

**THE 23rd PSALM**  
Old Testament Lesson #164

The writer of this psalm pictured himself as a sheep under the care of God, who was like a shepherd to him.

Like a good shepherd leads his sheep to green pastures and good drinking water, so God leads the psalmist. The effect of God's leadership is to restore the soul of the psalmist.

Because God is good, God leads the psalmist in ways that are right.

Because God is with him, the psalmist does not become afraid, even in threatening places.

Just as a shepherd uses his rod and staff to guide and protect his sheep, so God guides and protects the psalmist, making him feel comforted.

Just as a shepherd feeds his flock even when surrounded by dangerous animals, so God cares well for the psalmist even when he is surrounded by enemies.

Just as a shepherd uses healing oil to treat the wounds of the sheep, so God treats the emotional wounds of the psalmist.

Because of God's care, the psalmist knows that he will experience goodness and mercy in his life and will never be separated from God.

**POINTS TO CONSIDER:**

- This psalm is an extended metaphor. Depending on the age of the children, you may be able to explain what a metaphor is, talking about how one thing represents something else.
- Verse 5 also suggests the metaphor of a host who protects and cares for someone under his roof even though the guest's enemies wait outside. The guest is safe as long as he remains under the hospitality of the host.
- This psalm is traditionally attributed to David.
- In the ancient Near East, the term "shepherd" was sometimes use to refer to leaders to describe their relationship to the people under their rule. Naturally good "shepherds" were preferred.
- In the New Testament, Jesus identified himself as "the good shepherd" (John 10:11). Also, Christians found Jesus to be the "Shepherd and Overseer" of their souls (1 Peter 2:25). Peter described Jesus as "the Chief Shepherd" (1 Peter 5:4).

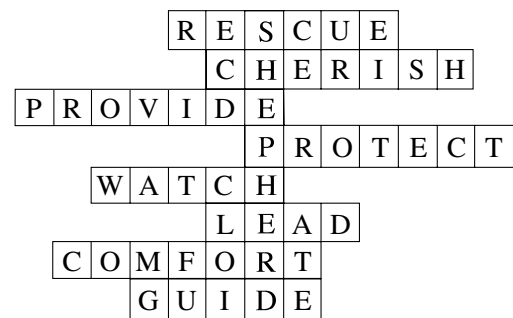
**The 23rd Psalm**

- I. The writer of this psalm pictured himself as a sheep under the care of God, who was like a shepherd to him.
- II. Like a good shepherd ...
  - A. God leads the psalmist, restoring the soul of the psalmist.
  - B. God leads the psalmist in ways that are right.
  - C. God guides and protects the psalmist, making him feel comforted.
  - D. God protects and stays with the psalmist, even in threatening places. Thus the psalmist does not become afraid.
  - E. God cares well for the psalmist even when he is surrounded by enemies.
  - F. God treats the emotional wounds of the psalmist.
- III. Because of God's care, the psalmist knows that he will experience goodness and mercy in his life and will never be separated from God.

**ANSWER KEY:**

wolf, dark, viper, storm, hunger






"I will fear no evil for the Lord is with me."



Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life.

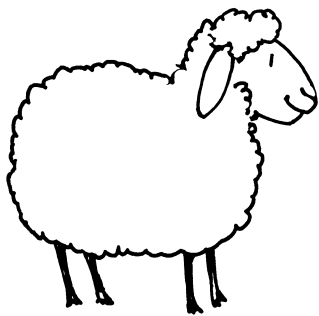
I will fear no evil for the Lord is with me.

Unscramble the names of things a sheep might fear.  
Then use the numbered letters to find the message.

 LOFW 1 2 3 4	 AKRD 5 6 7 8	 PRIVE 9 10 11 12 13	 MOSTR 14 15 16 17 18	No Food!  NURHEG 19 20 21 22 23 24
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“ 10 1 10 3 3 4 12 6 17 21 16 12 9 10 3 4 2 24 ”  
15 19 23 3 2 13 5 10 14 1 10 15 19 18 12

Cross off all the things a good shepherd would *not* do.  
Fit the things a good shepherd *would* do in the boxes.



- |         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|
| beat    | forget  | protect |
| cherish | lead    | provide |
| comfort | leave   | rescue  |
| guide   | lose    | starve  |
| harm    | neglect | watch   |

		S				
		H				
		E				
		P				
		H				
		E				
		R				
		D				

A psalm is a song. Use the musical notes and symbols to find a reason for singing.

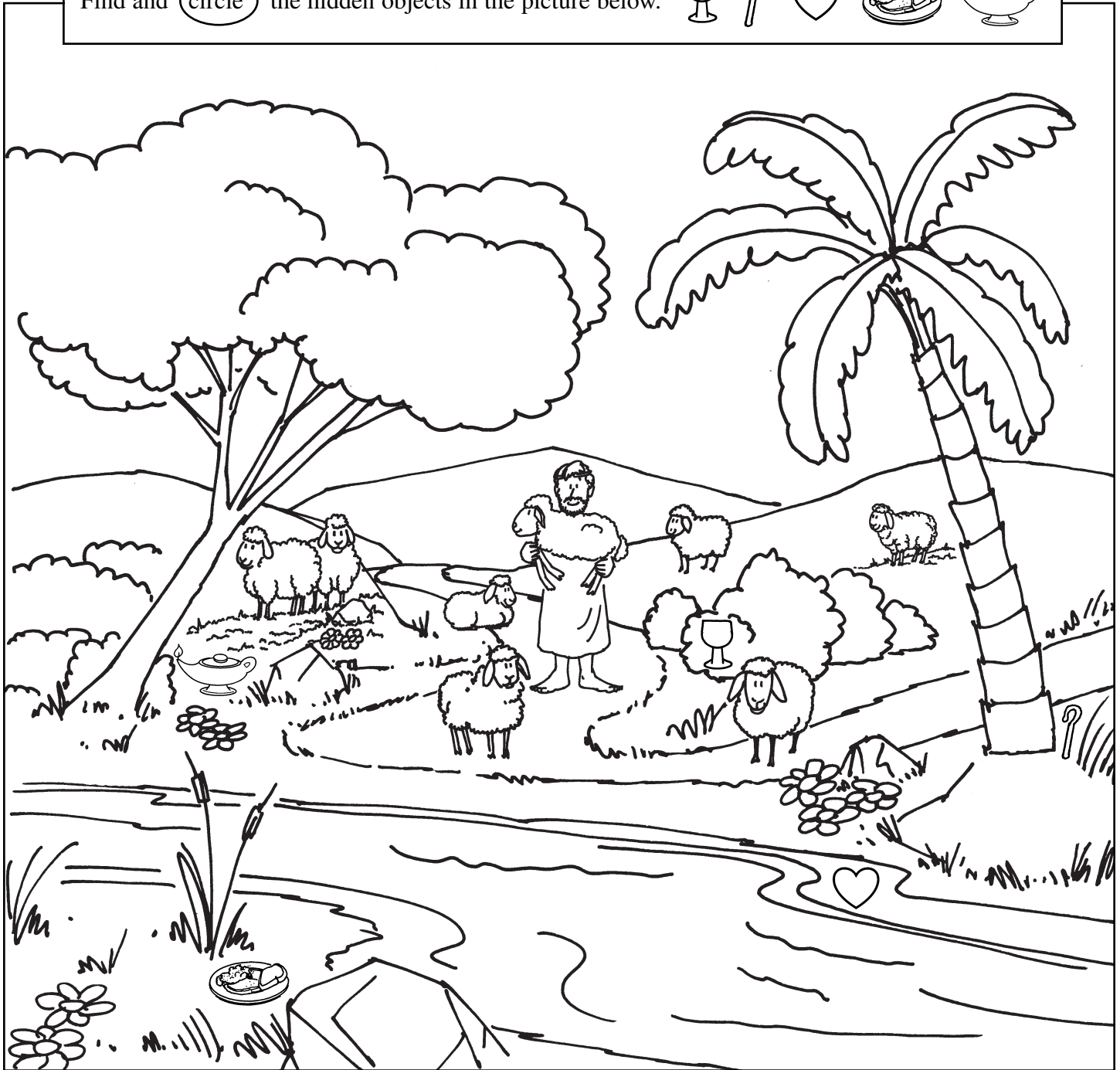
A D E F G H I L M N O R S T U V W Y

Musical notation for the letters A through Y, including treble and bass clefs, notes, rests, and accidentals.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

The Lord is my shepherd.

Find and **circle** the hidden objects in the picture below.



Name \_\_\_\_\_