

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES FOR EASTER 4

SUNDAY 3rd MAY 2020

GETTING STARTED



Can you find someone to play 'Who Am I' with? This is a guessing game and you will need some post-its and a pen. Each person writes the name of a famous person on a post-it and then you stick it on the forehead of the other person. They have to ask you questions to work out who they are, for example 'am I a man?', 'am I a sports person?' When they think they know who they are they say, 'I am'

In the Bible Jesus used 7 special sayings which all begin 'I am' He used these to help people understand who he was, each 'I am ...' tells us something important about who he is and what he does. In today's Bible story Jesus says, 'I am the gate'. Let's find out about the story and what Jesus meant.

THE STORY

You can watch this YouTube clip, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKtW_3yQXBw. The first 1.2 minutes is today's Bible story, it then goes on to talk about another one of Jesus' I am sayings, see if you can work out which one. Or you can read the story below.



Jesus said, 'I am just like a good shepherd who takes care of his flock of sheep. He knows the names of all his sheep. When he calls them, they follow him into the safety of the sheepfold. And when he calls them out, they follow him wherever he goes, because they know and trust him. But if a stranger gets into the sheepfold and calls to the sheep, they refuse to follow, because they do not know the stranger's voice. The gatekeeper only opens the gate for the good shepherd. Thieves and robbers try to break into the fold to steal the sheep, but the shepherd protects them from danger.'

The people listening to Jesus still did not understand what he was saying, so he said to them, 'I am just like the gate of the sheepfold. All those who went before me were thieves and robbers who wanted to lead the sheep astray, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am not like a thief who comes to steal and kill and destroy. **I am the gate:** whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. I came that the sheep might have a full and happy life.'

THINKING ABOUT IT – SHEEP PENS IN JESUS TIME

In this story, Jesus calls himself the gate for the sheep. That might be a bit confusing for us to understand as we don't live in a place where there are sheep all over the place. In Jesus time, you would have seen sheep and shepherds in nearly every field. The people listening to Jesus would have known exactly what he meant when he said he was the gate for sheep.

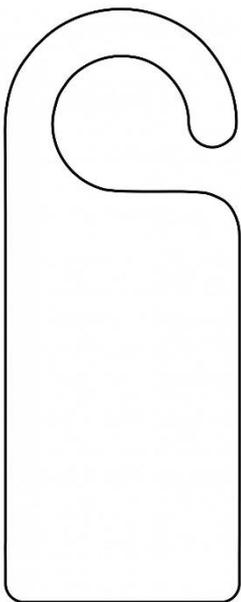
In Jesus' time, shepherds would usually keep their sheep in two types of pens. If you were in the city there would be a big pen where several shepherds could keep their sheep all together. This type of pen had a door, which was guarded at night by a gatekeeper, a bit like the one in the picture above. In the morning, the shepherds would come and call their own sheep, even though there were lots of sheep all in the pen together, they would only follow their shepherd because they knew his voice.

The second type of sheep pen was a smaller pen out in the countryside and a shepherd would keep his sheep out here when the weather was good. The walls of these pens were made of piles of rocks, and there was no gate, just an opening for the sheep to go through. To keep his sheep inside, and to keep wild animals out, the shepherd would lay across the opening to sleep.



Jesus calls himself the gate because he keeps us safe and protects us from anything that could hurt us. When we hear his voice and follow him, we go through the Jesus gate and he shows us how to live God's life, a life that is full and happy.

CRAFT



Can you make a door hanger to remind us that Jesus said 'I am the gate'?

There is a template on the last page. If you have some sparkles you can decorate it or colour it in.



WORKSHEETS

There is a separate file this week with a word search, maze, crossword.

PRAYER

Dear God, help us to listen for your voice and to follow you and trust you. Amen

