



Psalms for the Anxious Heart is a short, daily devotional that offers meditations of truth and peace. Each devotion includes a reading of a Psalm, a brief teaching on the passage, a salient truth to cling to, and a suggested song to guide further meditation.

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*But you, LORD,
are a shield around me,
my glory, the One who lifts
my head high.*

PSALM 3:3

I remember lying in bed one night long ago, unable to sleep. Uncertainty gripped my heart with fingers of fear, strangling out all rational thought. I was teetering on the brink of a full-blown panic attack. I wanted to trust God. I just wasn't sure I could get my heart there. Can you relate? Ever had a panic attack? Life can, at times, hurl at us the unexpected and leave us shaken to the core.

When David wrote Psalm 3, he was shaken to the core. He was on the run from his son Absalom who was trying to

kill him and overtake the throne. I can't imagine one of my kids being so angry that they wanted to kill me, can you? David poured out his heart to the Lord but then made this glorious proclamation about God being his shield.

The apostle Paul also mentions a shield in his famous passage on the armor of God in Ephesians 6. He calls it the shield of faith. In both passages, the shield is God's faithfulness. We don't create a shield by conjuring up enough faith. When uncertainty, fear, and anxiety pummel our minds, we often can't come up with what we feel is enough faith.

The great reassurance from this passage is that you don't have to. Simply put your faith—however small—in the person of Christ Jesus. His very nature is faithfulness. He is the one who shields our thinking in the day of battle. When we focus on His faithful goodness, the Holy Spirit shields our minds from the tormenting attacks of the enemy. God's faithfulness literally becomes a shield around our minds, but only as we choose to focus our thoughts on Him.

Today, when fear threatens to capture your thinking, take those thoughts prisoner. Shift your focus to praising God. He is your shield. His faithfulness will guard your thinking as you fix your thoughts on Him.

Selah—Pause and Reflect: *What reminders do you have of God’s faithfulness in the past that might prompt you to trust Him today?*

Today’s Truth: *In times of uncertainty and fear, fix your thoughts on God’s faithfulness.*

Listen: *“I Will Praise You” sung by Hillsong Worship and “Take Courage” sung by Kristene DiMarco*

Pray: Lord Jesus, in these uncertain days, I often feel anxious and afraid. I bow before You and praise You for Your unfailing love in my life. I take the shield of Your faithfulness, and I hold it up against any attack of the enemy toward my mind. I praise You that I can trust You to accomplish what concerns me. Lord God, Your Word teaches me that the key to keeping my mind at peace is to focus my thoughts on You. Holy One, You have already established peace for me. You are good, holy, faithful, and true. You alone are worthy of all my praise. You are worthy, Lord, to receive glory and honor and power.

(Psalm 138:8; Isaiah 26:3, 12–13; Ephesians 6:16; Revelation 4:11)

*Many, LORD, are asking,
“Who will bring us prosperity?”
Let the light of your face shine on us.*

PSALM 4:6

David, the writer of this psalm, gives voice to several of the fears that pummel our hearts in the face of a crisis. It almost feels as if he is living through our current pandemic. David writes, “Many, LORD, are asking, ‘who will bring us prosperity?’” In other words, “Where is our provision?”

When the children of Israel wandered through the desert, they complained about their lack. Lack of proper food, lack of water, and lack of direction (Ex. 16). God provided manna for them to eat each day. The Israelites

asked, “What is it?” And that’s where the name manna came from (v. 31). They could only gather enough for that day. If they tried to collect more, it became rotten. This became a test of their faith. Would they trust God to provide for each day? God led them through the wilderness with the cloud of His presence during the day and the fire of His presence at night. As David writes this psalm, he remembers it is the light of God’s presence that provides for our lack as we journey through the wilderness.

Friend, in times of crisis, it’s easy to focus on what we lack. Feeling fearful, we look at the stock market and wonder, will it crash? Will we have a job? Will we be able to make our house payment? So many questions.

In the exact moment of our panic, we need to turn our eyes toward the light of His presence and remember He Himself is our provision. His nature lacks nothing! He is the glorious, eternal one who is our Creator, Provider, Healer, and Sustainer. He does not lack and promises that, even in the wilderness, He Himself will be our provision.

Selah—Pause and Reflect: *When you feel panic hit, where do you most often run? Netflix, food, alcohol? What does it look like for you to focus your attention on the God who lacks nothing and who promises to be your provision?*

Today's Truth: *He Himself is your provision.*

Listen: *"With You" sung by Elevation Worship*

Pray: Lord God, the Almighty One, I praise You that You are the glorious one who lacks nothing. Let the light of Your face shine on me. Remind me that You are the all-sustaining Creator. You are the glorious one who lacks nothing. Open my eyes to see Your provision and presence more clearly. Strengthen me to trust You more completely. I praise You that through You, all things were created and that in everything, You have preeminence. I praise You that You are the God who is completely self-sustaining. Certainly I can trust You even when I don't understand. I praise You that there is no need that I have that You cannot fill. Your glorious nature is able to provide all that I need. Thank You that I can lie down and rest in complete peace, trusting Your glorious nature to provide and protect while I sleep.

(Colossians 1:17; Psalm 4:6, 8; 23:1)

*In the morning, LORD,
you hear my voice;
in the morning
I lay my requests before you
and wait expectantly.*

PSALM 5:3

Everything seems to come to a screeching halt in the face of crisis. During the COVID-19 crisis, everything has stopped: businesses shuttered, schools closed, church services cancelled. The world seems to have stopped, quite literally, on its axis. The uncertainty has left many feeling uneasy and insecure, and asking, “Where is God in this mess? Has He forgotten us?”

Friend, God has not forgotten you. Where is He? He is listening. He hears the cries of your heart and the faintest whispers of your longings. The psalmist, David, cries out to God, “Hear my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray” (Ps. 5:2). Then David goes on to write these profound words of hope: “In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly” (v. 3). What helped David shift his prayer from a desperate plea to a prayer of hope? I believe it was because of the personal understanding David had of God’s character. In tender affection, David calls God *my* king and *my* God.

Friend, though God is infinitely vast and beyond our wildest imagination, He is intimately personal. When *you* cry, He hears and bends down to listen as a loving Father (Ps. 116:2 NLT). The writer of Hebrews confirms this truth, instructing us to come confidently into the throne room with our requests. There, in His loving presence, we will find grace for our every need (Heb. 4:16). Today, lay your requests before Him, and wait with anticipation for His answer.

Selah—Pause and Reflect: *What are the longings of your heart in this moment? What does it look like to lay those desires confidently before the Lord and wait with hope for Him to answer?*

Today's Truth: *God is a God who listens to every whisper of your soul. Trust He is listening today, and lay your requests boldly before Him.*

Listen: *“Just Want You” sung by Sarah Reeves and The Belonging Co*

Pray: Lord, I praise You because You are my King and my God. Though You are the King of the universe, You are a loving Father to me. While You are infinite beyond my wildest imagination, You are intimately acquainted with every tiny detail of my life. I praise You that I can boldly come into Your throne room and lay every request—both big and small—at Your feet. Thank You, Lord Jesus, that You told me I could ask You for anything and that I should keep on asking until You answer. Lord, in the moments when You seem silent and my heart is tempted to believe You don't care or that You have forgotten me, strengthen my resolve to keep

asking. Help me to hold on to the promise that You are listening and that You will respond according to Your will. I believe You, Lord; strengthen me in my moments of unbelief. I praise You in advance for how You will work in each situation that I have laid at Your feet. I praise You that I can trust You.

(Psalm 5:2; Hebrews 4:16; Matthew 7:7; Mark 9:24)

*Those who know
your name trust in you,
for you, LORD,
have never forsaken
those who seek you.*

PSALM 9:10

We were designed for community. Created in the image of a relational God, our hearts crave connection. When deep bonds are missing, we panic. As I write this, the coronavirus pandemic is raging and has raised our feelings of panic. With both voluntary and state-mandated social distancing, many are feeling isolated and lonely. Even though we try to stay connected

through social media and online video calls, it's not the same. We miss authentic, in-person community.

The psalmist David had his lonely moments as well. Isolated and running from King Saul, David had reason to feel lonely. Yet David wrote these profound words to address our loneliness: “For you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you” (Ps. 9:10). The writer of Hebrews echoes this truth and reminds us that God says, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you” (Heb. 13:5).

Friend, as you read this, you might be suffering and feeling isolated. You might be grieving the loss of a loved one, job, security, or home and feel like you have no one who understands. I have good news for you: you are not alone! Our Savior came into our sorrow and suffering, and He has promised that He will never leave us—no matter what comes our way. He understands the grief in your heart and the sorrow in your soul. You are not alone. He is with you. You have a 24/7 companion through the trials of life.

Selah—Pause and Reflect: *How do you best experience the presence of Christ? Who are three people you could call in a crisis who would support you and strengthen you?*

Today's Truth: *You are never alone. God's presence goes before, behind, above, and beneath you. He will never leave you nor forsake you.*

Listen: *"Isn't He" sung by Natalie Grant and The Belonging Co*

Pray: Lord Jesus, I praise You that You have promised You will never leave me nor forsake me. Thank You that Your presence is continually with me. If I go up to the highest heavens or down to the darkest place of the deep, You are there. You hold my hand as I journey through life. When I feel lost, You guide me. When I feel afraid, You comfort me. Your love holds me secure. Nothing I do can separate me from Your eternal affection. Even if others abandon me, You will not. I praise You that even in the darkness of life's wilderness, Your presence is with me. Thank You for the empathy You offer me when I am grieving. You weep with me in my sorrow and rejoice with me in my triumph! Thank You that You have called me to be Your friend. Not only do You call me Your friend, but You graciously give me those whom I can call friends. Thank You specifically for _____ [write

in the names of three friends to whom You are close that You can turn to when discouraged]. I praise and exalt You for designing me for community and for modeling friendship for me. I exalt You, Lord Jesus!

(Psalm 27:10; 73:23–24; 139:7–10; Romans 8:35; John 11:36; 15:14)

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