

Restoring “baaa-d” relationships

In the pasture at Nazareth Village roam a flock of sheep. Some sheep have white wool, some have black wool, and some are spotted. This close-knit flock of sheep keep each other safe, comfort each other when they are afraid, and play with each other. Wherever the sheep go to eat grass or to drink water, they always stay together! Do you have close family or friends like this?

One day, the sheep were wandering in the field and along came a rooster. The rooster kept following the flock of sheep, and would fly in their faces. The sheep didn't want the rooster around because it was mean. But still, the rooster would follow them to a stream of water or a certain patch of grass. Everywhere the sheep went, the rooster followed.

The sheep would not have picked the rooster to be their friend. The rooster was mean; the sheep were peaceful. The rooster liked to wander by himself; the sheep liked to stay in a group. How could the sheep and rooster be friends? They were so different from each other!

At first, the rooster was not liked by the sheep. But with time, the sheep began to accept the rooster. He could even be nice sometimes! Eventually, the rooster stopped flying in the sheep's faces and the sheep let the rooster join them in eating the seeds. Now, even a year from when the rooster first appeared, when the shepherd calls the sheep, the rooster follows also.

Questions for discussion

1. At the beginning of this story, the sheep and the rooster didn't get along. Think about a time at school or church when you didn't get along with someone. Why didn't you like them?
2. In the Bible, Jesus tells us that we should love others, even the people who we don't like (Matthew 5:44). In the story, the sheep showed the rooster love by treating it as one of the flock. How can you show love to someone who you don't always like?
3. Even though the sheep didn't like the rooster, they eventually became friends. What good qualities did the sheep find in the rooster? What good qualities can you find in the people you don't like?

Additional video content

Are you curious about how the sheep and rooster acted before they got along? Check out the video on our website.
www.MennoniteMission.net/NazarethMissionBank



God tells us to love everyone. Even those we don't always get along with.

Our gifts can help support Nazareth Village.

\$500 helps to build a study center, where students, teachers and pastors can come to spend time learning about Jesus' life in Nazareth.

\$100 helps Nazareth Village stay open for a day.

\$50 helps Nazareth Village purchase one lamb for the farm.

\$15 allows one person to visit Nazareth Village to see how Jesus lived.

Gift designation. All gifts to support ministries in Nazareth Village should be sent to Mennonite Mission Network, PO Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370. Please indicate that the funds are for **“Mission Banks: Nazareth Village”** or **“Project #1428.”**

▶ For more activities and stories, visit www.MennoniteMission.net/NazarethMissionBank.



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Why do children like Nazareth Village?

Children in present-day Nazareth are not much different from children in the United States. They want to play with their friends, to be loved by their family, and to have fun! In Nazareth, many children come to Nazareth Village to have fun and explore life as Jesus would have lived it. They herd sheep, ride donkeys, learn to weave, and work with the carpenter.

“We come to rest in the midst of nature, sit under the olive trees, enjoy our friends, and simply be a kid like Jesus would have been,” a girl named Natalie said.

At Nazareth Village, children don’t just learn about work. They learn about food and fun, too! The following games were popular in Jesus’ time.

The Ball Game (also known as Monkey in the Middle)

Gather three or more people to stand in a circle. One player should stand inside the circle. Then, a player around the circle throws the ball to another player around the circle (avoiding the player in the center). If the player in the middle catches the ball, they leave the middle, and the one who threw the ball goes into the middle, and the game starts all over again. The game ends whenever you choose to end it.

The Name Game

Gather three or more people to stand in a circle. Pick a player to throw the ball up high and say the name of one of the other players. If the player whose name was called catches the ball before it hits the ground, the player that threw the ball, throws it again and says someone else’s name.

If the ball falls to the ground before it is caught, then all the players must run away from that player until he or she gets the ball and says, “Stop!” The other players must immediately freeze, and the person with the ball must throw the ball to tag one of the “frozen” players. If a player gets tagged by the ball, then that player is out of the game. If the player who threw the ball misses, then the thrower is out of the game. The game ends when there are two players left.

Additional video content

Visit our website to learn why children are so excited about coming to Nazareth Village!
www.MennoniteMission.net/NazarethMissionBank



Gather ‘round—at Nazareth Village, children can explore life as Jesus would have lived.

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A day in the life of a Nazareth child

When Jesus was a boy, lives were simple. People often grew up to learn the jobs, or occupations, of their parents. Do you remember what Jesus' earthly dad, Joseph, did for a living? (See Matthew 13:55.) Any other boy of Jesus' age would have followed in his dad's footsteps. Similarly, the girls learned the work of their moms.

Each morning, children would wake up early – sometimes as early as 4 a.m. to start their days with their parents! In that time, everyone had their distinct roles, and they worked hard. For girls, sometimes it meant carrying a heavy bucket of water with their moms. For boys, it sometimes meant lifting heavy bundles of wheat with their dads during harvest.

Boys would start their days by doing chores before the heat of the day set in. Then they would go to the synagogue with their dads and brothers. At the synagogue, where Jews go to worship God, they would study God's word. Did you know that Jews use the same first five books of the Bible as Christians do? They call it the Torah. After four hours of studying God's word and memorizing Scripture, boys would follow their dads, and sometimes uncles and cousins, to their work. At work, the boys would learn from their dads to be a carpenter, like Joseph, or to work in the fields during harvest, or to make sure that the sheep and donkeys were safe in the pastures.

Girls would learn from their moms to weave, clean, carry buckets of water, and cook. Lunch was the main meal of the day, when families often ate stew. Supper was normally

smaller, made up of bread and dips. Some common food was lentil soup, goat cheese, olives, herbs, chicken, and vegetables.

Children would work with their parents (and play, of course!) until nearly sunset, which signaled the end of the day. After that, they would curl up and go to sleep, because oil lamps for light or warmth were expensive.

Questions for discussion

1. Life in Jesus' time probably looked very different from what it does for us. What things did you notice are different?
2. Did you notice that the boys studied God's word each day, while the girls didn't? Why do you think this is? (It's OK if we don't have an answer. Try to see things from another point of view, whether or not you agree with it.)
3. Just because someone does something different from what we do, doesn't mean that it's wrong. In fact, sometimes we can even learn something from them! Tell about a time when you remember learning something from someone who thought differently from you. What did you learn?

Additional video content

Visit our website to learn more about how children lived in Jesus' day, and to tie a head cover like people often wore in those days.
www.MennoniteMission.net/NazarethMissionBank



Helping hands—In first century Nazareth, children woke up early to start work with their parents.

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