

The Lost Lamb

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Scene Summary

The lost lamb presents the parable that Jesus told to a group of people including Pharisees and scribes who complained that Jesus was friendly to sinners. Scenes include: Jesus speaking to a crowd...two men complain...a shepherd leads his sheep to pasture...shepherd calls a wayward sheep...he counts his sheep as they enter the sheepcote...he asks another shepherd to watch his flock...he searches along rocky path for lost sheep...he finds the lost and frightened lamb...he joyfully carries it on his shoulders...he rejoices with other shepherds...Jesus tells the people: “there is rejoicing in heaven when one sinner repents.”

Scripture

(Luke 15:3-7 NIV) Then Jesus told them this parable: {4} "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? {5} And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders {6} and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' {7} I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

(Psa 23 NIV) A psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. {2} He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, {3} he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. {4} 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. {5} You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. {6} Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

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Players

- **Narrator** – The play’s “catechist” or teacher should be a good reader with a clear voice.
- **Person 1, 2** – Part of a crowd wanting to hear Jesus.
- **Jesus** – God’s One and Only Son.
- **Shepherd** – A non-speaking role.
- **Many Sheep** – Students on their hands and knees, pretending to be sheep.

Special Props

- Normal items from the prop box such as cloaks, veils, robes and headdresses.
- A staff for the shepherd.

Script – The Lost Lamb

[Scene 1 setup: This is a play within a play containing two scenes: one with Jesus speaking to the people and the other scene of the shepherd. In the second scene, the narrator directs the action as the children act out the roles of the shepherd and lambs.]

Narrator: Almost everywhere Jesus went people followed him. They wanted to see the wise teacher that they had heard so much about. They wanted to hear what he had to say. One day, a crowd gathered to hear Jesus. Most listened quietly, but...

Person 1: [contemptibly] What kind of a teacher is he?

Person 2: [sneering] I have heard that he talks with sinners and eats with them.

Narrator: Jesus looked at the men. He was sorry that they did not understand why he came to earth. So he decided to tell them a story to help them understand God’s love.

Jesus: Once there was a shepherd that had 100 sheep...

[Scene 2 setup: the children playing sheep are on their knees, pretending to eat grass and following the shepherd, etc.]

Narrator: The shepherd took good care of his sheep. He led his flock to the rich green grass. He walked ahead of the sheep and pushed aside the tall grass to make sure there were no poisonous snakes to harm them. At noontime he led the sheep to a quiet pool for cool drink of water. He knew that the sheep were afraid to drink from a stream where the water ran fast. The shepherd found a shady place for the sheep to rest when the sun was hot and high in the sky. When the sun went down in the afternoon, the shepherd led the sheep to another grassy place. When the sharp thorns of a bush caught a sheep, the shepherd helped it get loose. He poured oil on the cut to make it heal and take away the sting. When a lamb ran away from the flock, the shepherd would call it back. Sometimes he would have to run after it. He didn’t want any of the sheep to get hurt or lost. At night, he led his sheep to a sheepcote where they would be safe from wild animals.

[Have one child slip away from the flock and hide]

He counted the sheep as they went in. 94...95...96...97...98...99...quickly the shepherd looked around. Where was the last sheep? Will you watch my sheep, he asked another shepherd who was leading his sheep into the cote. One sheep is missing and I must go to find it. With his heart beating fast, the shepherd hurried fast along the hills looking for the lamb. Could it have fallen from the path? Or could a wolf or mountain lion have caught it? Suddenly the shepherd stopped and listened. In the distance, he heard a soft “bahhhh, bahhhh.” He then saw the trembling lamb in the shadow of a large rock. Quickly he checked to make sure the lamb was all right. With the lamb on his shoulders, the shepherd sang and whistled as he hurried back

to the sheepcote. You must never wonder away again he told the lamb. You were frightened and I was worried about you. I found him! I found my lamb that was lost in the hills! My lamb is safe.

[Back to scene 1]

Jesus: The shepherd was glad that he found the lost sheep. And there is great joy in heaven when one sinner is sorry for their sins.

Narrator: Jesus wanted people to know that he was the Good Shepherd.

The End

Supplemental Information

In Bible times, shepherds led their sheep from one grassy spot to another during the days. Often shepherds had to take their flocks many miles from home to find the sweet, tender grass. Sometimes they were away from home for several days or weeks.

At night each shepherd found a dry cave or sheepcote where he and his sheep could be safe during the night. Sheepcotes were square stonewalls about four feet high. The doorway was narrow so that only one sheep might enter at a time. The shepherd stood beside the doorway and inspected each sheep as it entered. Thorny bushes or sharp rocks cut sometimes sheep. From his ox horn, the shepherd poured oil on the cuts to take away the sting and to help heal them.

As each sheep entered the sheepcote, the shepherd spoke to him or tapped him tenderly on the head. He counted his sheep every night. If one was missing, he went to search for it. With the door of the sheepcote fastened, he knew his other sheep would be safe. He loved his sheep and took good care of them.

Reflection questions

- In Matthew, Mark, Luke and John we read many stories about crowds of people following Jesus. Why do you think they wanted to see Him?
- Not everyone agreed with Jesus. Some men thought He should talk only to good people. Why do you think Jesus talked to people who did wrong things?
- Some people did not understand why Jesus came to earth. Do you know the reason? Why did He come?
- Jesus told the men a story about a shepherd. Why do you think the shepherd went ahead of the sheep and swished the grass with his crook?
- The shepherd knew that sheep are afraid to drink from a stream where the water runs fast. So he found a quiet pool where they might drink. Sometimes he even piled rocks at the edge of a stream to make a quiet pool. Why do you think the shepherd found a shady place for the sheep to rest?
- Sheep sometimes get caught in a thorn bush and the shepherd must help to free the animal. He could have thought: “That silly animal should stay away from thorn bushes, I’ll let him get out by himself.” Why do you think he helped the sheep?
- Lambs are like children. Sometimes they wander away, and do not come back when the shepherd calls. Do you think the shepherd got tired of calling and chasing the lambs?
- The shepherd was out in the hills with his sheep for a week or more. Before dark each day he looked for a sheepcote where he and his animals could be safe all night from wild animals. He looked at each sheep as it went into the cote. He poured oil on any scratches. He counted the sheep. Often two or more shepherds would lead their sheep into the same sheep cote at night. This shepherd had 100 sheep. But one was missing. He asked another shepherd to watch the 99 sheep while he went to look for the lost one.

- The shepherd had a lot of sheep left. Why do you think he went to look for only one sheep?
- How do you think the lamb felt when he could not find the shepherd or the flock? How would you feel if you were lost?
- The shepherd carried the lamb back to the rest of the flock. Why didn't the shepherd make the lamb walk? Do you think he punished the lamb for getting lost?
- When the shepherd got back the other shepherds saw how happy he was. They were happy too! Why? Because he found the lamb that ran away!
- Jesus wanted the people to know that He is like a good shepherd. How did this story help the people to know that Jesus loves everyone? Do you think that God loves people who do wrong things?