background

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men" (Colossians 3:23). The ant has always been an example of industry to mankind, and the Bible is not the only piece of ancient literature that speaks of it (remember Aesop's fable "The Ant and the Grasshopper"?). As we talk about ants this week, have your students think about their own work habits: Do they come when they are called to do their chores? Do they finish their work? Do they help clean up after play at a friend's house? Even fours and fives have work they need to do; help them to identify what it is and encourage them to do it "as working for the Lord."

If you have not read this quarter's Introduction, be sure to do so before teaching this lesson. While we still encourage you to have a Focus Activity, Story Time, and a Project Time, the lessons themselves are laid out a little differently. A whole list of suggested projects and activities will be given at the end of the lesson, and you can choose a Focus Activity and a Project from this list. Also, a list of "interesting facts" about each animal will be included in the lessons. You may choose to use these during your Focus Time or before your Bible lesson - whichever works best for you.

This quarter is a good time to use your own creativity and add a little variety to your Sunday School class. But don't forget that preschoolers also feel more secure with a regular routine. If you usually sing songs before the Bible story, for example, continue to do so. They like to know what's going to happen next in Sunday School.

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. The following list gives interesting information about ants that you may wish to use sometime during the lesson.

Facts About Ants

There are many different kinds of ants, but they are all hard workers!

Harvester Ants gather seeds directly from plants or from the ground. They collect much more than they need, and they store the extra seeds in special chambers in their nests. Then they will have seeds to eat when the weather is bad.

Gatherer Ants gather liquid, such as honey or nectar, during the rainy season, and they store it for the dry season.

Herder Ants don't have herds of cows or goats; they have herds of insects! Insects, like aphids, that live on sap can be milked by these ants for extra sugar and water.

Army Ants actually go out and look for meat! They go out as a group and hunt other insects and even animals.

Ants live together in colonies. Although they are small, they can accomplish great things by working together. Scientists know of about 9,000 different kinds of ants, and there may be even more than that!

Bible Story (from Proverbs 6:6-11 and 30:25)

We've been talking about ants this morning. Who can describe to me what an ant looks like? *(Take descriptions from your students; establish that ants are small insects with six legs and antennae.)*

Ants are not very big, are they? They are some of the smallest creatures you will ever see. But the Bible says they are very wise! In fact, they are wiser than some humans.

You see, some people are very lazy. They don't like to work. They like to sleep in late and let others worry about earning a living or feeding their family. But if you're not willing to work, then the work never gets done, does it?

But ants are not lazy. Ants are hard workers. They know that the time to gather food is in the summer, when there are lots of seeds and berries and things that can be gathered. Then they store the extra food so they will have things to eat. That's planning ahead!

God's Word says that we should be like ants in this way. We should do our work, not be lazy, and not put things off until it's too late. How about you? What kinds of things do you need to do for your family? *(Get ideas from students.)*

Are you quick to do your chores as soon as Mom or Dad calls on you for help? Or do you call back, “Just a minute!” Sometimes we say “Just a minute” and then forget to do it at all! What if Mom and Dad forgot to do their work? What if Mom forgot to go to the grocery store and get food for the family? What if Dad forgot to take care of the car, and it broke down and didn’t work?

Everyone in the family has work he or she needs to do. The Bible says, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men” (Colossians 3:23). Did you know it pleases the Lord when we do what we’re told without complaining? Let’s be like ants, and always be ready to do our best work for Him! (*Lead in prayer.*)

Suggested Activities and Projects

Choose from this list of activities and projects the things you would like to do as a class to reinforce this lesson.

- Bring an ant farm into class and watch the ants as they work. Or, if the weather is good, you could go outside to look for an anthill.
- Bring in a book about ants from the library - one with good illustrations.
- Make edible ants out of marshmallows and chow mein noodles or pretzels. The marshmallows make the 3 sections of the ant’s body, and the noodles are used for its six legs and antennae.
- Read Aesop’s Fable, “The Ant and the Grasshopper.”
- Make a list with your students of the kinds of “chores” they do. Do they clean their rooms? Help by playing with a little brother or sister? Do they help set the table, etc.?
- Have students march in line, like an army of ants. Have them work on passing an object from the front of the line to the back of the line, and then back to the front. See how fast they can do it!
- If you are artistic, you could draw silly pictures of the different kinds of ants as you talk about them. A Herder Ant could have a lasso, an Army Ant could have on combat gear, etc.

THE CHILDREN'S DOGS

Matthew 15:21-28; Proverbs 17:17 and 18:24

Lesson Aim

To consider the place that dogs have as family pets and to learn from them some of the qualities of a faithful friend.

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:2 - "He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters." (this week and next)

Lesson Background

The attitude toward dogs in Bible days was very different from the attitude we have today. "Man's best friend," as we affectionately know the dog, was considered contemptible by the Jews. In the Old Testament, dogs roamed the streets as scavengers, looking for garbage and carrion to eat. Enemies of God's people were often referred to as "dogs" - and it was not a complimentary term.

A story that comes closer to our contemporary attitude toward dogs is seen in Matthew 15:21-28. A Gentile woman comes to Jesus to beg healing for her demon-possessed daughter. Jesus presses her, saying, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs." The Greek says "the little dogs," meaning the children's pet dogs in the home. The woman is not deterred by this comment, but reminds Jesus that the little dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the table. She is not asking to take anything away from the Jewish people; she is simply asking to benefit from Christ's presence among them. Jesus is pleased with her answer and with her faith, and heals her daughter.

Dealing with this story in depth would raise issues that would be difficult for this age group to understand (Gentile/Jewish relations, demon possession), and that's not really where we want to go with this lesson. We'll spend most of our time looking at the ways dogs demonstrate faithfulness and discuss how we,

too, can be faithful friends. And we'll remind students of the most faithful friend of all - Jesus, the friend of sinners.

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. The following list gives interesting information about dogs that you may wish to use sometime during the lesson.

Facts About Dogs

Dogs come in all shapes and sizes, from the littlest Chihuahua to the larger dogs, like the Great Dane and Saint Bernard. Dogs have often been called "Man's Best Friend" because they help people in so many ways. Sometimes they are work dogs and help with farming or hunting. Perhaps they are police dogs that help solve a crime by tracking down a criminal or sniffing out hidden drugs or explosives. Some dogs are service dogs; they have been trained to lead a blind person down a busy street or fetch things for a disabled person who finds it difficult to walk.

But even dogs that don't have a special "job" still seem to become a part of the family. That's because they are such good friends to people. Dogs are always happy to see you; they forgive you when you're in a bad mood, and they try to cheer you up. Unlike some other animals, dogs like to be with humans, and they can be good company for a young child, a lonely person, or someone who is old and living alone.

It is important to remember, however, that a dog that does not know you may not be friendly. He may think he is protecting his home or his family, and if you come up to him suddenly he may try to bite. Always check with an owner first to ask before you pet a strange dog. And never run up to a growling or barking dog; that's their signal for you to stay away!

Bible Story (from Matthew 15:21-28 and Proverbs 17:17, 18:24)

We've been talking this morning about dogs and all the ways they help human beings. Sometimes they seem like one of the family, don't they? But even though we may love our pets, they aren't really family members. Dogs are animals; they aren't humans, made in the image of God. If your house were on fire, who would your parents rush to get out of the house first, you or your dog? You, of course, because you are their child! Hopefully, all the pets would get out safely, too, but your parents' first concern would be for your safety.

In Jesus' day, children would keep little dogs as pets in the house. Jesus once told a woman that it would be wrong for the parents to take the children's food and feed it to their dogs, allowing the children to go hungry. On the other hand, these little dogs could sit beneath the dinner table and eat the crumbs that fell from their masters' plates. There was a difference between dogs and children; the children needed to be taken care of first, and their pets' needs were considered after that.

But even though dogs are simply animals, and not nearly as smart as humans, there is one way in which they can teach us. Dogs are good examples of faithful friends. Proverbs 17:17 says, "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." That means a friend is always loving, and will stick by you even when there is trouble. Have you ever had someone say he was your friend one day, and then the next day he didn't want to play with you? That is not being a faithful friend. Or maybe your friend left you when

it was time to clean up after playing, or when you got in trouble for something that he did. That's not being a faithful friend, either.

Compare that kind of behavior with most dogs you know. Dogs are good companions for people because they like to be around humans. They are always happy to see you, and they forgive you when you are in a bad mood. Some dogs can even sense when a human is in trouble; there are many stories of children who get lost in the wilderness who are found and protected by a dog during a cold night.

We need to try to be faithful friends. Can you think of some ways that you could be a faithful friend to others? *(Take ideas from students: sharing toys, not fighting, taking turns, getting along with brothers and sisters are all good ideas.)* As we think about faithful friends, we need to remember who our best friend is - the Lord Jesus! Proverbs 18:24 tells us, "there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." Jesus is our faithful friend because He loves us and He is always there for us. Not only that, but He came to take the punishment for the sins of His friends. He did that by dying on a cross and then rising again on the third day. Let's thank Jesus for being our friend and ask Him to help us be better friends to one another. *(Lead in prayer.)*

Suggested Activities and Projects

- Bring in pictures of different breeds of dogs to show your students. Many encyclopedias will illustrate the many branches of the dog family; point out how much variety there is in dogs - size, hair, color, etc. If some of your students have family dogs, they can point out what breed of dog they have.
- If someone in your church uses a service dog, this would be a good week to ask him to come and speak about how the animal helps him. Your students will need to understand that service dogs are working animals, and therefore they should not attempt to play with them while they are in the classroom. (You may wish to let parents know a week ahead of time if you are going to have a live animal in class; they may wish to stay a few minutes if their child is afraid of dogs.)
- There are many coloring pages and doggie crafts on the Internet that you can use for your Sunday school class. Two sites to check out are www.freecoloringpages.com and www.makingfriends.com.
- Have students draw a picture of their best friend. On the back, help them to list at least one way that they can be a better friend to that person.

THE STRENGTH OF THE OX

Proverbs 14:4; Matthew 11:28-30

Lesson Aim

To learn about oxen and how valuable they were to farmers because of their strength and labor. To learn what a yoke is, and why Christ said His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:2 - “He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters.”

Lesson Background

There were few animals as valuable to farmers in Bible days as the ox. Even today, in many Third World countries, the ox can be seen working a farmer’s field with a plow or pulling a cart or wagon. An ox is actually a castrated bull, bred to be strong enough to pull heavy equipment over a long work day. Because of their importance on the farm, oxen were rarely butchered for meat in Bible days, although they were occasionally used for sacrifices to the Lord. One of the prophecies of judgment against the Lord’s people included this warning: “Your ox will be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will eat none of it” (Deuteronomy 28:31).

Unless you live in Amish country, your students will probably not be familiar with the use of animals with farm equipment. Nor will they be familiar with the concept of being “yoked” with a harness, which we will be discussing this week. Christ’s words about His yoke being “easy” and His burden “light” tie into our memory verse this week. Surely He is a good Shepherd who leads His people with kindness and compassion. Who would not wish to serve such a Master!

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. The following list gives interesting information about oxen that you may wish to use sometime during the lesson.

Facts About the Ox

How many of you have ever been to a farm and seen a cow? They're very big, aren't they? Well, today we're going to be talking about the ox, which is a part of the "cow" family - but oxen are much bigger and stronger than cows! Back in the old days, including Bible times, farmers didn't have tractors and big farm machines to do heavy work on the farm. So farmers used an ox to pull their plow or to pull their heavy wagons. Oxen are very strong - much stronger than most horses - and they can pull a lot of weight. They were very valuable to the farmer.

How did the farmer get the ox to pull his plow? The farmer used something called a yoke to attach the plow to the animal. The yoke was a wooden device that went around the animal's neck and shoulders. The farmer would use ropes to attach the yoke to the plow or wagon that he wanted the ox to pull. Sometimes two oxen were yoked together when there was something very heavy to pull. Once an ox was yoked, he couldn't get away from doing the farmer's work. He did what the farmer wanted him to do until he was freed from the yoke.

In Bible days the ox was an important and valuable animal. On the Sabbath day, when God's people rested and worshiped the Lord, the oxen were allowed to rest, too. They were not supposed to do work on the Sabbath. That was just one of the ways that people took care of their animals.

Bible Story (from Proverbs 14:4; Matthew 11:28-30)

What animal have we been talking about this morning? That's right, the ox! What did farmers in Bible times use oxen to do? The ox did all kinds of farm work, didn't it? It could pull plows or carts or wagons, and it could work for a long, long time because it was so strong. The ox was such a valuable animal that the writer of Proverbs, in the Bible, said, "Where there are no oxen, the manger is empty, but from the strength of an ox comes an abundant harvest" (Proverbs 14:4). A good, strong ox was needed to provide food for the farmer and his family and for the other animals. Could a farmer pull a heavy wagon? No! Could a horse? Yes, but oxen could do the heavy work better than horses. They wouldn't tire as easily.

What do we call the thing the farmers put around the neck and shoulders of the ox to attach it to the plow or wagon? We call it a yoke. Sometimes the ox was yoked to very heavy things. Maybe he had to pull a wagon filled with grain, or even with people. Could the ox get away from the wagon when he was yoked? No, he had to keep pulling, even if he was tired, until the farmer released him from the yoke.

People are not oxen, are we? Did anyone ever put a yoke on you? No, of course not. But people can get tired like oxen, can't we?

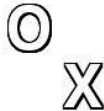
One day Jesus was teaching a large crowd of people and He felt sorry for them. They were like oxen, yoked to very heavy burdens in their lives. But these heavy things were in their hearts. Some of the people were sad because of the bad things they had done - the sins against God they had committed. These things felt heavy in their hearts and minds. Others were trying to be good enough on their own to go to heaven. But we can never be as good as God, can we, no matter how hard we try? Others were just sad and weary and tired.

Jesus wanted to free these people from the heavy things in their lives. “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest,” He said to the people. “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

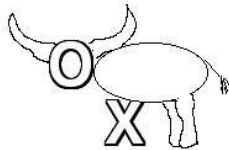
We don’t need to work to be good enough to be saved; in fact, we never can be good enough! What a heavy yoke that would be around our necks! We need to come to Jesus and trust in His work on the cross for us. Jesus offers us rest and peace - like our memory verse today. Who can remind us of our verse? That’s right: “He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters.” Jesus offers His yoke, which is easy and light. What a great Savior He is! Let’s thank Him for all He has done for His people, and for the freedom and peace He gives them. (*Lead in prayer.*)

Suggested Activities and Projects

- Bring in pictures of oxen and yokes and plows for students to look at. (If you can’t find such pictures in an encyclopedia, try illustrated Bible dictionaries or encyclopedias, which are sure to have some good ones. Try your church’s library as well.) Since this method of farming will be foreign to most of your students, you may wish to discuss what plowing is (“digging up the soil so that seeds may be planted”), along with other common farming terms. You may wish to show your students pictures of modern-day farm machinery to contrast with the farming of Bible times. (Some of your preschool boys will love these!)
- If you have access to farm equipment, bring in a yoke or harness for the students to see and touch. Point out how heavy these devices are and how difficult it would be for them to have such on their shoulders.
- Your beginning readers will enjoy this activity! Point out that the word “ox” is spelled with an “O” and an “X.” Then show them how to draw an ox using these two letters. First, hand them a piece of paper with the “O” and “X” written next to each other like this :



Then show them how to add features to the letters to make them look like an ox. (Some will want to do several versions, so have plenty of paper.)



- For more fun with “O” and “X,” you could bring in blocks or alphabet stamps and make the words “ox,” “box,” and “fox.” Or you could show how to play tic-tac-toe with “O” and “X.”
- Finally, have an “OX” snack with some breakfast cereal or other snack food that features O’s and X’s (there are several choices on the market).

SOARING LIKE EAGLES

Psalm 103:5; Isaiah 40:29-31

Lesson Aim

To see the eagle as a picture of the strength and freedom that God gives His children.

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:3 - “He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.”
(this week and next.)

Lesson Background

Since ancient times, the eagle has been a symbol both of strength and freedom. The Romans revered the bird because of its bravery, and used it as a symbol in times of war. In the United States, the eagle is our national bird, not only for its strength, but for the freedom it represents as it soars high above the clouds. No wonder the eagle has been called the “king of birds”; anyone who has seen one flying in the wild is struck by a sense of majesty.

God promises the strength of eagles to those who wait upon Him and trust Him to provide all of their needs. He will refresh those who feel too tired to carry on so that they feel instead as if they could fly! Let this be an encouragement to you as you continue to serve the Lord in your Sunday School class.

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. The following list gives interesting information about eagles that you may wish to use sometime during the lesson.

Facts About Eagles

Eagles are called “birds of prey”; that means they catch small animals, or even fish, for their food. Eagles have much better eyesight than people. Even when they are flying far above the earth, they can see a fish in the water. They can swoop down, grab the fish from the water, and fly away with it in their talons. They are very good “fishers.”

Eagles can live a long time - anywhere from twenty to fifty years. In this country, the eagle is a protected bird. It is against the law to hunt them or to bother an eagle nest.

Eagles have been called the “king of birds.” In the United States, the bald eagle is our national bird because it reminds us of strength and freedom. They are bigger than most of the other birds of America, and they are expert flyers and hunters. They really are special birds!

Bible Story (from Psalm 103:5 and Isaiah 40:29-31)

What makes you feel really tired? (*Get ideas from students.*) Sometimes we run so fast or play so hard, it seems like we can't take another step! Maybe you've been to a picnic or amusement park or some other special place where you were so tired you couldn't even walk! Mom or Dad had to carry you the rest of the way.

We all know what it's like to have a tired body. But have you ever been tired on the “inside”? Grown-ups call it being discouraged. Maybe you tried to ride a two-wheel bike, but you just kept falling down. Or maybe you tried to tie your own shoe, but you couldn't get it to work out. When we're tired on the “inside” we feel like giving up. We don't want to try any longer. Have you ever felt that way?

Sometimes God's people feel like giving up. They wonder why it takes God so long to answer their prayers. Doesn't He hear their prayers? Doesn't He care about them? But God's Word has something special to say to people who are tired on the inside. Let's read it together (*Read Isaiah 40:29-31 aloud to the students*).

What could be stronger than an eagle flying in the sky? What could be more free? God says He will never forget His people. He will answer their prayers, and He will give them new strength. Psalm 103:5 says that He will satisfy His people with good things so that their youth is renewed like the eagle's. All He asks for His people is to wait on Him and trust Him to do what He says.

Strong and free like eagles! The next time you are tired out on the inside and feeling discouraged, remember these words from the Bible. Ask God to help you be like an eagle as you wait for His help. Let's thank Him for His promise to always care for us. (*Lead in prayer.*)

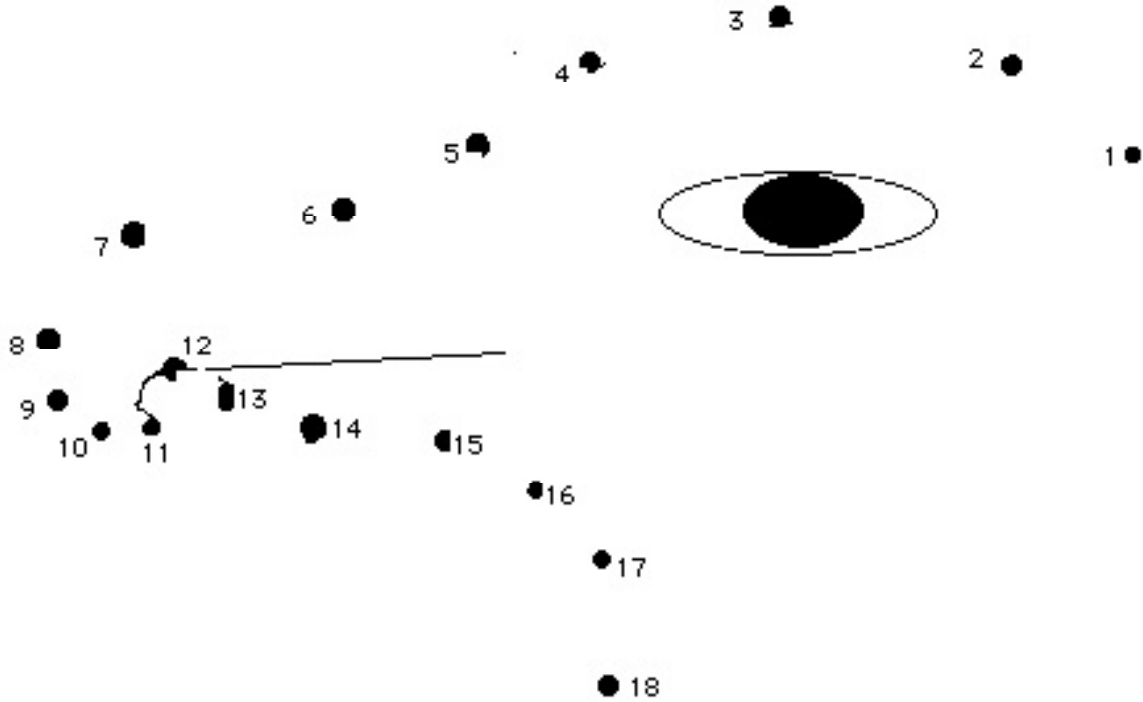
Suggested Activities and Projects

Choose from this list of activities and projects the things you would like to do as a class to reinforce this lesson.

- Make photocopies of connect-the-dots worksheet for your students (some younger ones may need this kind of puzzle explained to them).

- Bring in a book with nice illustrations of eagles from the library, or an encyclopedia that has good pictures, to show your students.
- Bring in objects with the “American eagle” on them, such as quarters and dollar bills, and discuss why the eagle is a good symbol for the U.S.A.
- Act out Isaiah 40:31 as a class. Have the students rise up from a squatting position, flap their arms like eagle wings, run in place and walk in place. Repeat the activity until everyone gets it right.
- Bring in magnifying glasses and small objects for students to look at through them. Discuss the eagle’s sharp vision. Ask how many students have flown in airplanes; what do things on the ground look like from up in the air? Talk about how good an eagle’s eye must be to see a fish or a rabbit from high in the sky.

Connect the dots, then color.



The Lord will bless us with strength and freedom if we trust and wait upon Him.

AS A HEN AND HER CHICKS

Matthew 23:37

Lesson Aim

To discuss the ways that animal mothers, especially hens, take care of their young. To show Jesus' love that brought Him to the cross, even though He was rejected by His own people.

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:3 - "He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

Lesson Background

Christ could have used any number of metaphors to describe His love and concern for the city of Jerusalem, but He chose the picture of a mother hen gathering her chicks under her wings to protect them from trouble. The chicken is one of the most mundane of domestic creatures, common on all the continents and in most of the world's cultures. Certainly Christ's hearers would have been familiar with the image; our culture is no doubt the least familiar with "chicken behavior," as many of us get our eggs and poultry from the supermarket and never actually spend time in the company of chickens!

This morning we will look at the maternal behavior of the chicken and a few other animals with which the children will be familiar. And we will discuss Christ's words as He headed for Jerusalem. He longed for its people to embrace Him as Messiah and to be embraced by Him, but He knew it was not to be. Instead, they would kill Him as they killed the other prophets God sent into their midst; in the parallel passage in Luke, Jesus says He will go to Jerusalem, "for surely no prophet can die outside of Jerusalem!" (Luke 13:33). Yet He was willing to go and die for His people because He knew that, ultimately, it was the only way He could gather us to Himself. How thankful we should be for His great love for us!

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. The following list gives interesting information about chickens that you may wish to use sometime during the lesson.

Facts About the Chicken

Did you know that chickens are birds that cannot fly? Chickens have large, fat bodies and short little wings, so they cannot fly away. Why do farmers raise chickens? Chickens are raised for food, both for meat and for the eggs they lay. Many hens can lay an egg a day.

A male chicken is called a rooster or a cock. A female chicken is called a hen. Both roosters and hens have combs on top of their heads and wattles under their beak (point this out if you have a book or illustration). But roosters have larger combs and wattles. Baby chickens are called chicks.

Farmers can give their chickens special food to eat, made out of corn and grain. But a chicken's feet are made for digging in the dirt for food. A chicken has four toes on each foot, and they can scratch to find worms, or seeds, or even bugs.

Chickens cannot fly away, and they are not good fighters. They are easy prey for animals to catch and eat. Farmers built chicken coops, not to keep the chickens in, but to keep other animals out! Wolves, foxes, and even stray dogs could rob a farmer of some of his chickens at night, so farmers often kept their chickens in a special coop surrounded by - can you guess? Chicken wire!

Bible Story (from Matthew 23:37)

We've been talking about lots of animals in Sunday School these last few weeks, but one thing we haven't mentioned is how animals take care of their babies. If your cat has ever had kittens, you know that mother cats are very protective of their babies. Sometimes they will even try to hide the kittens from their family; they will pick up their babies one by one by the scruff of the neck and carry them to a secluded place. It can be difficult keeping track of a mother cat and her kittens! Mother dogs, too, are protective of their puppies, as are many wild animals.

And mother hens are no different. Chickens cannot fly, and they are not good fighters, so what can a mother hen do when she sees her chicks are in danger? Perhaps there is a storm approaching, or perhaps the hen sees the shadow of a hawk as it flies overhead. The hen calls to her little chicks, and they all come running to her. Then the hen gathers her chicks under her wings and hides them until the danger is past. The chicks must feel very safe and protected under the mother hen's wings.

That picture of a mother hen protecting her chicks under her wings was something that Jesus was thinking about when He went to Jerusalem for the last time. Jesus was very sad; He loved the people of His nation, the Jewish people. He had been sent by God to be their Savior. But the people did not believe He was the Son of God. The Jewish leaders hated Him because He told the truth to the people. While some believed in Jesus because of His great miracles, most of the people did not receive Him as their Savior. And the Jewish leaders were looking for ways to have Him killed!

Jesus knew there was danger ahead for the people of Jerusalem; He knew that the Roman army would one day soon destroy the city and many would lose their lives. If only the people would listen to His words and accept Him as God's Son!

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!” He cried one day. “You who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.” The people of Jerusalem would not listen to Jesus; they would not come when He called to them. Instead of being able to embrace the Jewish people, Jesus knew what was going to happen. He knew the people would reject Him as Savior. He knew the Jewish leaders would have Him arrested, and that He would be crucified on a cross! Jesus knew all this, but He went to Jerusalem anyway.

Why did He go to Jerusalem? Why did He die on the cross? He died for the sins of His people, didn't He, so that we can be in heaven with Him someday. That's the great love He has for His people - much greater than the love even of a mother for her child! Will you come to Jesus when He calls to you? He only longs to take you under His wing and save you. Let's pray right now that God will help you to hear His voice, and obey Him when He calls to you. (*Lead in prayer.*)

Suggested Activities and Projects

- Bring in pictures of hens, roosters and chicks for your students. If you have Internet access, you may wish to obtain free coloring pages for your students. These are available on many sites: www.enchantedlearning.com has a labeled picture of a rooster they could color. Another source to look at is www.freecoloringpages.com, which will link you to “barnyard buddies.” You may also find sources of your own; many farm organizations and state agricultural departments have a children's page with coloring and other activities.
- Your local library will have a number of books written especially for preschoolers about chickens and eggs. Two to look for: *The Egg Story*, by Anca Hariton, has lovely illustrations of farmyard chickens and the development of an egg to a chick. Also, *The Chicken or The Egg?* by Allan Fowler has photographs of chickens and poultry farming (there is a very mild allusion to evolution at the beginning that you may wish to skip).
- Many Easter crafts involving chicks would be fun to do with this lesson. Why not make some yellow chicks for your students to take home? Use two yellow cotton balls - one for the head, and one for the body. Glue the cotton balls together. Scraps of orange construction paper can be used for feet and beaks. Eyes can also be made of construction paper, or you can glue “wobbly” eyes on the chicks (available in craft stores). You can find other Easter crafts on the Internet (try www.makingfriends.com) or at your local craft store.
- As a class, act out the various things that chickens do. You can have them cockle-doodle-doo like a rooster (loudly!), cluck like a hen (normal voice), and peep like a chick (softly). They can pretend to scratch in the barnyard looking for worms and seeds. Or have your students be chicks while you are the mother hen. Have them peep around the barnyard until they hear you clucking, and then have them come running to you.

THE MIGRATING BIRDS

Jeremiah 8:7; Romans 1:21

Lesson Aim

To marvel at the miraculous way God equips birds with the inner knowledge to migrate and to realize He gives Man an inner conscience to know Him.

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:4a - “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.” (this week and next)

Lesson Background

The people of Bible times observed the world around them, and were aware that birds such as storks and thrushes migrated from season to season. They marveled at the migration, even with their limited knowledge of the process. Modern-day scientists have studied the migration of birds and have found many more reasons to marvel. They believe that the birds use the sun by day and the stars by night to navigate. They even think the birds look for landmarks and use the earth’s magnetic fields to return to the same nesting area year after year. (Some of us have trouble remembering where we parked at the mall!)

Even with all their research, there are many things about bird migration that scientists don’t understand and cannot explain. As Christians, we can explain that God has given birds an inner knowledge of what to do and when to do it. Sadly, many scientists look to the theory of evolution to explain migration, and by so doing they ignore another “inner knowledge” that God has given - the knowledge that He exists, written in every human heart. This knowledge should cause man to fly home to his Creator, but sin and pride have silenced the consciences of many. Let us pray that this is never the case for our students, but that they will always be sensitive to the voice of the Lord.

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. The following list gives interesting information about migrating birds that you may wish to use sometime during the lesson.

Facts About Migration

Do you know where birds go in the wintertime? Some birds, like cardinals and blue jays, stay where they live all year long. But many birds don't like the cold weather; it's too cold for them, and it's hard to find food when it snows. When it starts to get cooler outside, they take a long journey to where it is always warm - like Florida or Mexico. We call that journey "migration."

Before the birds migrate, they eat more food so they have energy for the journey. Some birds, such as geese, begin to gather or "flock" with other birds for the long journey to warm weather. But some birds - like the littlest bird of all, the hummingbird - make the journey all by themselves. Some fly by day, some fly at night. In the spring, when the time is right, the birds fly back north to return to the same nesting grounds. Perhaps you have heard people talk about looking for the first robin of spring? We know that spring is near when we see robins, because they've returned from the south to make their nests and lay their eggs.

Bible Story (from Jeremiah 8:7 and Romans 1:21)

We've been talking about birds this morning, and about migration. Who can tell me what migration is? (Get ideas from students.) Yes, migration is the long trip that birds make when it starts to get cold. The birds leave their nesting grounds and fly to a place that is warmer. But how do they know which way to fly? How do they know when it's time for them to fly south for the winter? Why don't they get lost? I'm sure I couldn't find my way to Florida or Mexico without a map. How are they able to do so?

The fact is, we don't really know how birds are able to migrate. We just know that God has put the law of migration in the minds of birds. The birds know when to fly and where to fly by "instinct." That instinct was put there by God, so that the birds would be able to travel to warmer places. If they stayed where it was cold, they would have a difficult time finding food. Many of them would die.

Do people migrate like the birds? No, when people travel we use maps or compasses, or perhaps we ask for directions from someone who has already been where we are planning to go. But even though we don't migrate, the Bible tells us that God has written a law in our hearts, too. Every person who is born has a law written in his heart that tells him about God. It tells him God exists. Sometimes we call that law a "conscience." But many people do not want to worship God. They don't want to obey His laws or serve Him. Most of all, they do not want to admit that they are sinners who need a Savior. So they silence God's law in their hearts and say there is no God. They disobey Him and fall farther and farther into sin.

What would happen to the birds if they refused to obey the law of migration? What if they stayed in the north during the long, cold winters? Many of them would die, wouldn't they? It's too bad that people can't learn from the birds that obedience leads to life. "Even the stork in the sky knows her appointed seasons, and the dove, the swift and the thrush observe the time of their migration," the Lord says in His Word, "but my people do not know the requirements [*the laws*] of the Lord." Let's not be people like that. Let's always be glad to worship God and live as He would want us to live. Let's ask Him for help right now to do that. (*Lead in prayer.*)

Suggested Activities and Projects

- Bring a bird book or pictures from bird magazines and show what some of the birds common to your area look like. Students will be able to appreciate the birds with bright colors, like cardinals and blue jays.
- Bring a map or a globe to show the migration path that birds in your area generally take. Preschoolers appreciate distances best if you can talk to them in terms they understand. “It would take us two long days in the car to drive as far as these birds fly,” for example.
- Make bird feeders for the students to take home and place in a tree. These should be very simple: a pinecone spread with peanut butter and rolled in bird seed is fun to make. Simply tie some yarn around the cone so it can be hung in a tree.
- There are many places on the Internet that provide free coloring sheets of birds or of springtime pictures (one place to check out is www.childfun.com). You could print some of these out for your students to color.

THE VENOM OF THE SNAKE

Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 58:3-5

Lesson Aim

To relate the story of Numbers 21 and to show how wicked speech (such as the Israelites' blasphemy against God) is like the poisonous venom of snakes.

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:4a - "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me."

Lesson Background

The Lord used many means to discipline the children of Israel during their years of wandering in the wilderness, but in the incident related in Numbers 21, He sent venomous snakes among the people that bit and killed many of them. Could it be that the punishment was a mirror of their sin, which was primarily one of blasphemy and evil speaking? Psalm 58:3-4 tells us that the wicked "are wayward and speak lies. Their venom is like the venom of the snake." James also reminds us that the tongue is "a restless evil, full of deadly poison" (James 3:8). The Israelites' poisonous talk was met with poisonous snakes, and the result was disastrous. Thankfully, God in His mercy provided relief and recovery for those who would look by faith at the bronze snake on the pole - a picture of our Savior and the provision He would make for our sin by His death on the cross (John 3:14-15).

We will look at the story of Israel's sin of speaking against the Lord and against Moses, the resulting punishment, and the cure. We will then encourage our students to think about the different ways they can use their tongues. When are their tongues used for good? When is their speech poisonous? Let's encourage our students to think before they speak to make certain their tongues are not "snake-like."

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. The following list gives interesting information about snakes that you may wish to use sometime during the lesson.

Facts About Snakes

What kinds of things do you think about when I say the word “snake”? Many people think that snakes are slimy and slippery, but their skin usually feels dry and smooth to the touch. Snakes are reptiles, like lizards. Most snakes are not poisonous, but some snakes have enough poison to kill an animal as large as an elephant! Others have just enough poison to kill an animal the size of a small lizard.

All snakes are meat-eaters. One kind of non-poisonous snake you may have seen is called a garter snake. Garter snakes eat insects and some small animals like mice and frogs. We also have some poisonous snakes in North America, such as rattlers and cottonmouths.

One interesting snake is called the python. It is not poisonous, but it is still deadly. The python wraps itself around other animals and then begins to squeeze. Each time the animal takes a breath, the python tightens its grip until it has squeezed the animal to death! But pythons don’t live in North America where we live. They can be found in other places in the world.

Bible Story (from Numbers 21:4-9 and Psalm 58:3-5)

We’ve been talking about snakes this morning. Who can tell me what a snake’s tongue looks like? It is long, and then forked into two pieces at the end, isn’t it? Now, our tongues don’t look like that, do they? But did you know that the Bible says our tongues can be poisonous, like a snake’s? It happens when we say bad things with our tongues and sin against God.

The Bible tells a story about a time when God’s people sinned against Him with the things they were saying. This happened when Moses was the leader of God’s people and they were traveling through the wilderness. The wilderness was a very difficult place to travel; it was like a desert, with little food or water. But the Lord provided for the needs of His people. He made certain they had water when they needed it. And He gave them food in a miraculous way; every morning, a special bread called manna appeared on the ground for God’s people to gather and eat for the day. There was always enough food for every man, woman, boy and girl in Israel.

But the way through the wilderness was still difficult, and during one especially rough journey the people began to complain. They complained against Moses, and they complained against the Lord. They began to wish that they were back in Egypt - even though they had been slaves in that land! They forgot about the way God had used Moses to lead them out of Egypt and all the special ways that God was caring for them.

“Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert?” They said to Moses. “There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!” The people were even complaining about the manna God sent them every day. They were no longer grateful for it.

The Lord was displeased with His people for the things they were saying. He sent venomous (that means poisonous) snakes among the people. Some of the people were bitten by the snakes and they died.

Suddenly, the Israelites realized that they had been sinning in the things they were saying about the Lord and about Moses. They repented of their sin and asked Moses to pray for them.

The Lord told Moses to make a bronze snake and put it on a pole. Whoever was bitten by a snake could look on the bronze snake, and then he would not die. Moses took the bronze snake throughout the camp, and those who looked on the snake survived. The people were taught a lesson about complaining against the Lord.

In Psalm 58, David writes about wicked men and the things they say with their tongues. “They are wayward, and speak lies,” he writes. “Their venom is like the venom of a snake, like that of a cobra.” Just like the Israelites in our story today, we need to be careful about the things we say. Our tongues have the power to hurt people. What are some things we can say that can hurt others? (*Take ideas from students; cover areas such as lying, calling others names, complaining and whining, using naughty words, and making fun of others.*)

We don’t want to be like the poisonous snakes in our story today, do we? We need to watch the things we say with our tongues. We need to be careful to speak the truth. We shouldn’t call people names or make fun of them. Let’s ask Jesus to help us use our tongues to say good things to others and to help us watch the things we say with our tongues. (*Lead in prayer.*)

Suggested Projects and Activities

- Bring in pictures or books with illustrations of different kinds of snakes. Many encyclopedias will have pictures of various kinds under the “snake” heading (some of your little boys will really like this).
- Make a list of “good ways” we can use our tongues and “bad ways” we can use them. (Bad ways are listed in the lesson; good ways would include compliments, saying please and thank you, praising God, etc.) If you can make simple pictures beside each idea, it will help your students read the list with you.
- Make “accordion” snakes for students to take home. Cut out long snakes from construction paper, and have the students fold the body “accordion” style, so that the snake is three-dimensional. You can draw snake eyes and glue forked tongues on the snake’s face.
- Make snake “sock puppets” for students to take home. This is a good use for socks that have lost a mate! Students can cut out felt tongues and eyes (or use store-bought “wobbly eyes”), and then glue them onto the toe part of the sock. When the sock is worn on the hand, it becomes a snake. They will have fun with this one!

LIKE A DEER

Habakkuk 3:16-19

Lesson Aim

To see the deer as a picture of confidence and security in the Lord.

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:4b - “Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

Lesson Background

The time of judgment was near at hand for Judah, and Habakkuk knew that invasion and captivity at the hands of the Babylonians were ahead for God’s people. The book of Habakkuk records the prophet’s struggle as he speaks to God about the injustice in the land and the coming judgment. The news is only bad, but Habakkuk rests in his knowledge of God’s sovereignty, even in this. The third chapter of Habakkuk is a beautiful prayer of trust in God, and it concludes with the words, “The Sovereign Lord is my strength; He makes my feet like the feet of a deer, He enables me to go on the heights.” Like the sure-footed deer, Habakkuk was certain that God would keep Him from stumbling and bring him to a place of praise and worship.

Deer have no natural protection except their swiftness and their surefootedness. But while other creatures falter and fall on the mountainside, the deer of Palestine is a picture of grace and confidence. Like Habakkuk, we too can be confident that our God will get us through all of our trials and bring us to “the heights” of knowing and loving Him. Let’s try to convey that picture to our students this week.

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. The following list gives interesting information about deer that you may wish to use sometime during the lesson.

Facts About Deer

Have you ever seen a deer? Sometimes we can see them in our yard, or in the woods, or perhaps in a farmer's field. Or maybe you have seen one in a zoo. We have lots of deer in the United States, but there are deer in many other places of the world as well. There were deer in Bible times, and although they were a bit different from our deer, they were very much the same. What color are deer? They are brown, aren't they? This makes it hard for their enemies to see them, because they blend into the trees and the leaves. Baby deer are called fawns; they have spots when they are young, which make them even harder to see in the woods. Female deer are called does. Male deer are called bucks. Bucks grow antlers, and every year the old antlers drop off and new ones grow. The antlers get bigger every year, with more points on them. So a "ten-point" buck is older than a "four-point" buck.

Deer eat many different foods - grasses, twigs, leaves, nuts, fruits and vegetables, and roots. In North America, deer usually live in wooded areas near fields. In Bible lands, the deer would often live in the hills or in mountainous areas. Their hooves make it easy for deer to climb the rocky hills, much like the mountain goats you may have seen. They don't worry about falling off a mountain like you or I might do!

Bible Story (from Habakkuk 3:16-19)

What animal have we been talking about this morning? Deer! Here is a question for you: Do deer have enemies? Yes, they do, don't they? In Bible lands there are many creatures who would like to catch a deer so they could eat it. Lions, leopards, foxes, jackals, and wolves are all animals that hunt deer. Can you think of anyone else who hunts deer? Yes, even man hunts deer, for food and for its buckskin hide.

How can a deer protect itself from its enemies? Does it have sharp teeth or long claws to fight with? No, that's not how God made deer. But God did give the deer very swift legs so it could outrun its enemies. Deer run very fast, don't they? And God gave the deer its sure-footed hooves so it could climb the mountains quickly to get away from those who are chasing it. The deer's hooves can take it to the mountain heights, where few creatures can follow.

Do people have enemies? Of course. In Bible times, a man named Habakkuk was a prophet of the Lord. He lived in very evil days, when most of God's people were no longer worshiping the Lord. They were dishonest and constantly fighting with one another. They did not follow God's law. The Lord told Habakkuk that He was going to punish His people by allowing their enemies to attack and conquer them.

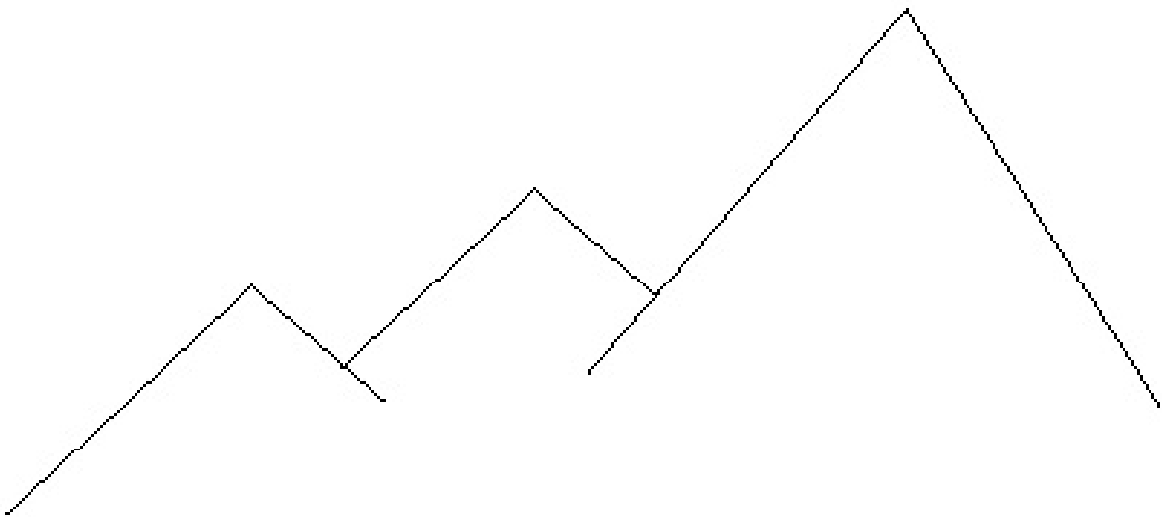
Habakkuk knew that bad days were ahead for God's people. Their enemies were the Babylonians, and they were cruel and evil. But Habakkuk also knew that He could trust in God. It didn't matter how bad things would get. Habakkuk said that even if there were no figs or grapes or crops for the people to eat, and no cattle or sheep on the farms, he would still trust God to take care of him and rejoice in the Lord. "The Sovereign Lord is my strength," Habakkuk said. "He makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights."

Can we trust God, too, to always take care of us in bad times? Will He protect us from our enemies? We know from our memory verse this quarter that God watches over us like a shepherd. If we follow His ways, He will keep us from stumbling. He will “guide us in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.” Let’s pray and ask the Lord to help us always to trust in Him. (*Lead in prayer.*)

Suggested Activities and Projects

- Make photocopies of the worksheet for your students and help them to fill in the missing words.
- Bring in a set of deer antlers for the students to see and touch. [Note: If you bring in an entire mounted deer head, be aware that some students may be fearful or reluctant to touch it. Encourage them that the deer is no longer alive, and cannot hurt them or be hurt by them.]
- Bring in a book or encyclopedia with nice illustrations of deer. An illustrated Bible handbook or dictionary might also have some pictures of deer in Palestine.
- Have students make deer “antlers” to wear on their heads. They can do this by tracing their hands twice on brown paper and then cutting them out. These hand prints can be taped to a brown band and fitted around the student’s head for an “antler” look.
- Students may enjoy singing a chorus such as “As the Deer” if that is one your church sings regularly.

Draw a picture of a deer climbing on the rocky mountain.



Habakkuk was afraid of God’s enemies, but he knew God would take care of his own.

He said God “makes my feet like the feet of a _____.” God will watch over

us if we trust in Him. He will keep us from stumbling if we walk in His ways.

TRUSTING IN HORSES

Isaiah 31:1-3; Psalm 20:7

Lesson Aim

To learn about the horse and its importance in warfare during Bible times. To realize that our faith and trust must not be in our own abilities, but in God alone.

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:5a - "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies..."

Lesson Background

When we consider the role of horses in history, it is likely that we think of them mainly as a form of transportation. But in the days of the Bible, when people wanted to get around from place to place they usually rode a donkey, or perhaps a camel. Horses were owned only by the very rich, and most of the nation of Israel's horses were owned by the kings of Israel for purposes of warfare. Mounted soldiers and chariots pulled by horses gave an army the advantage over soldiers on foot. The speed and strength of the horse were much desired on the battlefield.

Egypt was a major source for horses in the ancient world, and the Israelites were warned not to become too dependent on horses, lest it forge new bonds between them and their old enemy (Deuteronomy 17:16). Despite this warning, Solomon was the first Israelite king to build up an impressive stable of war horses and kept 12,000 in his stalls to pull his chariots (II Chronicles 9:25). And King Ahab placed so much value on his horses that he himself joined the search for grass for them when famine ravaged the land (I Kings 18:5-6). Unfortunately, the Israelites began to trust in their horses and chariots and the strength of their army instead of their God. This is what Isaiah warns of in chapter 31.

We may not think we are likely to have a similar problem, but it is very easy to find other things in which to trust! As a nation, do we trust in God or in our superior weapons and military? As individuals, do

we put our future in God's hands, or do we worry constantly about our investments and 401-k plans? And how much do we trust in our own ability and intelligence to make our way in this world?

Being prepared and ready for what may come is not a bad thing, but ultimately we know that we have little control over the things that happen in this world. How good to know the One who is in control of all things and works them out to accomplish His purposes! Let us point our students to trust and put their faith in Him.

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. The following list gives interesting information about horses that you may wish to use sometime during the lesson.

Facts About the Horse

Have any of you ever ridden on a horse? Back before the car was invented, that's how many people traveled long distances; they rode on a horse, or they hitched a horse up to a carriage or a wagon to pull them somewhere. Horses were used for riding, for racing, for pulling plows, and for warfare. In our country, we don't usually use horses for farm work or to take us from place to place. But many people still keep horses because they like them. Horses are beautiful, and they are fun to ride!

Male horses are called stallions and female horses are called mares. A young horse is called a colt. Horses can come in many different colors, shapes and sizes. Some horses, like the Arabian, are raised to be fast runners. Some horses, like the Clydesdale, are strong workhorses that can pull a heavy load. Almost all horses are known for their beautiful manes and tails. Perhaps you have seen a horse with its mane and tail braided and decorated for a special show. At shows, horses and their riders perform in different ways to show how the horse has been trained. Some horses can jump, while others have learned special movements. Some horses are trained to race. The horse is truly an amazing animal!

Bible Story (from Isaiah 31:1-3 and Psalm 20:7)

We've been talking about the horse this morning. Who can tell me some of the things that people have used horses for? (*Take answers from students.*) Farming, racing, riding, pulling wagons - horses have done all those things for people, haven't they? But in Bible times, other animals were used for farm work, and people rode donkeys from place to place, not horses. But horses were very important to people in Bible times, especially to kings! That's because the horse was fast and strong, and a powerful army needed lots of horses. Horses could pull chariots into battle. And soldiers on a horse could go faster than soldiers on foot. Also, a soldier on horseback sat up higher than one on foot. It would be harder to reach him with a weapon, but it would be easier for him to strike down his enemies from above the battle.

Horses were expensive in Bible times - much too expensive for regular people to own. But kings tried to get as many horses as they could find. King Solomon was very rich, and one of the things he did was to buy horses from Egypt and from other countries to make his army strong. He had 12,000 horses for his soldiers and his chariots!

Having a strong army with lots of horses seems like it would be a good thing. But do you know what happened? The people of Israel forgot that the Lord God was their strength and protector. They began to

trust in their horses and their chariots instead of in God. “No army would dare attack us,” they thought, “because our horses and chariots will strike them down!” But it wasn’t their army that kept the Israelites safe. It was the fact that God loved them and had chosen them to be His special people.

The prophet Isaiah knew this, and he warned the people about trusting in horses instead of God (read Isaiah 31:1 aloud to students). Isaiah goes on to say in verse 3 that “horses are flesh and not spirit.” You can hit a horse with a spear and kill it, can’t you? And if another army has more horses and more chariots and more soldiers than your army, then it will take more than just an army to win the battle.

God had shown the people of Israel again and again that He was their Defender. Remember the story of Gideon? Gideon had just 300 men, and the Midianites had thousands and thousands of soldiers. But who won the battle? Gideon won because the Lord was with him! This was something that King David understood. He taught his army and his people to look to the Lord for victory in battle. “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses,” he told them, “but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.”

What do you trust in? Some people don’t think they need any help, that they can get by in life because they are smart enough, or strong enough, or brave enough to handle any problems. But there are times when we all get scared. Where do we go when we are frightened? Let’s be like David, and trust in the Lord our God to take care of us and keep us safe. (*Lead in prayer.*)

Suggested Projects and Activities

- Bring in pictures of horses to show to your students. Many encyclopedias will have illustrations of many different breeds of horses, from race horses to work horses. Also, you may want to include pictures of donkeys and zebras for comparison purposes.
- If you have an illustration of a chariot on file, bring that in so students can see what they looked like. Explain that chariots were often pulled by two strong horses and held two men, a driver and an archer. This freed the archer to use both of his hands. It also enabled an archer to pursue one particular enemy until he overtook him. (This almost cost good King Jehoshaphat his life; you can read about it in II Chronicles 18:29-34.)

- Make a “torn paper” picture of a horse. Before class, tear brown paper into pieces of different lengths and widths (no piece more than an inch wide.)



Students may then use the torn pieces to construct a horse. If you have yarn, they could attach some for the mane and the tail.



- For a large motor activity, have students stand in place and pretend to be horses. Have them start with a walk, then move to a trot, then into a full gallop. (Make certain that the students know they are not to run during this activity, but must stay in place, so they won't run into other students.) If you have just a few students, you may wish to play a game of “Follow the Leader” as horses.

LITTLE THINGS - THE HYRAX, LOCUST AND LIZARD

Proverbs 30: 24-28

Lesson Aim

To see that even little creatures can accomplish great things, both in the natural world and in the spiritual world.

Memory Verse

Psalms 23:5b - "You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows."

Lesson Background

The Scottish theologian George Lawson writes this about Proverbs 30:24-28: "God is to be admired in the leviathan and the behemoth, and he is no less to be admired in the ant and the locust. The formation of these little creatures, and the instincts which God has given them, appear surprising to the wisest of men. They are not furnished with the noble gift of reason, and yet they have a degree of wisdom which may raise a blush in the cheeks of many who boast of the dignity of their rank in the scale of creatures" (from *Commentary on Proverbs*, Kregel Publication, 1980).

In I Corinthians 1:27-29 we read, "But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things - and the things that are not - to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him." We see this throughout the Bible, from young David's victory over Goliath to Christ's triumph over the disgrace of the cross. What an encouragement to us and to our students, who are among the "little things" of this world!

[Note: you may notice some differences between your translation and the little creatures we discuss in this lesson - most notably the lizard in verse 28, which some translate as "spider." We are using *lizard*,

but both lizards and spiders can be found in king's palaces, so the main point will not be lost regardless of the translation you use. "Coneys" are actually rock badgers, or hyrax; use the term with which you feel the most comfortable.]

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. You may wish to share the following facts with your students sometime during the lesson.

Little Things

Hyrax (coney or rock badgers): The hyrax are small animals, about the size of a rabbit or a prairie dog. They are very shy. They live together in colonies, like prairie dogs, but they make their homes in rocky places. Hyrax have ears like a squirrel, but no tails. They are very cute.

Locusts: These are small insects and look like crickets or grasshoppers. Although small, the locust can cause great damage to a farmer's crop because they travel together in great swarms. When flying together, they can appear as a dark, black cloud. A swarm of locusts, with millions of the insects, can descend on a farmer's field and eat every green thing in sight. The Bible compares them to a mighty, terrible army that sweeps in to destroy.

Lizards: These little reptiles can be found nearly everywhere in the world (except the polar regions), but they are especially plentiful in tropical regions. Most lizards are small; they eat insects by catching them with their long tongues. In warm climates, lizards can be found everywhere - in trees, in grass, along the ground, and often in people's homes. In places like the Fiji Islands, a lizard in the house is not considered a problem; in fact, they can help by eating insects that are pests to humans!

Bible Story (from Proverbs 30:24-28)

Many people think you need to look at something big in order to see God's wisdom and power in the world. They talk about visiting the ocean, or the Grand Canyon, or perhaps Niagara Falls. And those are great places to see God's handiwork. But we can also see God's greatness in the little things that He has made. Let's read together some verses from Proverbs 30 about little things (read verses 24-28 aloud).

One of these little creatures we've already talked about in Sunday School; do you remember which one? Yes, the ant, which stores up its food in the summer. Ants are hard workers, aren't they? But let's talk about these other little things. The "coney" are what we call hyrax, or rock badgers. They aren't very strong, but somehow they can make their homes in the rocky crags. That would be hard for a big creature to do, wouldn't it? Locusts are insects, and you can squash an insect just by swatting it or stepping on it. But when the locusts all get together in a swarm, then there are too many to squash! They can destroy an entire countryside, like an enemy invasion. Farmers fear the locust for that reason. And lizards are little, but they can be found everywhere - even in a king's palace! Someone would notice a bigger creature, but the lizard is little and quick.

The truth is, size doesn't matter in God's kingdom. God has designed each creature to accomplish His will in the world. He designed giraffes to have long, long necks, so they can reach the leaves from the

tops of trees. He created whales as mammals that live in the water. And He created all of the little bugs and creeping things that live in the world as well. Each has a job to do, a part to play in God's kingdom.

That's true of people, too. God calls children to serve Him as well as adults. Think about Samuel, who served in God's Temple as a boy, and King Josiah, who was only eight when he was crowned. And God calls on the weak and small to defeat the big and powerful - like David, who defeated the giant, Goliath.

God doesn't care how old you are or how big you are. He just wants a willing heart; someone who loves Him and wants to serve Him in any way God chooses. That's the kind of heart we need to have, isn't it? Let's pray and ask God to give us willing hearts to serve Him forever with our lives. (*Lead in prayer.*)

Suggested Projects and Activities

- Bring in pictures of coneys, locusts and lizards to show your students. For a picture of a coney, you will probably need a Bible encyclopedia or dictionary; check your church library.
- Do some "big" and "little" activities. You could bring an assortment of items of different sizes and have the students tell you which ones are "big" and which are "small." Or you could draw a line down the middle of a large sheet of paper (or a chalkboard) and write "Big" on one side and "Little" on the other. Have students suggest names of animals to write on the "big" side, and then some to write on the "little" side. (This activity would be especially helpful if you have young fours, to make certain they understand the difference between the two terms.)
- You could pantomime different animals as a class; start with big animals, like elephants, rhinos, and giraffes, and then act like some smaller animals, such as rabbits, mice, and bugs.
- Your class might enjoy listening to the Veggie Tales song "Big Things Too" from *Dave and the Giant Pickle*. Explain that this song is based on the battle between David and Goliath.
- Share a picture book about a young person whom God has used to do big things. This could be a Bible story, such as David and Goliath, or one about King Josiah, or the little servant girl who helped Naaman the leper. For a modern story, you could check out *The Story of Ruby Bridges* by Robert Coles. Ruby, a first grader in New Orleans in the days of segregation, not only endured the taunts and threats of the crowds as she attended a white public school; she also prayed daily for them, asking God to forgive them for the bad things they were saying. Coles' book emphasizes Ruby's faith and the faith of her family during this time.
- Have students make pictures of "little things" with their thumb prints. Using an ink pad, have each student make three or four thumb prints on a piece of paper. Then (after washing their hands!) have them add details to the thumb prints to look like bugs, birds, rodents, or whatever they choose. (Make a sample project to illustrate the idea.)

THE LION OF JUDAH

Proverbs 19:12; Revelation 5:5

Lesson Aim

To see the lion as the “king of the beasts” and to discuss why Jesus is called the “Lion of Judah.”

Memory Verse

Psalms 23:6a - “Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life ...”

Lesson Background

Christ is portrayed both as the Lamb of God and the Lion of Judah in Scripture. As the Lamb of God, He is the perfect sacrifice to appease the wrath of God and take away our sins. But as the Lion of Judah, He is the returning, victorious King who shall reign forever and ever. Both pictures are seen in John’s vision in the fifth chapter of Revelation. “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?” the angel cries out in God’s throne room, and no one is found worthy of the task. As John weeps, one of the elders comforts him, saying, “See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.”

But when John turns to look, he sees, not a lion, but a lamb, “looking as if it had been slain.” Jesus is both simultaneously - our mighty king and our sacrifice for sins. And yet, for those outside of Christ, He will only be the avenging Lion prophesied in Genesis 49:9-12, the lion “returned from the prey.”

C.S. Lewis understood this imagery, and his Christ-figure in the *Chronicles of Narnia* is Aslan, the great lion, who is both loving and fearsome. We hope to give our students an understanding of Christ’s power, majesty and kingship as we discuss lions, and the Lion of Judah.

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. You may wish to share the following facts about lions with your students during the course of the lesson.

Facts About Lions

Have you ever seen a lion in a zoo? Were you allowed to pet the lion? Why not? Lions are very dangerous animals, aren't they? They have sharp teeth and claws, and they are great hunters. A male lion can weigh more than 500 pounds! That's why they are kept far away from humans, even in zoos; they are usually behind bars or very thick glass, or perhaps in a deep pit from which they cannot escape.

Lions live in the wild in Africa and India today, although there used to be lions in Israel back in the days of Samson and David. Male lions have manes, or hair around their faces and necks. Female lions, or lionesses, never have manes. A lion's roar can be heard even if you are five miles away! [Note: Lions also live in North America; they are called mountain lions, cougars, or pumas and are different from the kinds of lions that live in Africa.]

When lions live together in the wild, they are called a "pride." The lionesses do most of the hunting for the pride. Lions are "carnivores," or meat-eaters; they hunt animals like zebras, antelopes, and giraffes in the wild. A lion can run very fast - almost 40 miles an hour - but only for short distances. And most of the time, lions aren't hunting or following their prey. In fact, they usually spend about 20 hours a day just lying around. That's more than twice as much rest as people get each day!

Bible Story (from Proverbs 19:12 and Revelation 5:5)

What animal is known as "the king of the beasts"? The lion! Why do you think he is called the king? (*Get ideas from students.*) The lion is a beautiful animal and looks very king-like. But I think the reason he is called the king of the beasts is because he is so powerful. You don't argue with a lion, do you? No - you try to stay out of his way! A lion could cut a human to shreds with its teeth and claws. He is strong and muscular, and he can be swift when he wants to be. You don't want to make a lion angry with you!

King Solomon was thinking about that when he wrote one of the Proverbs. As the king of Israel, it was his job to punish evildoers and to reward those who did good things, or those who were faithful servants of the king. In Proverbs 19:12 he writes, "A king's rage is like the roar of a lion, but his favor is like dew on the grass."

When would a king be angry with someone? When he broke one of his laws. King Solomon is saying to lawbreakers, "Watch out!" The king will come at you like an angry lion, and you will be sorry for the bad things you did. On the other hand, Solomon says that those who please the king will get his favor, which is cool and pleasant like the dew on the grass. Just like the lion, you don't want to make a king angry with you!

King Solomon was just an earthly king, but did you know that Jesus is called "the Lion of Judah"? Jesus is a lion? When Jesus came to live on earth, He didn't act like a lion, did He? He didn't demand to be treated like a king; He was an obedient servant of God, helping the people, washing the disciples' feet, even dying on the cross for the sins of His people.

But Jesus is coming back someday. And when He returns, it will be as King of all the earth - the Lion of Judah! Every knee will bow to Him and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. For His children, that will be the happiest day of all - when Jesus returns as King. But for the wicked, that day will be the worst in history. They will be judged by the Lord and punished for their wicked deeds. Like an angry lion, the Lord's wrath will be swift and terrible.

We need to worship Jesus as our Lord and King even now, before He returns to the earth. Let's pray right now and thank Him for being the "Lion of Judah," our great king! (*Lead in prayer.*)

Suggested Projects and Activities

- Bring in pictures of lions and their prides to show to your students. These may be from an encyclopedia, picture books, or from the Internet. You may wish to show illustrations of lions from Bible stories, such as Daniel in the lions' den or Samson killing the lion with his bare hands (discussed in the first quarter of this material).
- If you have time, you may wish to share a Bible picture book with your students that deals with Daniel in the lions' den. Check your church or local library for a version that's easy for preschoolers to understand.
- Have your students imitate the sounds made by the animals we are studying this quarter. Students can bark like dogs, cluck and crow like chickens, shriek like eagles, hiss like snakes, whinny like horses, and roar like lions. (Include some quiet noises as well, like the soft "cheep, cheep" of baby chicks or quiet flapping of wings.)

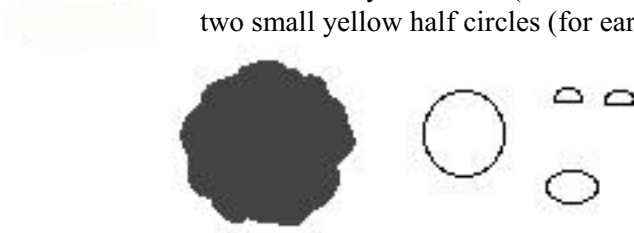
- Make lion refrigerator magnets with your students. Using yellow and brown craft foam sheets (the kind that are easily cut by scissors), cut out the following shapes:

large brown circle with wavy borders (for mane)

smaller yellow circle (for face)

even smaller yellow oval (for mouth)

two small yellow half circles (for ears)



Students can draw the mouth on the oval, and eyes and nose on the yellow circle. Glue the mouth oval below the nose, and the face in the middle of the mane. Then attach the ears on the side of the mane. A small magnet piece can then be glued to the back for this cute refrigerator magnet.



[Note: Older students may enjoy doing some of the cutting, but pieces should be pre-cut for younger students. Make certain you leave time to wash sticky fingers.]

THE SHEEP AND THEIR SHEPHERD

Psalm 23; John 10:11-18

Lesson Aim

To learn why sheep need a shepherd and why Jesus calls Himself “the Good Shepherd.”

Memory Verse

Psalm 23:6b - “... and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Lesson Background

The imagery used in Psalm 23 of the Lord as the shepherd of His people is found throughout both the Old and New Testaments. People in Bible times were familiar with the utter dependency of sheep on their shepherd -- for pasture, for water, and for protection. Because we are less familiar with the habits of sheep and shepherds, a book like Philip Kellar’s *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* can be very enlightening for modern readers. We want to help our students understand what sheep are like and why they need a shepherd so they will understand the psalm they’ve been working to memorize all quarter. This will also help them to understand and take comfort in the fact that Jesus calls Himself “the Good Shepherd,” who loves His sheep so much that He was willing to lay His life down for them.

If you have not been reviewing the verses of Psalm 23 all along with your students, this would be a good week to take some extra time to say the complete psalm together. As suggested in the Introduction, you may wish to reward the students who can say the entire psalm next week with a special treat or certificate. But with or without a reward, your students will be proud of their accomplishment, and this precious part of Scripture will be hidden in their hearts and minds for a lifetime!

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. You may wish to share the following facts about sheep with your students sometime during the lesson.

Facts About Sheep

Sheep were very important animals during Bible times. People raised sheep for many different uses; the sheep's wool, which is the soft fur that covers them, can be shaved off without harming the sheep and used to make clothing and blankets. Sheep's milk was used for drinking and for making cheese. The sheep themselves could be killed and eaten as lamb or mutton. And some sheep were used in Israel as sacrifices for sin at the temple.

A male sheep is called a ram and a female sheep is called a ewe. Baby sheep are lambs. They are not very smart animals. They cannot run quickly or protect themselves from other animals, such as wolves, that may track them and kill them for food. That's why sheep need a shepherd. A shepherd watches over a flock of sheep. He protects them from wild animals that may try to kill them. He helps them if they are hurt, and he brings them back to the flock if they wander away. A shepherd leads his flock of sheep to good pasture land where there is water and plenty of grass for them to eat. Without a shepherd, sheep would never survive out in the country. The shepherd is a sheep's best friend!

Bible Story (from Psalm 23 and John 10:11-18)

We have been learning Psalm 23 as our memory work this quarter, and today we have learned the last part of the last verse of the psalm. Let's say the psalm together now as a class. (*Recite Psalm 23.*) This psalm was written by David - the same David who killed the giant, Goliath. Before David fought Goliath, before he became King David of Israel, he had a different job. Do you know what he did? Yes, David was a shepherd. He was in charge of taking care of his family's sheep.

As a shepherd, David took care of his sheep's needs. He led them to good pasture land, with water for the thirsty sheep. He protected them from danger - from rocky cliffs where they could fall and be hurt, from wild animals that might attack them, and from people who might want to steal them. Being a shepherd could be a dangerous job; if a lion or a bear attacked the sheep, the shepherd would try to drive the animal away. He did his best to keep the sheep safe.

David knew about the job of a shepherd, and it reminded him of the way the Lord cares for His people. So he wrote in Psalm 23, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want." Let's think about that, and the psalm we've memorized. We are not in want because the Lord gives us everything we need. He brings us to quiet places where we can rest and He guides and directs our paths, like a shepherd watching over the sheep. He protects us from danger, even in the "valley of the shadow of death." We do not need to fear evil, for He is always with us, even in the midst of our enemies. He blesses us now, and someday, if we are truly His sheep, we will live in His house forever. What a great promise that is!

Did you know that Jesus says that He is "the Good Shepherd"? Perhaps Jesus was thinking of Psalm 23 one day when He was speaking to the people. He wanted them to understand His love and concern for His own. And He wanted them to know the price He would have to pay so that His sheep could live with Him in heaven someday. "I am the good shepherd," He told the people. "I know my sheep and my sheep know me - just as my Father knows me, and I know the Father - and I lay down my life for the sheep."

When did Jesus lay down His life for His sheep? When He died on the cross for their sins! That's real love, isn't it? That's more than just the love of a shepherd for his sheep; that's the love of God for lost people who need salvation. I'm so glad that Jesus is the good shepherd! Let's thank Him for loving His people so much that He was willing to die for them, so that someday His sheep can "dwell in the house of the Lord forever." (*Lead in prayer.*)

Suggested Projects and Activities

- Bring in pictures of sheep and Bible-time shepherds. (Actually, shepherding in the Middle East has changed little over the centuries, so a picture of shepherds from the Middle East today will look very "biblical.")
- There are a number of good picture books that deal with the 23rd Psalm. Check your local or church library.
- Decorate your classroom with a bulletin board covered with your class "sheep." For each student, cut out a simple, fluffy sheep shape from white paper. Have each student write his or her name on a sheep. Then arrange the sheep on a bulletin board with the words "The Lord Is Our Shepherd."
- Make fluffy white sheep pictures. Have students glue cotton balls to a piece of drawing paper, and then add features such as legs, faces, grass, etc. to finish the scene. (You may wish to make a sample picture to inspire them.)
- Listen to or sing a song about the 23rd Psalm, or about Jesus and His sheep. If your class doesn't know any "sheep" songs, you can teach them the chorus, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me ..." from the hymn of the same name.

WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

Matthew 7:15

Lesson Aim

To encourage students to be good Bible students so they will recognize false prophets, whom Jesus called “wolves in sheep’s clothing.”

Memory Verse

Review Psalm 23.

Lesson Background

Jesus’ harshest actions and words were reserved for those who used religion either to advance themselves or their pocketbooks. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers in the temple on two separate occasions because they sought to profit from worshipers during the week of the Passover (Matthew 21 and John 2). He pronounced seven woes on the Pharisees and Jewish teachers because they burdened the people with excessive legalistic rituals (Matthew 23). And He warned His disciples against false prophets, those “wolves in sheep’s clothing,” who were ready to take advantage of the faithful.

How do we recognize a wolf? After warning His listeners in Matthew 7:15, Jesus tells them in verse 16, “by their fruit you will recognize them.” When a wolf is trying to pass as a sheep, you may not be able to recognize him immediately. Eventually, however, his works will bear out who he truly is. We have seen this repeatedly, even in recent history, in the scandals and illegalities of some “ministries” that were really conducted for the profit and aggrandizement of the minister. The best protection against wolves is to be knowledgeable about God’s Word so we can weigh the teachings of others against the truth. Sheep who know the true Shepherd will not be easily fooled by impostors - no matter how well disguised they may be!

Because this is the last week of the animal lessons quarter, we will suggest several review activities for you and your students. Also, this is a good week to recognize your students who have worked hard and are able to say the entire 23rd Psalm on their own.

Lesson Procedure

Choose the projects and activities you would like to use with this lesson from the list at the end of the lesson and gather the necessary materials for them. You may wish to share the following facts about wolves with your students during the course of the lesson.

Facts About Wolves

Do you know the difference between a wolf and a dog? Wolves look very much like some larger dogs; in fact, they are part of the canine, or dog, family. But dogs live with people and help them in many ways. Wolves are wild animals; they are meat-eaters, and they hunt other animals for food. A wolf will spend most of his day hunting for food. Sometimes wolves hunt alone and sometimes they hunt in groups, or packs. When a wolf kills an animal, he may eat as much as 15 pounds of meat right there on the spot. (Has your Mom ever accused you of “wolfing” down your food? That’s what she’s talking about!) If a wolf has pups, however, he will bring some meat back to the wolf den for the pups. Both male and female wolves take care of their pups after they are born.

Wolves usually hunt animals like deer and moose, rabbits and mice. They are important to God’s world; without wolves, there would be too many deer and mice and rabbits in the farmers’ fields. But wolves also sometimes attack cows, sheep, and other valuable animals. Farmers have to protect their animals from wolves; that’s why so many stories, especially fairy tales, talk about “the big, bad wolf.” But people don’t need to be afraid of wolves, and in many places there are laws to protect wolves and keep them from being hunted.

Bible Story (from Matthew 7:15)

Last week in Sunday School we talked about sheep and their shepherds. Who can remember some of the things we said about sheep? (*Take ideas from students and help them to review.*) Sheep need a shepherd for many things, don’t they? Shepherds lead their sheep to good pasture land where there is water for the sheep to drink. They protect the sheep from danger, especially from wild animals that might attack them. Sheep are helpless to defend themselves and they cannot run fast enough to get away from their enemies, so a shepherd must be constantly watching over the flock to keep the sheep safe.

Jesus said that He is the Good Shepherd and that believers are His sheep. Do God’s people, His sheep, have enemies? Yes, of course they do. Satan is God’s enemy, and He causes problems for God’s people. And there are wicked men and women in the world who hate God’s Word and try to silence it whenever they can. In some places in the world, Christians are killed because they believe in Jesus. Even in our country, people may laugh at Christians or try to cause problems for them.

But in Matthew 7:15, Jesus warns us of another danger - a very sneaky kind of enemy that God’s people need to watch for. “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.” Can you imagine what would happen if a wolf disguised himself as a sheep and then came near the flock? The sheep wouldn’t be able to tell he was a wolf! The shepherd would not be able to tell if he was some distance from the sheep. The wolf would be able to attack and kill any sheep he wanted!

Why did Jesus say this to His people? He was warning them of danger within the church. Just because someone says he is a Christian doesn’t make it true. Just because someone says he is preaching the Gospel doesn’t make it true. Jesus said there would be false prophets - pastors and preachers and Bible

teachers - who really aren't preaching God's Word. Sometimes they become preachers to get rich. Sometimes they are just trying to be in charge of a large group of people who listen only to them. These are the dangerous "wolves in sheep's clothing" that we need to watch out for!

That's why we study the Bible in church and Sunday School. The better we know God's Word, the easier it will be to spot a false prophet. We will know when they are telling us something that the Bible doesn't say. We will be able to tell the truth from a lie. Let's thank God today for His Word and ask Him to help us understand it and learn all we can. Then someday we will be able to tell the sheep from the wolves! (*Lead in prayer.*)

Suggested Projects and Activities

- Bring in pictures of wolves, wolf packs, etc. If you would like to print up coloring sheets from the Internet, there are a number of web sites that offer free wolf coloring pages. Two you might try are www.enchantedlearning.com and www.everythingalaska.com.
- Make a list of as many animals as your students can remember discussing over the past 13 weeks. If you illustrate your list with simple pictures next to the words, it will help even your younger students to remember. (Past lessons include ants, dogs, oxen, eagles, chickens, migratory birds, snakes, deer, horses, hyrax, locusts, lizards, lions, sheep and wolves.)
- Play a game as you review the different animals we've studied this quarter. You could act out some of the different animals as a class. Or you could have one student (a volunteer!) come forward and whisper in his ear the animal he should pantomime (such as an eagle.) The student then acts it out until someone guesses what he is. (You could call this game "Animal Charades.")
- Instead of a game of "Duck, Duck, Goose," play a game of "Sheep, Sheep, Wolf." Children sit in a circle, and one student pats each student on the head, calling out "sheep, sheep, sheep," until he chooses one, and cries "wolf!" The student chosen as the wolf chases the other around the circle. If he doesn't tag him before the student takes his place in the circle, he's the next one to be "it." (Students like being "it" for this game; encourage students to pick a different student each time to be the wolf.)