



Date: _____
Series: Lookin' for a Leader
Summer Year 3, Lesson 13

David Writes the Psalms

Take Home Point: *Talk to God in a personal way.

*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: Psalm 23, Psalm 103, and Psalm 31

Key Verse: Psalm 23:1, "The LORD is my shepherd. I am never in need."

We will help kids know:

- David was one of the authors of the book of Psalms.
- Psalms express prayers and praises to God in a very personal way.
- As we read, pray, and meditate on the psalms, we can more deeply communicate with God. The psalms helpfully apply to many situations in our lives.




We will help kids feel:

- Conviction that they need more to their prayers than simple and quick hellos and good-byes.
- Confidence that they can more intimately connect with God about the things that are really important to them.

We will help kids do:

- Put in their own words some of the verses from David's psalms.
- Practice at home a time of reading from the psalms and have deeper conversations with God in prayer.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
Small Group Warm-Up 	3	<p>Saying “hello” and “good-bye” are pleasant ways to greet people but there is not much conversation in these words. Sometimes in our prayers, all we do or say are simple and quick “hellos” and “good-byes.” By the end of today, we are going to see if we can have deeper conversations with God.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bag of M&Ms for each group • one large candy bar for each group
Large Group 	4 10 11 12	<p>Overview</p> <p>Puppet Presentation: “The Lord Is Gordy’s Skateboard Coach”</p> <p>Mime Presentation</p> <p>Puppet Conclusion: “The Lord Is Gordy’s Skateboard Coach”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gordy • skateboard • black costume, white gloves, and white face paint for the mime • chair
Small Group Application 	5	<p>David wrote psalms that help express the truth about who God is. When you read the psalms it is like listening to someone have a deep conversation with God or about God. It is much more than a quick “hello” or “good-bye.” As a group, write your own psalm using one of David’s as a guide.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • copies of Psalm 23, 103, and 31 (see pages 7-9) These can be run with the actual psalm on the front and the “How You Would Say It” version on the back so that each child receives a half sheet. • pens and pencils

Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction! Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.*

The warm-up game will show the difference between light conversation and deeper, more intimate, and personal conversation. Sometimes we can say a lot of words to people but we really do not get to know them. The same can be true with our prayer life. Sometimes we can keep it on a superficial level if we do not learn to talk about the more important things. Our look at the psalms today will help us see how David spoke in a very personal way about the more important issues of life.

The game begins with a bag of M&Ms and a challenge.

How many different ways can a person say “hello?” One could say “hello” or could wave. I will give you an M&M for each time you think of a new way to greet someone. We will take turns around the circle. You cannot repeat what someone else has said or an action they have shown.

Give one M&M for each different answer. After all possibilities are exhausted, ask the next question.

How many different ways can a person say “good-bye?”

Once again, pass out M&Ms for answers as children take turns around the circle. Then say:

Saying “hello” and “good-bye” are pleasant ways to greet people, but there is not much conversation in these words. Usually you are not talking about anything very important when you say these words.

Show the kids a large candy bar.

We’re not going to eat this large candy bar now, but we can at the end of our lesson. Right now, I want you to look at the candy bar and think about how much bigger and better it is than an M&M.

This large candy bar reminds us of having a conversation with someone that is really important. It is not just saying a quick “hello” or “good-bye.”

Can you think of someone with whom you have had a heart to heart conversation and have told some things that are very important? Maybe you talked about something that you are very excited about or

maybe you talked about something that was troubling you. Whatever the case, the thing you talked about was important. Who can think of when they have had some important conversations like that with a friend or a parent?

Collect several illustrations from the kids of personal conversations with other people. (Do not give away the candy bar yet. It will be used after large group.)

Let's say you had a very good friend at school and all the talking you did with that person was just to say "hello" or "good-bye" when you passed them in the hall or on the playground. That person's feelings would probably be hurt.

Now let's think about God. Sometimes in our prayers all we do or say are simple and quick hellos and good-byes. Sometimes we have very important things happening in our lives but we do not talk to God about them. I imagine this might disappoint God as well.

Today, we will learn how David wrote a whole book of psalms in which he put his very deep thoughts to God in short poems or songs. By the end of today, we are going to see if we can have deeper conversations with God by looking at some psalms and writing some ourselves. Today we will learn how to **talk to God in a personal way.*

Large Group: 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Overview

Puppet Presentation: "The Lord Is Gordy's Skateboard Coach" – Gordy and Mr. King talk about how David was a man after God's heart. David had a personal relationship with God and recorded his thoughts in the Psalms.

Mime Presentation: Psalm 23 is acted out.

Puppet Conclusion: "The Lord Is Gordy's Skateboard Coach" – Gordy puts Psalm 23 into his own paraphrase, learning to talk to God in a personal way.

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson.

Observation Questions: What happened?

Read Acts 4:12.

What is the only name we can be saved by? (Jesus.)

Interpretation Questions: What does this mean?

Why do you think we want to pray in Jesus' name? (Only through Jesus can we talk to God in a personal way. He is the one through whom we are saved.)

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

Application Activity:

It is important that the various small groups have differently assigned psalms. After they compose their psalms, they can gather to read it to the others. You might gather the groups according to grade levels or whatever is convenient for your situation.

Let's practice talking to God in a personal way. When we do, let's remember to pray in the name of Jesus. When we trust Jesus as our Savior, that is the way we can be personal friends with God.

God wants to hear more from us than a quick "hello" and "good-bye." Some of the psalms David wrote can help us do that. David put into words his feelings and the truth about the help that God gives.

Let's look at a psalm David wrote. I will read it to you, and then we will read it through again leaving out certain parts that you will fill in. When you help fill in a part, I will give you a section of this candy bar.

Break the candy bar apart in sections so all can have a piece while working together as a group.

In having the kids compose an original psalm, you can read one section at a time. Encourage several different answers from the group and discuss their interpretations as

you go. You might even take different answers so that you compose two or three versions of the psalm.

It might be helpful as well to talk about how David might have felt when he was writing the psalm and how we sometimes feel the same way. After you have composed your psalm(s), meet with the other group(s) to share your responses. After the groups have exchanged readings of their psalms, return to small groups for closing prayer.

Give kids copies to take home and write their own versions.

Closing Prayer:

Say: **Let's **talk to God in a personal way.*** Again read the psalm your group has written and encourage each child to pray personally for needs that are important to them after the reading.

Then close in Jesus' name.

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Psalm 23
David's Song of
Comfort

1. "The LORD is my Shepherd.
I am never in need.
2. He makes me lie down in green
pastures.
He leads me beside peaceful
waters.
He renews my soul.
3. He guides me along the paths of
righteousness for the sake of his
name.
4. Even though I walk through the dark
valley of death, because you are
with me, I fear no harm.
Your rod and your staff give me
courage.
5. You prepare a banquet before me
while my enemies watch.
You anoint my head with oil.
My cup overflows.
6. Certainly, goodness and mercy will
stay close to me all the days of my
life, and I will remain in the LORD's
house for days without end."

Psalm 23
"How Would You Say It?"

*Choose one idea for the entire psalm. "The Lord is my..."
"soccer coach," "amusement park," "big brother," "teacher,"
"friend," "lifeguard," and so on.*

1. The LORD is my _____.
This is all I could ask for!
2. He makes me _____.
He leads me _____.
He renews _____.
3. He guides me _____.
4. Even though _____, I fear
no harm.
Your _____ and your
_____ give me courage.
5. You _____.
6. Certainly, _____ will follow me
all the days of my life. And I will remain in
_____ forever.

Psalm 103
David's Praise for Forgiveness

1. Praise the LORD, my soul!
Praise his holy name, all that is
within me...
2. He has not treated us as we
deserve for our sins or paid us
back for our wrongs.
3. As high as the heavens are
above the earth—that is how
vast his mercy is toward those
who fear him.
4. As far as the east is from the
west—that is how far he has
removed our rebellious acts
from himself...
5. Praise the LORD, all his angels,
you mighty beings who carry out
his orders and are ready to
obey his spoken orders...
6. Praise the LORD, all his
creatures in all the places of his
empire. Praise the LORD, my
soul!

Psalm 103
"How Would You Say It?"

*Choose one idea for the entire psalm. "The Lord is my..."
"soccer coach," "amusement park," "big brother,"
"teacher," "friend," "lifeguard," and so on.*

1. Praise the LORD, my soul!
Praise his holy name, all
_____.
2. When it comes to treating us like our sins
deserved, guess what He did! He _____
_____.
3. His mercy is so big. It's bigger than
_____.
And bigger than
_____.
And bigger than
_____.
4. He took our sins away from us. So far away that
_____.
5. Praise the LORD, all his angels. You should
sound like

_____.
6. Praise the LORD, all you people who live in
_____.
Praise the LORD with all _____
_____.

Psalm 31

David's Song of Rescue

1. "I have taken refuge in you, O LORD.
Never let me be put to shame.
Save me because of your
righteousness...
2. Be a rock of refuge for me, a
strong fortress to save me.
Indeed, you are my rock and
my fortress...
3. Have pity on me, O LORD,
because I am in distress. My
eyes, my soul, and my body
waste away from grief. My life
is exhausted from sorrow, my
years from groaning...
4. I have become a disgrace
because of all my opponents. I
have become someone
dreaded by my friends, even by
my neighbors...
5. My future is in your hands.
Rescue me from my enemies,
from those who persecute
me...
6. But you heard my pleas for
mercy when I cried out to you
for help...
Be strong, all who wait with
hope for the LORD, and let
your heart be courageous."

Psalm 31

"How Would You Say It?"

Choose one idea for the entire psalm. "The Lord is my..."
"soccer coach," "amusement park," "big brother,"
"teacher," "friend," "lifeguard," and so on.

1. I have hidden myself in you, O Lord. Don't let

_____.
2. Be a place where I can hide like _____
_____.
3. Have pity on me, O Lord, I feel
_____.
4. Because of my enemies, I feel so
_____. Even
my friends _____.
5. My future is in your hands. Rescue me from
_____.
6. But you heard me tell you about
_____ and
you answered me with _____.
So everyone, don't forget! You can
_____.

Large Group Presentation

The Lord Is Gordy's Skateboard Coach Puppet Presentation

Today's carnival event will not be a carnival booth. Rather, it will be a dramatic mime presentation. The presentation happens at the very beginning of the puppet play. It requires a mime (adult or child) to act out a reading of the 23rd Psalm. The presentation needs to be practiced beforehand. A black costume, white gloves, and white face paint would make the presentation even more effective.

Gordy and Mr. King's dialogue briefly sets up the learning point and the mime for Psalm 23. After the mime, Gordy paraphrases Psalm 23 in his own words. Gordy uses a skateboard for a prop.

Mr. King: Hello, kids! Welcome to Kingdom Quest Carnival where we are still looking for a leader.

Gordy: We are looking for a leader and we have found one right here. Me!

Mr. King: I suppose you could be a leader, although today we are talking about King David. King David was a man after God's own heart and he was a great leader.

Gordy: Yeah, just like me!

Mr. King: I am sure he was like you in many ways. King David had struggles and hard times in which he cried out to the Lord for help. He also had joyful times in which he gave thanks to God. He even had sinful times in which he was very sorry for the things he did wrong.

Gordy: Wow! King David really was like me!

Mr. King: Yes, he was. Instead of having a carnival game today, we are going to have a carnival show. We are going to read David's Psalm 23 while a mime acts it out for us. When we do this, I want you to think.

Gordy: What?! Me think?

Mr. King: Yes, I want you to think about how David spoke personally with God. David talked to God from his heart about things that were very important. In this psalm, David describes just who God is to him. Since David was a shepherd, he wrote about how he felt God was his shepherd. When you listen to this, you will find that God wants to be your shepherd, too. He wants to be personal and close to you.

Mime Presentation

Mr. King reads the mime presentation of Psalm 23 very slowly. While he does this, the mime acts out the actions as depicted below.

Read one phrase at a time, waiting until the mime has completed the action before continuing to the next line.

Psalm 23 David's Song of Comfort

Mime Actions

Prop: 1 chair

**1. "The LORD is my Shepherd.
I am never in need.**

Mime a shepherd's staff.
Cross arms and bow head.

**2. He makes me lie down in
green pastures.
He leads me beside peaceful
waters.**

Lie down comfortably.
Turn to side and dangle fingers in
an imaginary flowing stream.

3. He renews my soul.

Put hands behind head.

**He guides me along the paths of
righteousness for the sake of his
name.**

Walk in place with hand on
forehead searching horizon.

**4. Even though I walk through
the dark valley of death, because
you are with me, I fear no harm.
Your rod and your staff give me
courage.**

Walk in place through something
scary, slightly crouched down.
Stand up confidently and walk.
Take hold of a pretend staff as you
do so.

**5. You prepare a banquet before
me while my enemies watch.
You anoint my head with oil.
My cup overflows.**

Sit down (on chair) to eat. Wave off
enemies.
Enjoy and feel the oil flowing down.
Sip the cup.

**6. Certainly, goodness and
mercy will stay close to me all
the days of my life, and I will
remain in the LORD's house for
days without end."**

Raise one arm up in thanksgiving.
Then raise the other.
Fold arms. Kick back. Smile. You
are remaining in the Lord's house
forever.

The Lord Is Gordy's Skateboard Coach

Puppet Presentation Conclusion

Gordy: Wow! That was really cool!

Mr. King: Yes, it was, Gordy. David wrote psalms that help express the truth about who God is and the truth about how we sometimes feel. When you read the psalms, it is like listening to someone have a really deep conversation with God or about God. It is much more than a quick “hello” or “good-bye.”

Gordy: I would like to have a conversation like that, too.

Mr. King: You can, Gordy, by reading the psalms. You can even write some of your own thoughts down like David did. Let me help you do that.

David was a shepherd so he thought of the Lord as his shepherd. Gordy, you're not a shepherd, but what is something you like to do?

Gordy: I love to go skateboarding.

Mr. King: Okay. Is there someone that helps you do that?

Gordy: Sure! Mr. Benson at the skateboard shop. He's like a skateboard coach. He shows us how to do all sorts of neat things.

Mr. King: Okay. Why don't you think about how the Lord is like a skateboard coach? But the Lord helps you go through life, not just learn how to skateboard.

Gordy: What do you mean?

Mr. King: Here, take one of these sheets of paper that the kids will use later on. Fill in the blanks to write your own version of Psalm 23.

Gordy: So instead of saying, “The Lord is my shepherd,” I should say, “The Lord is my skateboard coach?”

Mr. King: Sure, Gordy. Let's try it and find out. I'll hold the page for you and you read.

Gordy: *(Brings out a skateboard.)* Okay, here goes. The Lord is my skateboard coach. This is all I could ask for. He helps me cruise down hills. He leads me to ride over smooth sidewalks. He renews my soul. He guides me when I get up in the air with an ollie and when I come back down and I'm grinding. Even though I skateboard through the streets where everyone crashes and burns, I fear no harm. Your coaching and your kind words

give me courage. You help me to jump the curb even in the presence of those who laugh at me if I fall. You anoint my head with a safety helmet. My sports drink overflows. Certainly, your safety and your adventure will follow me all the days of my life. I will remain with you forever with my skateboard in heaven.

Mr. King: **Wow, Gordy! That wasn't too bad.**

Gordy: Why, thank you. It's kinda like talking about God the way David did.

Mr. King: **Yes, it is. We can use what David wrote to help us have deeper conversations about God. Kids, you're going to work together in your small group to do what Gordy did. You will compose an original psalm by filling in the blanks. After your group does that, then gather with another group (or several groups) to listen to their examples of different psalms they have written.**

Gordy: Wow! This kinda makes you have to think, doesn't it?

Mr. King: **Yes, but it's good for us. It helps us think about how wonderful God is and what he's done for us. Why don't we close in prayer? Gordy, I'll start and then you close, okay?**

Gordy: Okay, Mr. King.

Mr. King: **Heavenly Father, thank you for giving us a chance to find out more about who you are and how much you love us. Thank you for giving us Jesus. Thank you for his death and resurrection in our place. Thank you for forgiving us of our sins.**

Gordy: Let the power of Jesus live in our lives. Let us not have prayers to you that are so short that they are nothing but "hi" and "bye." Help us to really think about you and tell you about those things that are very important in our lives. Bless us as we do that now in our small groups. In Jesus' name. Amen.