

Especially for

From

Date





*Everyday
Inspiration*
from
Psalm 23

*A Devotional Journal
for Women*

BARBOUR BOOKS

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Introduction

The twenty-third Psalm is one of the most memorized and used sections of scripture in the Bible. Its words are spoken by a broken man to an all-loving God in praise and supplication. The writer, David, was a shepherd, so his word pictures are painted from his experiences. He rested in the green pastures, he walked through the dark valleys, and all along he knew of God's faithfulness. David might have written these words while he was on the same field where the angels announced Christ's birth. What a time of joy!

Psalm 23 is called a psalm of confidence, so trust that the Lord knows your heart and will hear you and be merciful. As you journey through these pages, let the words wash over you. Drink in the depths of each phrase and hear melodies of love and the promise of the Good Shepherd's care.



*Belonging
to Him*



In the Fold

The LORD is my shepherd.

PSALM 23:1 NIV

What a comfort the first line of Psalm 23 is to believers when we realize what care a shepherd takes of his sheep. David was a young shepherd when the Lord first tapped him for service. At that time, he worked on a hillside caring for his family's flock. The sheep—though smelly, often unruly, and not quite smart—were his responsibility. David knew when the animals needed food and water; he kept them safe from predators. He was their provider and protector. It follows, then, when he penned the first line of this psalm, he recognized the job description.

Our God is our Shepherd when we choose to let Him guide us. As a wayward lamb can flee from the flock, we must safeguard our hearts and stay in the fold. Not follow the crowd, but follow the Shepherd: the One who will never leave us alone or unprotected. The beauty of having a shepherd is realizing He is our ally and strength, our Guide. Just as David wouldn't lead his lambs into danger, our Lord will do the same. His desire is for our obedience. He is our safety and refuge. Draw near to the Good Shepherd this day.

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*Like a shepherd, he will care
for his flock, gathering the
lambs in his arms, hugging
them as he carries them.*

ISAIAH 40:11 MSG

*“But you, Bethlehem, in the land
of Judah, are by no means least
among the rulers of Judah; for out
of you will come a ruler who will
shepherd my people Israel.”*

MATTHEW 2:6 NIV

*When Jesus landed and saw a
large crowd, he had compassion on
them, because they were like sheep
without a shepherd. So he began
teaching them many things.*

MARK 6:34 NIV

The sweetest word of the whole
is that monosyllable, "My."
He does not say, "The Lord is the
shepherd of the world at large,
and leadeth forth the multitude
as his flock," but "The Lord is *my*
shepherd"; if he be a Shepherd to
no one else, he is a Shepherd
to *me*; he cares for *me*, watches
over *me*, and preserves *me*.
The words are in the present tense.

CHARLES SPURGEON

Men spontaneously praise
whatever they value.

C. S. LEWIS

Now may the God of peace,
who through the blood of the eternal
covenant brought back from the dead our
Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the
sheep, equip you with everything good for
doing his will, and may he work in
us what is pleasing to him, through
Jesus Christ, to whom be glory
for ever and ever. Amen.

HEBREWS 13:20–21 NIV

Once you were like sheep who
wandered away. But now you
have turned to your Shepherd,
the Guardian of your souls.

1 PETER 2:25 NLT

*And when the Chief Shepherd appears,
you will receive the crown of glory
that will never fade away.*

1 PETER 5:4 NIV

*“I am the Good Shepherd. The Good
Shepherd puts the sheep before himself,
sacrifices himself if necessary. A hired
man is not a real shepherd. The sheep
mean nothing to him. He sees a wolf
come and runs for it, leaving the sheep
to be ravaged and scattered by the wolf.*

*He’s only in it for the money.
The sheep don’t matter to him.”*

JOHN 10:11–13 MSG

Your path with its unexplained
sorrow or turmoil, and mine with
its sharp flints and briars—and both
our paths, with their unexplained
perplexity, their sheer mystery—
they are His paths, on which He will
show Himself loving and faithful.

Nothing else; nothing less.

AMY CARMICHAEL

Where does your security lie?
Is God your refuge, your hiding
place, your stronghold, your shepherd,
your counselor, your friend, your
redeemer, your savior, your guide?
If He is, you don't need to search
any further for security.

ELISABETH ELLIOT

From
His Hand



The Shepherd Host

*He lets me rest in green meadows;
he leads me beside peaceful streams.*

PSALM 23:2 NLT

In our fast-paced world, we often find ourselves overwhelmed with to-do lists and little time to accomplish anything. Fast food, freeways, and frenzy frequent our daily lives. David's words of refreshment in Psalm 23 can serve as a balm to the frazzled. Who wouldn't love the provision of "fresh pastures" and "restful waters"? Even the words convey a sense of calm to the reader. In this simple sentence, we see the God of the universe as a kindly host: One who provides for our needs with a special tenderness and love.

Meditating on these words and knowing for sure that our Jesus wants to supply our needs and allow us rest affords us a peace like no other. Yes, there are tasks at hand for each of us, but we need to remember the times of refreshment and relaxation so we might be reenergized for whatever lies ahead—knowing full well He holds the future. Take a moment to relax. Don't fret over lost time. Be still beside the still waters. Allow yourself time, and enjoy God's presence. Sit in silence and listen for the voice of your Host and allow the rejuvenation of His Spirit within you.

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*My sheep listen to my voice;
I know them, and they follow me.*

JOHN 10:27 NLT

A Message from Israel's GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies: "When I've turned everything around and brought my people back, the old expressions will be heard on the streets: 'GOD bless you!' . . . 'O True Home!' . . . 'O Holy Mountain!' All Judah's people, whether in town or country, will get along just fine with each other. I'll refresh tired bodies; I'll restore tired souls."

JEREMIAH 31:23-25 MSG

Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."

MARK 6:31 NIV

Psalm 23 is no sundial recording only sunny hours; it faces faithfully the dark defile and the lurking foes. At the same time it honestly and thankfully remembers life's delights. In short, it sees life steadily and sees it whole.

THE INTERPRETER'S BIBLE

The branch of the vine does not worry, and toil, and rush here to seek for sunshine, and there to find rain. No; it rests in union and communion with the vine; and at the right time, and in the right way, is the right fruit found on it.

Let us so abide in the Lord Jesus.

HUDSON TAYLOR