



# WEEK 4

## ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

**BREAKING  
NEWS**

### THE BIG IDEA

When I am lost, God guides me.

### THE BIBLE

**Ezekiel:** Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24  
(Psalm 95:1-7)

## LARGE GROUP TIME

*WHAT? What are we talking about today?*

#### MUSIC | Eyewitness Praise

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play "[Sing for Joy](#)" and invite the kids to sing along.

#### ACTIVITY | Follow the Leader

- Extra! Extra! Read all about it! Here we are back again with breaking news, which are moments in the Bible where God had important messages to communicate through prophets. Today's prophet is going to talk about following our leader.
- **Who is our ultimate leader?** That's right! Our leader is God! Before our next story, though, let's play a fun game that helps us be good listeners and followers!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Tell all of the kids to stand up. Play a few rounds of "Follow the Leader." Tell the kids to follow everything you do. If time permits, allow one kid to be the leader for a round.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Play a variation of this game where the leader gives a command (e.g., "lift your right foot") but does a different action (e.g., raises right hand). Anyone who does what the leader does instead of what the leader says is out!

#### ACTIVITY | Now Hiring: A Shepherd

- All month long, we are talking about breaking news and things you might see in the news. In a newspaper, there is a section called, "The Classifieds." This is where someone might find available jobs from people and companies looking to hire workers. Some of these jobs are for

people who take care of animals.

- **By a show of hands, how many of you have pets at home?**
- **Who helps you take care of your pets?**
- Sometimes, we are the ones who lead our pets. When we are taking our dog for a walk, we are leading the dog on the leash. When we have a treat for our cat, we lead our cat to where the treat is.
- **Does anyone know what kind of animal a shepherd leads and watches over?**
- Shepherds lead sheep! Turns out, sheep need to be led quite a bit.
- **If there was a classified ad for a shepherd, what do you think it would say? What type of person would they look for?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *On a poster board, write, “Now Hiring: A Shepherd.” Ask the kids to give different suggestions for what would make a good shepherd. Allow them to give silly answers, but make sure by the end of the activity, you lay out an accurate description of a shepherd’s job.*
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Delve a little deeper into what a shepherd actually has to do. After kids come up with some job descriptions, see if they can find parallels to what shepherds do in other professions.*

#### POLL | Have You Ever Lost Something?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For each of the questions below have kids respond with a smiley face for “no” or a frowny face for “yes” by tugging at the corners of their mouths.*
- **Have you ever lost something important to you?**
- **Who has ever lost their favorite toy?**
- **Have you ever lost your sweater or jacket?**
- **What about your socks? How many of you have one sock that does not have its match?**
- **Have you ever lost money?**
- There’s a reason why you were making frowny faces to answer yes. When we lose something, especially something valuable to us, it can make us sad. When we lose something important to us, we search high and low to find it. We do not stop until it is found!

### SO WHAT? *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

#### SCRIPTURE | Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Ask the same or different adult volunteers to lend a hand with the skits, or play both parts yourself. Provide a handheld microphone – real or pretend– for the characters to use. Print the scripture and roll it up like a scroll for Ezekiel to read.*
- Today, we’re going to meet another prophet by the name of Ezekiel. Ezekiel was from Judah, and lived during a really rough time in history. During that time, the people had been living in a way that did not honor God. All of the people of Judah had been exiled to a place called Babylon. Exiled means being sent away from the place where you live.
- This already sounds like some bad news. However, the breaking news that Ezekiel had was actually good news! Let’s see what he had to say:

- **Reporter:** Hello. This is *[name of volunteer]* again bringing you breaking news from the prophets. This time, we are going to hear from Ezekiel from Judah. Ezekiel, we know that your people have been away from home for quite a long time. What does God have to say to them?
- **Ezekiel:** *[Read Ezekiel 34:11-16.]*
- **Reporter:** Wow! That sounds like God is not happy with the leaders.
- **Ezekiel:** That's right. God feels the leaders have not been doing their job leading the people well. But God will take care of the people anyway.
- **Reporter:** That is good news. Anything else?
- **Ezekiel:** *[Read Ezekiel 34:20-24.]*
- **Reporter:** Can you tell us more about that?
- **Ezekiel:** They have taken advantage of people who can't help or defend themselves. But God will take care of all the sheep, or God's people. God alone is the judge of who is worthy of care and God will take care of everybody.
- **Reporter:** Thank you, Ezekiel, for that good news from God. This is *[volunteer name]* signing off until next time.
- Let's think about it like this: God is the shepherd, and the people are God's sheep. God spoke through Ezekiel, sharing a message of hope. Ezekiel was saying that even though the people were like lost sheep, God would bring the people back to where they needed to be.
- **What can we learn from Ezekiel's breaking news?**

#### THE BIG IDEA | When I am lost, God guides me.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask two volunteers to run across the front carrying a banner that says, "Breaking News" and play the sound effects from [this video](#). Ask another volunteer to play the role of the breaking news reporter.
- We interrupt these activities to bring you some breaking news. This is *[name of volunteer]* with today's Big Idea: **When I am lost, God guides me.**
- We now return to your regularly scheduled programming.

#### VIDEO | Breaking News, Episode 4

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's [teaching video](#).

#### STORY | Using a GPS or Map

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Tell a story (or ask another leader to share a story) about a time when you had to use a GPS or a map due to being lost. Focus on the fact that the GPS or map guided you to where you needed to be.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Whatever the story may be, add visual components to engage and sustain the kids' attention to what you are saying. At the end of the story, have a grand finale component that provides an emphasis on the Big Idea: "When I am lost, God guides me."
- It's a good thing there was a GPS or map to help you find your way.

- And it's a good thing we have God to guide us in life. You know, sometimes it can feel like we don't know what to expect. We can feel lost. But God is there to give us direction. God will guide us.
- **When I am lost, God guides me.**

### ACTIVITY | Human GPS

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Create two teams of five players each, and have them go on opposite ends of the room, while everyone else sits in the middle of the room. Four members from each team will be blindfolded, and the fifth player (or a leader) will gently guide them and station them such that all four of them are a good distance apart from each other. The fifth player then will provide step-by-step instructions to player 1 (who is blindfolded) so that they can safely get to where player 2 is. Once they get there, player 1 AND player 2 now have to safely get to player 3, and so on. The first team to get all four blindfolded players to where player 5 is standing wins!
- **What did the blindfolded players have to rely on to make it safely through the game?** That's right! They had to listen for their teammate who was giving them directions. Sure, they could have just felt their way around, but that would have been slower and even dangerous.
- Did you know that sheep know their shepherd's voice? Let's see what the Bible says that means for us, as God's sheep!

### SCRIPTURE | Psalm 95:1-7

- Sometimes, we are like lost sheep. We need a guide! We make mistakes and mess up at times, but God still loves us. God is still willing to guide us when we are lost. That is something to celebrate!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Find Psalm 95:1-7 in your Bible and encourage the kids to find it, too. Read it together. Then, read it again, inviting the kids to take turns reading one verse at a time.
- Verse 7 reminds us that God is our shepherd. Just like it says, we are the sheep under God's care.
- When we are lost, in the sense that we don't know what the right thing to do is or we're not sure of what God wants us to do, instead of just trying to "feel our way around" by giving it our best guess, we need to practice listening for God's voice – just like sheep do!
- We can celebrate that **when we are lost, God guides us.**

**NOW WHAT?** *What does God want us to do about it?*

### RESPONSE | Feeling Lost

- Sometimes, when we talk about getting lost, we are talking about being physically lost, like when we are on a trip and don't know how to get where we are going.
- But sometimes, feeling lost doesn't have to do with where our bodies are. It has to do with how we are feeling. Maybe you feel like you are having trouble making friends in a new place. Or you are undecided in making a big decision. When we feel like we need someone to help us, we can feel lost.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Post a large map on the wall. Give the kids sticky notes and ask them to write down ways they might feel lost. If they want their note to be private, have them write on the sticky side, so that when they stick it up, the blank side will face up. Invite them to come place their sticky note anywhere on the map.
- Being lost is never a good feeling. But thankfully, God is always around to guide us if we ever feel lost!

### REFLECTION | Tune In

- When there is breaking news online or on TV, people all over the world tune in to hear the information. God always has news to share with us if we give God time to speak. Tune in to God by being quiet and asking God to say something to you. It might not be through words that you hear. It could be feelings you experience. Or you might get a sense that you are loved. There are a lot of different things God can say to us in different ways.
- Let's practicing tuning in to God right now and let God speak to us.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play some soft music in the background. Ask the kids to bow their heads, close their eyes, and sit quietly for a few moments.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Some kids might not be sure of what to do during this time so try having a leader guide this reflection activity by prompting kids with questions that kids can respond to.

### MEMORY VERSE | Picture the Verse

- Let's pretend our memory verse is something happening on the news. Draw a picture that you think might show what is happening in our memory verse.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give kids a copy of the memory verse printable. Provide crayons and instruct them to draw a picture to go along with the verse.
  - ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** Add an image on to the printable beforehand and pass those out to the kids. While they decorate, practice saying the verse aloud with them, or set the verse to the tune of a catchy song.

### PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for being our shepherd. We sometimes feel like we've lost our way. But instead of losing hope or feeling down, help us to remember that when we are lost, you guide us. Amen.

## SMALL GROUP TIME

### DISCUSSION

- What can you tell me about Ezekiel?
- What metaphor did God use to describe the people and their leaders?
- How were the leaders being poor shepherds?
- Let's look at Psalm 95:2. Why do you think we are instructed to "shout triumphantly to God?"
- What are some ways we might feel lost?
- When we are lost, what can we do?
- How can we make sure we are listening to God?

### ACTIVITY | DIY Sheep

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids draw a [sheep face](#) using black construction paper, cut it out, then glue on some googly eyes. Have them also create four legs. Then, mix equal parts shaving cream and school glue in a bowl (or you can do 2 cups of shaving cream per 1 cup of glue). Have kids scoop out the mixture with a spoon and dollop it on colored cardstock paper, and try to make the shape of a sheep's body. Have them stick on the face and legs to the mixture, then set aside to dry.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Ask these questions as they make this craft: What does it mean that we are the flock and God is our shepherd? How do we keep from getting lost? How do sheep know the sound of their master's voice? How can we learn to recognize God's voice?
- Today we talked about how we are all like sheep that need a shepherd – God – to guide us. Let's make our own sheep to help us remember all the things we learned today!

### MEMORY VERSE | I Corinthians 16:13 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Practice this month's memory verse with the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) we've provided.