

Question on :

1. The ways in which God resembles a shepherd.

2. The ways in which his people resemble sheep.

The psalm is a picture of a day in a shepherd's life. He knows just where to find what the sheep need, and goes before to show them the way.

Vs. 2 and 3 describe refreshment, contentment and rest. Mark Guy Pearse says, "I once asked a northern shepherd, 'When do sheep lie down?' He replied, 'Why bless you sir, when they are full.'"

In v. 4, trouble and danger appear. Ask what some of these are. Refer to David's experience. (See 1 Sam. 17:34-37.) A recent traveler in Palestine tells of seeing clotted animal hair on the end of a stout club carried by a shepherd. When he pointed to it, the shepherd explained, by signs, that he had used the club on some wild creature.

V. 5. Ask what name is given to a man who provided a meal for others. What do the pupils know about the duties of a host? Show that in providing food for them and protecting them while they eat, the shepherd is the host of his sheep. Refer to the Eastern custom of anointing the head of an honored guest. (See the Lesson Explained.)

V. 6. The day is over. The shepherd's goodness and mercy have been with his flock through all their wanderings and now they are safe in the fold. So God leads, provides for, and protects his people all through this life, and when it is ended he brings them to be forever with him in the home he has prepared for them.

Ask who remembers a lesson in which this home was described. (See Rev. 7:15-17, lesson for March 21.)

Close by reading or repeating the whole psalm.

### FOR TEACHERS IN THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT

Teachers in the Primary Department should study carefully the scholars' materials in the PRIMARY QUARTERLY.

**AIM OF THE LESSON.** To make the children know the loving care of the Good Shepherd.

**INTRODUCTION.** Show several pictures of shepherds caring for sheep. These should be, not the pictures of farm life of our land, but the Oriental picture of the sheep on the lonely hills, dependent upon the shepherd for protection and care. If you cannot find the pictures you need, draw on the blackboard a rough sketch of the hills and valleys where the shepherd led his sheep. Draw the stream where they drank when thirsty. Draw the fold where they were kept at night, making the thorn branches at the top to keep out wild animals.

**THE STORY.** This beautiful Twenty-Third Psalm, which we so often repeat was written by David, and the more we know about him, the better we understand this song. He was a sweet singer and he played on the harp and we think that often as he sat watching his sheep he played on his harp and sang songs for which he made the words.

Perhaps many nights he had to stay out with his sheep, for he had to take them where there was green grass and pure water, and that meant sometimes going many miles.

David would carry his food with him : dried raisins and dates, and hard bread made of grain that was coarsely ground between stones.

He had to watch every minute to see that some little lamb did not get lost. If it did, he had to go and find it, no matter how tired or busy he was. He knew the name of every sheep and they loved him and would come at his call.

In those days a shepherd had to be brave and strong. You will know why when you hear that one day a lion came out from among the rocks to try to kill some of David's sheep, but with his bare hands and his strong stick David killed the lion. Another time it was a bear that came, and David killed the bear just as he had killed the lion.

He had no gun, for no one then had heard of such a thing, but he had a "sling." It was not like the slings that boys make now, but it was a long piece of leather. David would hold the two ends together and put a little smooth stone where the fold came in the middle. Then he knew just how to swing it around and send that stone flying through the air so that he could hit any mark at