



## Walking with God: The Rod & Staff

*"Yea, 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." Psalm 23:4*

For the Hebrew people of the Old Testament shepherds and sheep were part of the fabric of daily life. Though we may have seen sheep at a petting farm or a zoo, most of us have never seen a shepherd, so it is a bit difficult for us to understand their significance. Most importantly, a shepherd took care of his sheep; he looked after every lamb with much care and attention. When a shepherd took his sheep to graze, he always carried a rod and a staff. The rod was a sturdy wooden stick he used to fight off any animals that tried to attack the sheep—and the staff was a long skinny stick with a loop at the top—the shepherd used the staff to guide and direct the sheep so they would not wander away from the herd and get lost. The rod and staff remind us that no matter what danger we might ever face, we have a Shepherd, Jesus Christ, who most importantly loves us, protects us when we are in danger or hurting, and guides us when we stray from the right path.

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**Find the Hills Challenge:** When you take your family walk, consider walking on a path that might be a bit hilly, find a long skinny stick to help you along the way, and take some time for silence as you are walking to think about a time when you got off the right path, and God gently guided you back to Him, or a time when you were in danger and God protected you.

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**Journal Idea:** Draw a picture of or write what you thought about during the walk. Then share with one another, ending with a prayer of Thanksgiving.

