

The Good Shepherd

*David the Shepherd King, from Psalm 51, 2 Samuel 7;
paraphrase of Psalm 23*

DAVID WAS A SHEPHERD, but when God looked at him, he saw a king.

Sure enough, when David grew up, that's just what he became. And David was a great king. He had a heart like God's heart — full of love.

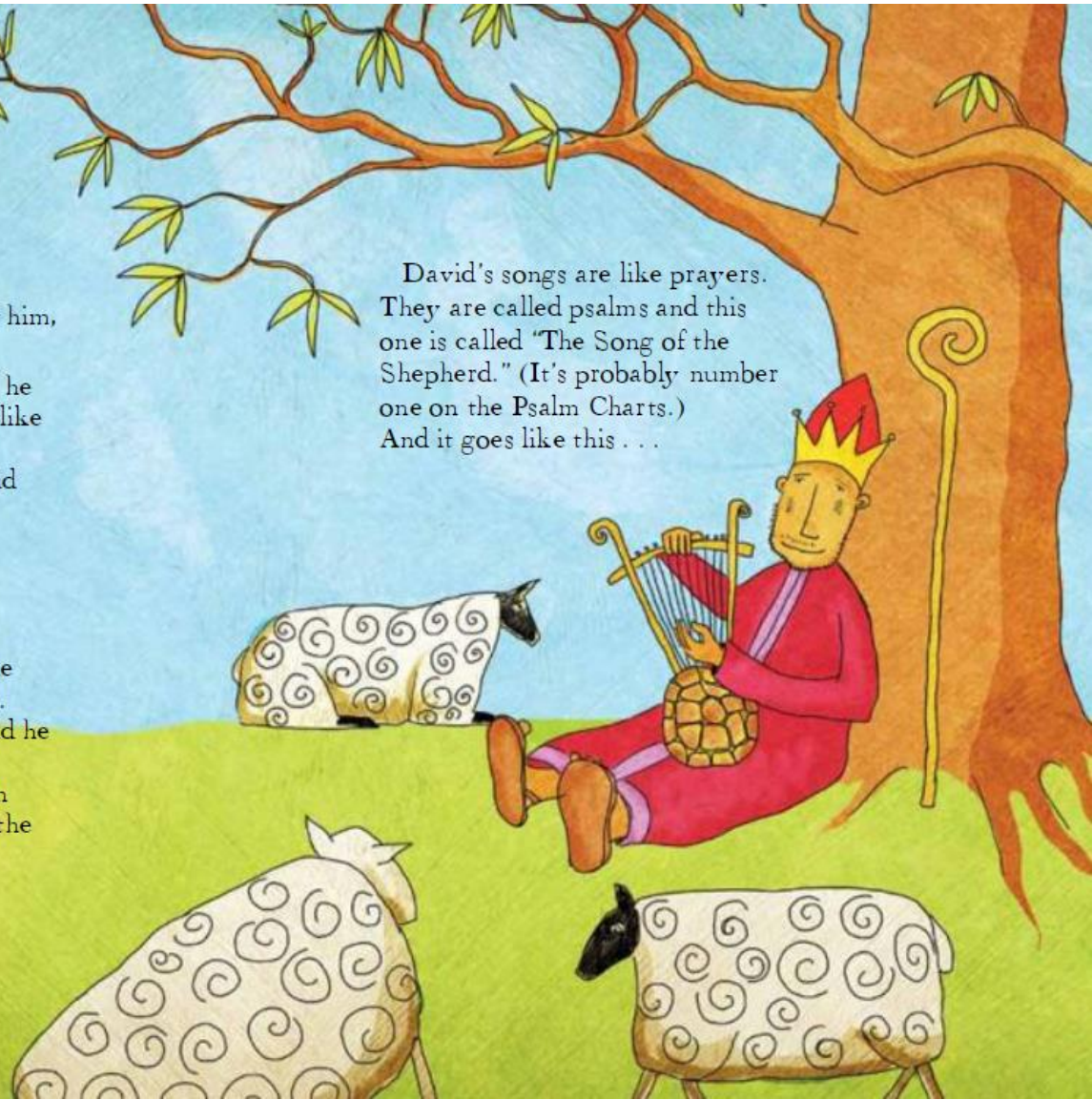
Now, that didn't mean he was perfect, because he did some terrible things — he even murdered a man. No, David made a big mess of his life. But God can take even the biggest mess and make it work in his plan.

"I need a new heart, Lord," David prayed, "because mine is full of sin. Make me clean inside."

God heard David's prayer. He forgave David and he made David a promise: "I will make you great, David. And one day, a King will be born into your family, and he will heal the whole world."

Did you know that David was a songwriter, too? In fact his songs were so good, they might have been in the top 40 charts (if they'd been invented then).

David's songs are like prayers. They are called psalms and this one is called "The Song of the Shepherd." (It's probably number one on the Psalm Charts.) And it goes like this . . .





God is my Shepherd
And I am his little lamb.

He feeds me
He guides me
He looks after me.
I have everything I need.

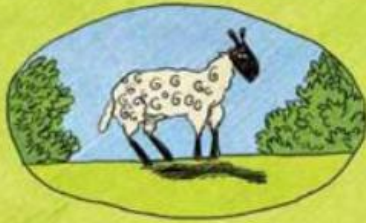
Inside, my heart is very quiet.
As quiet as lying still in soft green grass
In a meadow
By a little stream.

Even when I walk through
the dark, scary, lonely places
I won't be afraid
Because my Shepherd knows where I am.

He is here with me
He keeps me safe
He rescues me

He makes me strong
And brave.





He is getting wonderful things ready for me
Especially for me
Everything I ever dreamed of!

He fills my heart so full of happiness
I can't hold it all inside.

Wherever I go I know
God's Never Stopping
Never Giving Up
Unbreaking
Always and Forever
Love
Will go, too!

God gave David that song to sing to his people, so they could know that he loved them and would always look after them — like a shepherd loves his sheep.

And one day, God was going to do something that would inspire thousands upon thousands of new songs. God was going to show his people once and for all just how much he loved them.

Another Shepherd was coming — a greater Shepherd. He would be called the Good Shepherd. And this Shepherd was going to lead all of God's lambs back to the place where they had always belonged — close to God's heart.

