
Lost Sheep and Lost Creations

Hymn [The World Is So Big, Children's Songbook, #235](#)

Luke 15:4 "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?"

Ecc. 3:119 "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea they have all one breath..."

"There can be no doubt in the mind of any person who believes in the God of heaven that He will hold man accountable for any ill treatment of the creatures He has placed under his control, and those who misuse or treat them with cruelty will be called to an account for such acts. It is not our acts to our fellow man alone that we shall be called to an account for, but our acts to the creations of our Father in heaven. These animals are His, He created them, and they are not outside of the reach of His love and care, and they cannot be badly treated with impunity. This is the lesson that should be impressed deeply upon the minds of the young, and when they are awakened to realize this they will be more humane to the animals they have in their keeping and be more likely to treat them with consideration and kindness." –[George Q. Cannon](#)

Jesus sometimes used animals in His teachings, like the birds of the field or the lost sheep. In the latter, he taught the importance of the one and how disciples ought to feel the loss of one individual so much that they would work diligently to return them to safety.

Early prophets of the restoration taught that these principles extend to our relations with God's creatures. Joseph Smith stopped some men from killing rattlesnakes, and "exhorted the brethren not to kill a serpent, bird, or animal of any kind." When grasshoppers were eating the saints' crops, Brigham Young's response was that, so long as they had enough provisions, "we can say to the grasshoppers—these creatures of God—you are welcome." When we love the Savior's creations as He does, we will preserve them whenever possible.

Many of God's species are in danger today. It may not seem to make a big difference to some, but saints know that God cares about every individual sparrow. As stewards over His earth, it is our responsibility to help the animals fulfill their divine mandate of multiplying in their respective spheres. As we do so, we will better understand that God placed them in those spheres for a reason—often in ways that ultimately bless humankind.

Activity Ideas

For young children:

Missing Object game. Gather a dozen small items from your home and place them on a table. Look at each item carefully, and then take turns having one person remove an item while everyone else closes their eyes. Have them open their eyes and see if they can guess what is missing. Increase the number of objects for difficulty.

For older children:

As a family, draw animals in a food chain/interconnected web. Ask what would happen if an animal they didn't like was removed. Here's [one resource](#).

For all:

Visit a beekeeper [in your area](#). Learn what helps and harms the bee populations.

Treat Ideas

Quick and easy preparation:

Animal crackers from the grocery store.

Moderate preparation:

[Ladybug Chocolate-covered Strawberries](#)

Advanced preparation:

Make and decorate sugar cookies with animal cookie cutters. [Here's](#) a recipe.

Additional Resources

Read the story about Joseph Smith and the rattlesnakes [here](#).

Read Brigham Young's counsel on letting the grasshoppers live [here](#).

[This recent article](#) in the Deseret News talks about the extinction of species in our day.

Learn what the Church has done to create a sustainable habitat at their [Deseret Land and Livestock Ranch](#).

Learn more about endangered species [here](#) and [here](#).