

TEXT Luke 15:1-7

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to tell that the lost sheep represents a sinner. They can explain that Jesus cares about every individual, and is seeking to bring each one to Himself. They can describe the excitement that is felt when a sinner prays and is born again.

MEMORY VERSE There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. — Luke 15:10

The Lost Sheep

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

THERE IS JOY — Turn palms toward body, make circles away from body.

IN THE PRESENCE — Turn palms up, forearms crossed, bow upper body while slowly uncrossing forearms.

OF THE ANGELS — Place hands at shoulder level, pointing out, fluttering like wings.

OF GOD — Point up.

OVER ONE SINNER — Hold up one finger.

THAT REPENTETH — Bend at waist as you fold hands to pray.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Our memory verse for this week is illustrated by large bubble letters spelling JOY, an angel, and a kneeling figure. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut apart the sections as indicated by the heavy black lines, and display the pieces one at a time as your students learn the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Ask your students if any of them have ever been lost. Talk briefly about the feeling you have when you realize you are away from the one who cares for you and you don't know where that person is. Cut out a number of magazine illustrations, as described under In-Class Activities. Tell your children that these people are lost, explaining that even adults can be lost. They may not be lost in the physical sense, but spiritually they are lost if they are away from the Lord.

1. The religious leaders of Jesus' day complained because He associated with sinners. Jesus told a story about a lost sheep in relation to this.

2. Though ninety-nine sheep were safe in the fold, the shepherd went to seek one that was lost.

3. After a diligent search, the lost was found. The shepherd rejoiced as he carried the sheep home.

Climax: The shepherd called his friends and neigh-

bors and there was great joy and feasting because the lost sheep was safe in the fold.

Conclusion: The sheep was found because someone searched for it. The Holy Spirit searches for people lost in sin. When they are saved there is great joy in Heaven.

Response: The students can explain that just as the shepherd was happy to find his lost sheep, Jesus and even the angels in Heaven rejoice over one person who has been born again.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Lord often taught in parables. To those who wanted to know the truth, the hidden meaning in the parables revealed the truth. To the other listeners the parables were little more than stories. When asked by the disciples why He spoke in parables, Jesus quoted the prophet Isaiah. He said that the people would hear, but not understand, and see, but not perceive because of the hardness of their hearts. See Isaiah 6:9,10.

The parable of the lost sheep is one of Jesus' better-known parables. Artists have pictured the Shepherd on a high cliff risking His life to save a little lamb. In the nineteenth century Elizabeth Clephane wrote a song entitled, "The Ninety and Nine" which may be found in many song books today. It very graphically tells the story of the parable, from the leaving of the sheepfold to the rejoicing in Heaven over the lost sheep that was found.

In the land of Israel, raising sheep has been a way of life for many people down through the centuries. Abraham, Moses, and David were shepherds as was the minor prophet, Amos. While cattle turned loose to graze can survive fairly well, sheep are rather helpless creatures that are unable to find food and water in desert country. It is imperative that they have a shepherd seeing to their well-being and protection.

The story of the shepherd's leaving the flock in the wilderness and seeking the one lost sheep would be readily understood by the average Israelite. But to picture himself as the lost sheep and needing to be found by the Shepherd was beyond the spiritual comprehension of most of those that heard the Lord.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Cut out twelve 2" circles. Inside each circle write a letter with a number underneath it (make the number much smaller than the letter): T-1, H-2, E-3, L-4, O-5, S-6, T-7, S-8, H-9, E-10, E-11, P-12. Place these at random on a flannel board. Start your class time by asking the children to help you put these circles in order according to number. When they are in order the children will find what the good shepherd was searching for.

Find magazine pictures of current-day people involved in various activities. Give each person a fictitious name and make up a brief scenario describing how and why he is lost. For example: Bill loves sports more than he loves Jesus; Mark cares more about his job as a computer analyst than serving the Lord; Suzanne likes new clothes better than giving to others.

Tell the story of the lost lamb by using the picture series (see Patterns). Copy the pattern onto heavy paper. Lay very narrow strips of paper over the dotted lines and attach at the top and bottom. Lay another thin strip across the middle on the heavier dotted lines to divide the top series of pictures from the bottom. Glue this strip to paper. Slide two wide sheets of paper under the strips so all the pictures are covered. Uncover the pictures one at a time as you tell the story.

QUESTIONS

What would have happened if no one had tried to find the lost sheep?

How did the shepherd feel when he found the lost sheep?

Why do you think a man who had ninety-nine sheep would still look for one lost sheep?

How do you feel when you have found something that was lost?

Have you ever been lost? How did you feel when you finally saw someone you knew?

How is Jesus like a shepherd?

How are we like lambs?

How do you feel when you hear good news? Tell what

you think it is like in Heaven when someone on earth gives his heart to Jesus.

Does Jesus call everyone who is lost? How?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Give each child a copy of the Little Lost Lamb scribble picture (see Patterns). As you tell them the story, let the children draw curly fleece all over the little lamb.

Make a small sheep from construction paper adding cotton balls for fleece (see Patterns). Give each child a shepherd's crook made from a chenille wire. Bend back the sharp ends to avoid injury.

Hide a small stuffed lamb somewhere in your class area. Let your students help look for it. When someone finds it, pass out paper hats and treats to celebrate. Talk about how the shepherd looked for his lost lamb, and how he rejoiced when he found it. Show a sin-spotted heart and explain that people with a heart like this are lost. Show a picture of Jesus, and tell how He looks for the sinner.

REVIEW IDEAS

Enlarge the copies of the lost lamb picture series (from pattern under In-Class Activities) or copy them onto overhead transparencies. Use these to review the story.

Purchase two large sheets of white posterboard. Draw and color the outdoor scene onto one of the sheets (see Patterns). Use a safety razor to cut a door around each of the bushes and rocks so they can be opened and shut as needed. Lay this sheet of posterboard over the blank sheet and draw a lamb under one of the doors (a lamb hiding behind a bush or rock). Attach the two sheets together with tape and close all the doors. Make a copy of the picture of Jesus to use as the Shepherd (see Patterns). Color and cut out. Tell the story of the shepherd who was looking for the lost sheep and have the children take turns opening the doors as you move the shepherd to each location.

Show a large picture of Jesus the Good Shepherd, explaining that Jesus wants to be our Shepherd. When we tell Jesus we love Him He will take care of us. At this point show the children an enlarged picture of an angel choir (see pattern in Unit 16) and turn on a cassette tape of people who are singing a song of joy. Tell the children that when a person is saved it is a happy time for the angels in Heaven.

COORDINATING SONGS

"The Lord Is My Shepherd — I'll Walk With Him Always"

"Jesus Is the Shepherd, Guess Who I Am"

"Said a Precious Little Laddie" — Salvation Songs for Children No. 4

"'Tis Simple As Can Be"

"All Through the Week" — Harry W. Von Bruch

"Jesus, Tender Shepherd, Hear Me" — Salvation Songs for Children No. 3

"My Shepherd Is Jesus" — Primaries Sing for Church and Home

"Bring Them In"

"I'm His Little Lamb"

"His Sheep Am I"

"Shepherd of Love"

"Jesus Loves the Little Children"

SUPPORT MATERIAL

The booklet story, Snowflake — an old story that is still good today.

Little Lost Lamb — A Magic Picture Book

Little Lost Lamb — A Happy Day Book

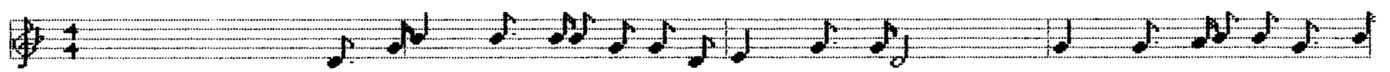
The Story of the Lost Sheep, No. 42 — The Lion Story Bible, A Lion Book

Jon and the Little Lost Lamb — Arch Book

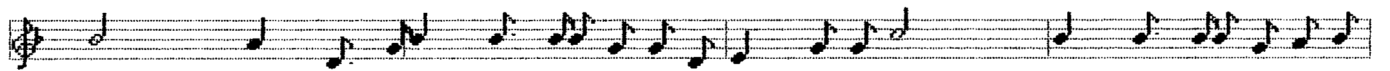
The Lost Sheep — by Nick Butterworth and Mick Inkpen, Multnomah Press

The Tiny Sheep — Illustrated by Bunshu Iguchi, Judson Press

MEMORY VERSE SONG



There is joy in the presence of the an - gels of God o - ver one sinner that re -



pent - eth, there is joy in the presence of the an - gels of God o - ver one sinner that re -



pent - eth.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

