

**FREE
SAMPLE**

PEACE WITH THE PSALMS

40 READINGS TO RELAX YOUR MIND
AND CALM YOUR HEART



DEVOTIONS FROM

ABIDE CHRISTIAN MEDITATION



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THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD: PSALM 23

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack
nothing.
He makes me lie down in green
pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
he refreshes my soul.

—PSALM 23:1-3



Imagine it. Lying down in a beautiful lush green pasture beside a quiet, soothing stream. Not a care in the world. Only feeling refreshed, restored, protected, guided, consoled, and loved. Yes, there are shadows. There is darkness. But never so oppressing that you fear it. Because God is with you. He has been, he is, and he will be for all eternity.

PEACE WITH THE PSALMS

Whether or not your life feels peaceful doesn't change the fact that your Father in heaven is the Good Shepherd and is present to love and care for you.

Imagine God's eyes, how he looks at you, the intense care and love. The look that says he knows everything about you yet loves you anyway. It's impossible for him to love you any more than he does right now.

Imagine the pastures he gives you. Feel the cool grass as you look up at the blue sky. The warmth on your face. Soak up everything you imagine around you. Can you hear the birds twittering happily? A gentle breeze stirs your hair. Smell the sweet scent of the grass and the nearby wildflowers. You are in a safe haven. A wide-open space well guarded by your loving Shepherd.

Hear water bubbling nearby. Gentle. Soothing. Refreshing. Hear it. Smell it. Dangle your feet and toes in it. It is there to soothe you. You dip your cupped hand in and pull out a handful of the cool water. You lean your head down to drink. Ahhh. Feel the life that it gives you. Drink deeply of the Living Water that is Jesus within your soul.

He leads you along the right paths for his name's sake. Not wandering, but guided down a path. His light shines on that path. His Word is a lamp for your feet to keep you from stumbling. His rod protects you. His staff guides you.

Even though you walk through the sunless valley, you will fear no evil, for you are with him. No storms surprise God. No thunder bothers him. No shadows catch him unaware. He is with you. You are his forever.

The Lord Is My Shepherd: Psalm 23

He prepares a table before you in the presence of your enemies. Sit at the table he has prepared. See all the gifts he has laid out before you. He has anointed and refreshed your head with oil. Your cup overflows. His blessings don't just fill you; they overflow.

Surely goodness and mercy and unfailing love shall follow you all the days of your life, and you shall dwell forever, throughout all of eternity, in the house and presence of the Lord.

Our gracious, heavenly Father, our Good Shepherd, thank you for leading me to this green pasture, for making me to lie down and rest. May I feel your presence all around me; help me to revel in the goodness you have brought me. May I hear your voice of comfort and feel your hands of care on me. When I am afraid, may I trust in you, knowing you care for me so very much. Take all worry away, Lord, as you walk with me through the valleys. Remind me moment by moment of your care and provision for me. Help me to relax, Lord, knowing that you will stay by my side. You will never leave me nor forsake me. As numerous as the stars are in the sky or as the grains of sand are on all the beaches in the world, so vast is your love for me. Let your love envelop me like a blanket, keeping me safe and warm. Let your clear waters restore my soul. Amen.



A TIME TO DANCE: PSALM 33

Sing joyfully to the LORD, you
righteous;
it is fitting for the upright to
praise him.
Praise the LORD with the harp;
make music to him on the ten-
stringed lyre.
Sing to him a new song;
play skillfully, and shout for joy.

—PSALM 33:1-3



A spirit of joy is a delight to the soul! But it's not always easy to come by. Sometimes our emotions get in the way. What is hindering you from experiencing joy in the Lord?

PEACE WITH THE PSALMS

I invite you to take your eyes off your circumstances and instead to focus on God himself so that you can receive the joy that he has for you—joy *in him*, which is so different from the world's.

God is glorious and deserving of our praise! When we turn our gaze on his wonderful face, our hearts are freed to sing of his mighty works, to bask in his loving-kindness and vast love for us. With everything we are and with all that we do, we can praise him. All of creation tells of his glory. Waves crash, thunder rolls!

For his mighty deeds, praise him. According to his excellent greatness, praise him. With every breath that you have, praise him. In a loud, glad, exalting voice, praise the God of the heavens and the earth. The psalmist calls on everything that has breath to praise the Lord!

As you turn your heart to a spirit of praise, lift your eyes to the heavens. See God's glory all around you in his creation. The trees of the field clap their hands in praise to him. The birds of the air are fed and clothed by him. Let your heart soar as you see all that he has done around you and in you.

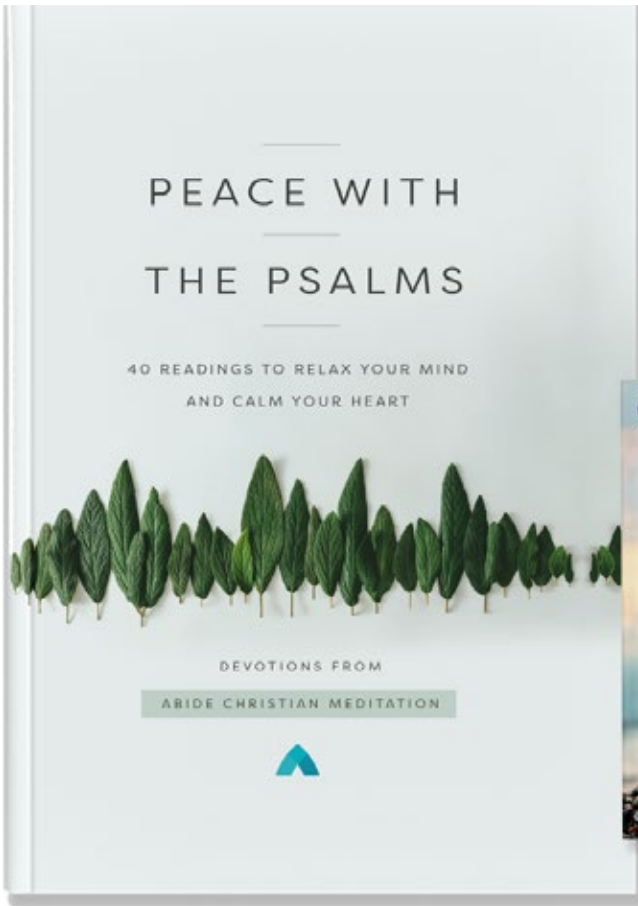
Music is often something you can use to quiet your heart and bring steadiness to your soul. Those peaceful times are renewing and invigorating. And then comes the loud crashing of the cymbals in joyous celebration of the goodness and greatness of God—the joy and the dancing that bursts forth from the very depths of your soul as you remember all that God is and all that he has done for you!

We are told in Zephaniah 3:17 that God will exult over us with loud singing and that he will rejoice over us with gladness. Imagine listening to his words of love for you and reflecting them back to him as you realize in a deeper and deeper way how much he loves you.

In Psalm 33:3 the psalmist urges you to write a new song, one filled with joy and praise to the God who *does* wonders and is wonderful. The great God of the universe is your audience. He is eager for your every word. Let his joy suffuse your heart, mind, and soul so that it spills out of your lips as you stand before him and praise him in the midst of all creation! Praise the Lord!

Oh Lord, Psalm 8:1 says "how majestic is your name in all the earth!" I might not be a world-class musician. I might not have the voice of an angel. But all that I am is yours, and with every breath I take, I want to praise you. You are good; you are sovereign; you are mighty. No power on earth can best you. Thank you for your love and care for me. You are worthy of praise! Open my eyes to see your wonders. Remind my heart of how worthy you are of my praise every moment of every day. Yes, I have struggles in this life, but you never change even though my circumstances do! I'm so very grateful for all that you are and all that you have done. May I never grow weary of praising you. Amen.

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