

SAMMY AND HIS SHEPHERD



SEEING JESUS IN PSALM 23

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Illustrated by Cory Godbey



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“Seeing Jesus in Psalm 23.”

Summary: Sammy the sheep explains to a neighboring sheep how his loving shepherd takes care of him and keeps him safe. Includes the text of Psalm 23 and suggested discussion questions.

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DEDICATION

To my mother,
Mary Kathryn McLaurin,
in celebration of her 90th birthday
and with gratitude that she tells her children,
grandchildren, and great-grandchildren
about her Shepherd.



“We your people, the sheep of your pasture,
will give thanks to you forever;
from generation to generation we
will recount your praise.”

Psalm 79:13



PSALM 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.
He restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.





CHAPTER ONE

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD; I SHALL NOT WANT

I'm such a happy sheep," Sammy thought as he grazed contentedly in the lush pasture.

He looked up and noticed a sheep in the next pasture looking longingly through the fence. He also noticed that the other pasture was not as nice as his.

"I never noticed how many rocks and how little grass are in that pasture," he thought.

Sammy ambled toward the fence. "Hi," he called to the other sheep. "What's your name?"

"I don't have a name," the sheep said.

Sammy tried not to appear shocked, but he couldn't imagine a sheep not having a name. Then he noticed that the sheep was very skinny and that flies were buzzing around her head.

The little sheep asked, "Do you have a name?"

"My name is Samuel, but everyone calls me Sammy."

"Where did you get your name?"

"My shepherd named me soon after he bought me. He names all of his sheep."

"Why does he do that?" the sheep asked as she shook her head to try to make the flies go away.

"Well, I guess because he loves each one of us and he knows us by name. Samuel means "heard by God." I was wounded and sick when my shepherd bought me, and he prayed for me. He named me Samuel so that I would always remember that God heard his prayer."

"You sure seem happy," the little sheep said.

“Of course I’m happy. I have the best shepherd in the whole world. I know that I will never want for anything.”

“How can you know that?”

“Because my shepherd loves me and he always takes care of me,” Sammy answered.

“I don’t understand,” the little sheep said. “Look at this pasture. There’s never enough grass to eat. I’m always hungry. And our water isn’t very good either.”

“I’m sorry you’re hungry,” Sammy replied. “I always have enough food and water because my shepherd provides everything I need.”

“Do you mean that you never have to walk through scary valleys or climb high hills to get to different pastures?”

“Oh, no, I don’t mean that I never have to go to hard places. But my shepherd is always with me and he helps me go through those hard places.”

“But what about the enemies waiting to attack you?” the little sheep asked.

“My shepherd always guards me, no matter how dangerous it is. He would even lay down his life to protect me.”

“I wish I had a shepherd I could trust,” the little sheep moaned.

Talking to the little sheep made Sammy grateful for his shepherd. He also felt sad for the scrawny sheep and wanted to show kindness to her, but he didn’t know what to do. Then he had an idea.

“Can we be friends?” Sammy asked. He noticed that the little sheep’s eyes brightened, so he continued, “Since you don’t have a name, I’m going to call you ‘My Friend.’”

The little sheep seemed to stand a bit taller and she certainly looked happier. “I like that,” she said. “I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“Same time, same fence,” Sammy laughed.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Susan Hunt is a consultant for the Presbyterian Church in America's Women in the Church ministry, which she formerly directed. She holds a degree in Christian education from Columbia Theological Seminary and has written Sunday school curricula for Great Commission Publications. She is a popular speaker at conferences in the United States and abroad. Her numerous published books include *Women's Ministry in the Local Church* (co-authored with Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III) and *Heirs of the Covenant*, plus such children's titles as *My ABC Bible Verses* and *Big Truths for Little Kids* (co-authored with her son Richie Hunt). Susan and her husband, Gene, a retired pastor, make their home in Marietta, Georgia. They have three adult children and twelve grandchildren.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Cory Godbey is an illustrator and author with Portland Studios in Greenville, South Carolina. As he tells it, Cory discovered his love for drawing in math class and soon began drawing pictures for elementary school textbooks. He eventually went to college to study old drawings by well-known artists, and he says he still looks at these old drawings when he runs out of ideas. He enjoys lively accordion music, pasta, and rain at night. He and his wife, Erin Elizabeth, live in South Carolina with their cats Harrel Whittington and James.