

QUIET  
CONFIDENCE  
FOR A  
WOMAN'S  
HEART

*Elizabeth George*



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## QUIET CONFIDENCE FOR A WOMAN'S HEART

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# *Contents*

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God Is Your Confidence, Hope, and Joy . . . . .	9
1. God Cares for You . . . . .	17
2. God Will Always Provide . . . . .	29
3. God Gives You Rest . . . . .	39
4. God's Peace Is Always Available to You . . . . .	53
5. God Is Your Healer . . . . .	67
6. God Will Guide You . . . . .	79
7. God Never Leaves You . . . . .	91
8. God's Comfort Is Only a Prayer Away . . . . .	103
9. God Is Your Friend...and So Much More . . . . .	113
10. God Will Always Protect You . . . . .	125
11. God Is Your Hope . . . . .	135
12. God's Home Is Yours...Forever! . . . . .	147
Your Quiet Confidence . . . . .	157
Questions and Insights for Deeper	
Understanding and Discussion . . . . .	161
Notes . . . . .	233

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*Questions and Insights  
for Deeper Understanding  
and Discussion*

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God Is Your Confidence, Hope, and Joy . . . . .	161
1. God Cares for You . . . . .	166
2. God Will Always Provide . . . . .	172
3. God Gives You Rest . . . . .	176
4. God's Peace Is Always Available to You . . . . .	182
5. God Is Your Healer . . . . .	188
6. God Will Guide You . . . . .	194
7. God Never Leaves You . . . . .	200
8. God's Comfort Is Only a Prayer Away . . . . .	205
9. God Is Your Friend...and So Much More . . . . .	211
10. God Will Always Protect You . . . . .	217
11. God Is Your Hope . . . . .	223
12. God's Home Is Yours...Forever! . . . . .	228



# *God Is Your Confidence, Hope, and Joy*

*He will feed His flock like a shepherd.*

ISAIAH 40:11

*I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd  
gives His life for the sheep.*

JOHN 10:11

*A*re you in need of strength, guidance, peace, and hope as you make your way through life? I understand. I've been there too. But I have great news! God has powerful promises just for you. We're going to take a close look at 12 of His wonderful, confidence-building promises, so prepare your heart to discover life-changing truths—

- about the Person and character of God
- about God's faithfulness to His own
- about the great promises found in Psalm 23
- about the moment-by-moment application of

these 12 promises to the issues and trials of your daily life

Truly, you and I are most blessed to possess the promises of God to see us through every day and every problem that will ever come our way.



And to help you get even more out of the truths in Psalm 23 and this book, a study guide for personal reflection, application, and digging deeper is included at the end of this book. You can enjoy this study alone in your quiet time or in a group. These questions and additional insights will propel you down the path toward a better understanding of God's complete provision for you.

### *Psalm 23*

How I cherish the simple-yet-all-encompassing truths of the Twenty-third Psalm. This “Shepherd Psalm” is so life-affirming and life-changing! I enjoyed sharing these truths with my daughters when they were growing up. And I know how they love passing them on to their little ones today. As you and I explore who the Shepherd is and what that means to us, our lives will be transformed. We'll become more confident in who (Whose!) we are and what we're doing in our lives.

#### *Building Your Confidence in Him*

Where does life find you today? What season are you in?

-  *Spring*—Are you in the early beginnings of life? Are you tasting the joy of fresh starts and taking your first steps as a Christian?
-  *Summer*—Have you progressed along the

way with the Lord to the place of wisdom, of a blossoming knowledge of the One you walk with?

- *Fall*—Are you in a fast-paced, terrific season of tremendous fruit-bearing, of harvest, of reaping profusely from the benefits that come from a close, sustained walk with God over time?
- *Winter*—Are you experiencing endings that for the first time seem to have no new beginnings? Are you being pressed to adjust to a new path that leads in directions you didn't anticipate or choose? Are you approaching the next bend in the path with a measure of fear?

As I wrote these words, I was walking through several seasons of life at the same time. In the winter of sorrows and losses, my dear dad died (and so did my husband's mother). My mother was institutionalized and no longer recognized me in any way. Yet it was also the spring of new beginnings. I welcomed my first two grandbabies—one month apart. And I relished a time of great productivity as I enjoyed health and ample time to write and speak to my heart's content.

Just like you, I need God's promises for the seasons I experience. I need them today and for the times I have yet to brave. Isn't it wonderful that we have a God—a loving Shepherd!—that watches over us? His care is unceasing. His love is unending. His guidance is unfailing. His presence is everlasting. We can thank Him too for the promises He gives us in the Shepherd

Psalm that confirm our hope and strength and joy in Him as we grow through and weather the seasons of life. As the psalm's precious fourth verse promises: God is with us every day and all the way.



### *David, the Psalmist*

When I pick up a book, I always check the backcover or flyleaf for information about the author. I want to know what qualifies the author to write on the subject before I dig in. Have you wondered about the life and the seasons of the writer of Psalm 23? I have. So who is the author and what qualifies him to write it?

King David, the inspired writer of Psalm 23, knew the refreshing seasons of youth, and he knew the maturity of years. But he also experienced...

- *a season of rejection...*when expelled from his home and throne
- *a season of fear...*when fleeing from the murderous King Saul
- *a season of discouragement...*as an anointed king, yet a homeless fugitive
- *a season of disappointment...*when God didn't allow him to build the temple
- *a season of heartbreak...*as he suffered the death of an infant son and witnessed strife and death among his children

Yes, David's life reveals many strengths and accomplishments. The finest thing said about David is that he was *a man of great*



*faith*. David was not only an ancestor of Jesus Christ, but he was also described by God as “a man after My own heart, who will do all My will” (Acts 13:22). A thousand years later, David, the man of great faith, was honored with a listing in God’s “Hall of Faith” (Hebrews 11).

Yet, just as a coin has two sides, so does David. You see, he was also *a man of great failure*, a man who fell into sin. David committed adultery with Bathsheba and arranged for the murder of her husband (2 Samuel 11). Still another of David’s failures was his choice to directly disobey God and take a census of the people (2 Samuel 24).

### —Building Your Confidence in Him—

As you and I walk through Psalm 23, we’ll be stopping many times to consider the life lessons we’re discovering. So far our brief look at David, a man of faith and failure, offers these specific instructions.

#### **Lesson #1—David admitted his failures**

To the prophet Nathan, David confessed, “I have sinned against the LORD.” Then we’re told the good news that the Lord marvelously “put away” David’s sin (2 Samuel 12:13). The Bible makes it wonderfully clear that the person “who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy” (Proverbs 28:13).

Are there any unconfessed sins in your life, dear friend? As the famous British preacher Charles H. Spurgeon once counseled, “Let us go to Calvary to learn how we may be forgiven.” That’s good advice for us as New Testament believers. At Calvary, at the cross,

Jesus Christ truly paid it all—the total penalty and price for our sins. Our responsibility now is to confess our sins. His promise is to forgive. And, beloved, there is no sin too great for Him to forgive!

One more thought: After David admitted his failure, the joy of his salvation was restored. His sins were washed whiter than snow (Psalm 51). These same joys await you and me each and every time we acknowledge our transgressions.

### **Lesson #2—David suffered sin's consequences**

Although David was forgiven by God, he paid a price for his disobedience. Consider this classic illustration: You can drive nails into a board, and then you can remove the nails, but the nail holes—the scars—remain. David's life was scarred by his sinful failures. One of his sons died in infancy, one of his sons betrayed him, and his family was divided. David definitely suffered.

These heartfelt words by two authors I admire inspire me. They take into consideration the reality of sin's consequences upon our lives. Anne Ortlund writes, "In my heart I do have a fear...I long to grow more godly with each passing day. Call it 'the fear of the Lord,' being in awe of Him and scared to death of any sin that would mar my life."<sup>1</sup> Carole Mayhall shares, "Daily I live with [one] fear—a healthy fear if there is such a thing. [It is] that I will miss something God has for me in this life. And it is mind-expanding to contemplate all that He wants me to have. I don't want to be robbed of even one of God's riches by not taking time to let Him invade my life. By not listening to what He is telling me."<sup>2</sup>

Why not join these two women in their “healthy fear” of the life-marring sins that can cause you to miss God’s best, that can hinder your desire to walk with Him in all His ways? And if you’re already bearing the scars of sinful ways, thank the Lord for His amazing gift of forgiveness and His marvelous grace that let’s you live for Him from this point forward.

### **Lesson #3—David went on**

After the death of his child with Bathsheba, “David arose from the ground, washed and anointed himself, and changed his clothes; and he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped...and he ate” (2 Samuel 12:20). A forgiven sinner, the grateful David went on to write many poignant psalms, including songs that express his passionate outpouring of confession, a contrite spirit, and the sparkling brilliance of joy.

David harbored no bitterness toward God. He accepted the responsibility for his wrongdoings. He wrote, “I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You [God], You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight—that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge” (Psalm 51:3-4). David owned his sin and considered the Lord to be “gracious...and righteous; yes...[and] merciful” (Psalm 116:5).

Follow David’s example of going on after a season of sin or tragedy. Do you need to...

- get up—rise up from the ground?
- wash up—wash yourself?
- dress up—change clothes?

- look up—enter into the presence of the Lord?
- pray up—spend time in prayer and worship?
- eat up—take in nourishment?
- go on—move forward?

What marvelous instruction and resolve you can draw from dear David! He shows you a pattern for spiritual growth: Your role is to rise up and go on. God's role is to sustain you along the way...and He promises to do just that!



These truths are a powerful prompt to *lift up* your praise to God, *rise up*, and *go on* your journey with the Lord. Your confidence in Him will grow as you explore and claim the promises God offers to you in this brief (only 117 words!) psalm of encouragement and refreshment.

— — — — —  
*Thank God, your Shepherd,*  
*that His care is unceasing, His love is unending,*  
*His guidance is unfailing, and*  
*His presence is everlasting.*  
 — — — — —

# God Cares for You

*The LORD is my shepherd.*

PSALM 23:1

*I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep,  
and am known by My own.*

JOHN 10:14

No words ever written carry the comforting weight these five do: “The LORD is my shepherd.” We’re soothed and assured by the knowledge and confirmation that God is our personal Shepherd who will care for us and be with us through every joy and challenge of life. I know because I’ve seen and experienced it myself.

When I led a study on this remarkable psalm for the women’s Bible study at our church, the hearts of those who listened were touched again and again by the thought of the Lord as their own caring shepherd. What kind of women were in our group? Women...

- denied the joys of motherhood or whose nests overflowed
- with children who spurned much-needed advice

- raising children alone or caring for elderly parents
- facing illnesses and life-threatening diseases
- coping with physical limitations
- struggling with finances or had husbands not working
- in unhappy marriages or facing divorce
- juggling careers and home life

From every walk and season of life, these were women who loved and needed the loving care of their Shepherd.

Have you ever wondered how the thought of God as a shepherd originated? In Hebrew, the five English words, “*the Lord is my shepherd*,” are translated from two words: *Jehovah-Rohi*.

### ***Jehovah-Rohi Feeds, Leads, and Warns***

One major meaning of the word *shepherd* is “to feed.” Feeding is found throughout Scripture.

- The Bible narrative of Joseph opens with him “*feeding* the flock with his brothers” (Genesis 37:2).
- Later, in Egypt, when Pharaoh asked Joseph’s brothers about their occupation, they answered, “Your servants are shepherds...[and we] have no *pasture* for [our] flocks” (Genesis 47:3-4).
- David “returned from Saul to *feed* his father’s sheep” (1 Samuel 17:15).
- And in the Shepherd Psalm, we read David’s inspired words, “The LORD [Jehovah] is my *shepherd*.”

### —Building Your Confidence in Him—

As one of *Jehovah-Rohi's* sheep, God promises to feed you. As creatures who need physical and spiritual food, we enjoy both from the hands of our loving Shepherd. He cares for us, bringing us to places of green pasture. Through circumstances and events He ensures we're brought to places where we can eat the best and most nourishing foods physically and spiritually.

I'm not a shepherd, but I did work at The Brandeis Institute, located in the rolling hills of Simi Valley, California. The lush hills were part of many sheepherders' routes. At the Institute, the bell at the entrance gate would frequently ring in the spring as yet another caring and loving shepherd asked permission to graze his sheep on the healthy and lush grass.

This kind of care is the role of a good shepherd—and a role completely fulfilled for us by our Good Shepherd.

And here's another tender fact about a good shepherd. When there are no pastures, he gathers the food needed for his flock by using his crook to pull down leaves and berries from trees. Then he feeds his sheep directly from his own hands.

So why do we worry? Why do we worry about food and clothing? About finances and money? About security and the needs of life? We have *Jehovah-Rohi!* We have the Lord as our caring Shepherd. When fears regarding the cares of this world set in, we need to confidently lean on God's promise to care for us. Then

we can declare to God, “Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You” (Psalm 56:3).



Another way *shepherd* is used in the Bible is in a figurative sense to signify the leadership role of a prince with his people. To David, the Israelites said: “You were the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and the LORD said to you, ‘You shall *shepherd* My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel’” (2 Samuel 5:2).

### *Building Your Confidence in Him*

What a glorious thought—to know you are led! Indeed, your Shepherd is a gentle, patient, and firm guide. And because of His character, you don’t need to know the path, the plan, or the future. You only need to know *Jehovah-Rohi*, the God who promises to care for you and to lead you. You can trust Him!

I know as a wife how important my husband’s leadership is and the security that following him brings to my anxious heart. When I’m headed toward the falling-apart stage, Jim simply puts his arms around me and says, “Everything will be all right.” He doesn’t tell me *how* everything will be all right, *when* everything will be all right, *who* is going to make everything all right, or *what* is going to happen to make everything all right. He just assures me that everything *will be* all right. And I am comforted just because my earthly leader, my husband, tells me so.

And, my friend, the assurance is even stronger with



*Jehovah-Rohi.* He is our Shepherd, our heavenly leader. He is all-knowing and all-powerful. Therefore we need no details. We need only to follow, knowing everything will be all right.

The Lord *is* leading us—there’s no doubt about that. But you and I must ask, “What kind of follower am I?” Or perhaps, “Which of these three kinds of sheep am I?”

*Restless and discontent sheep:* These sheep jump into other fields or climb into bushes and onto leaning trees. They sometimes fall and break their legs. They’re nervous and dissatisfied and cause the shepherd endless trouble.

Are you settled—at home with and abiding in the Shepherd? Are you one who trusts...and rests...in the Lord? Is the Lord all that you need? Are you content to be nothing more than His sheep and delight in what He gives you?

*Worldling sheep:* These sheep are intent on their own pleasures and selfish interests that have nothing to do with the shepherd. They run from bush to bush, searching for variety and sampling every kind of food. Only now and then do they lift their heads to see where the Shepherd is—to make sure they don’t wander too far away.

Worldlings dabble in sin and pleasure. They nibble on what is meaningless and even harmful. They stray farther and farther from the good shepherd. There is the “checking in,” but then back into the world they go.

Do you want a closer, more confident walk with

God? Draw nearer to God by heeding these time-honored, oft-proven, surefire practices:

- Follow the Shepherd. Determine to obey God's Word (John 10:27).
- Talk to the Shepherd. Pray always (Psalm 116:1-2).
- Listen to the Shepherd. Saturate your soul with God's Word (John 10:2-5).
- "Chew" on the Shepherd's food. Memorize and meditate on His Word (Psalm 1:1-2).

*Devoted sheep:* Blessed is the sheep who always keeps near the shepherd! Each sheep in a flock has a name, and the devoted followers answer joyfully whenever the shepherd calls. By prolonged and continued fellowship, the sheep who follow nearby enjoy the shepherd's presence and become his familiar companions. To those closest to him, he shares the choicest portions of the food he's gathered.

These happy and content sheep are never in danger. Why? Because they are near the shepherd! They will not get lost, fall into mischief, or suffer harm from wild beasts or thieves. Why? Once again, because of their nearness to the shepherd.

How about you? Are you a sheep who stays near the Shepherd? Do you delight in His company? Are you one who says "I am His and He is mine"? If you are, then you will be shown the path of life. You will know fullness of joy in His presence. And you will experience untold pleasures at His right hand forevermore (Psalm 16:11).

Yet another figurative use of *robi* is in regard to folly and judgment. The Scriptures teach us:

- “The mouth of fools *feeds* on foolishness” (Proverbs 15:14).
- The idolater “*feeds* on ashes” (Isaiah 44:20).
- God will “*feed*” false shepherds “in judgment” (Ezekiel 34:16).

We are warned not to consume, partake of, or be involved in activities that don’t exalt God.

### —*Building Your Confidence in Him*—

As you follow close to God and delight in *Him* (rather than in foolishness and ashes), you are safe from God’s judgment and the results of such dangerous nibbling. You see, with *Him* there is true substance, real meaning. Let me tell you a story—a true story.

My wonderful daughter Courtney moved with her husband, Paul, to Kauai, Hawaii, immediately after their honeymoon. Known as “the garden isle,” Kauai is sparsely populated and quite removed from world traffic. Almost everything is imported, which meant that Courtney, an avid reader, had little choice of books to read (and even less money to buy them as a newlywed living in one of the most expensive regions of the United States).

When Jim and I went to visit Courtney and Paul in their home in Kapaa, I was surprised to discover that she was reading through the many books written by Louis L’Amour. In case you don’t know about Louis L’Amour,

he's one of the foremost and prolific writers of Western fiction. His books are good, factual, well-written, and clean (all reasons why Courtney had chosen them). Also, as Courtney explained, they were available at the public library.

When I returned to the mainland, I voiced my uncertainty about Courtney's reading matter to a friend in Christ. While there's nothing wrong with Louis L'Amour's tales of the Wild West per se, I was concerned that they had become her mainstay. Louis L'Amour's stories were *not* why Jim and I had sacrificed to put our girls through Christian schools from preschool through grade twelve, followed by five years each at a Christian college.

Louis L'Amour's sagas were *not* why we made sure our girls were actively involved in a strong church, youth groups, and Bible studies, and *not* why we'd made sure we started each and every day of their lives at home with time in God's Word and prayer.

Well, I want to pass on to you the wisdom my wiser and more seasoned friend gave me. She asked, "Elizabeth, what are you doing to remedy the situation?"

You can be sure when Jim got home that evening, I shared her probing question with him. What *were* we doing to remedy the situation? Nothing! "What *could* we do?" became our passionate prayer concern.

Soon we were led to call Courtney and offer her our credit card number and a gift of \$25 each month for books chosen from a Christian book catalog. (And Paul was to select \$25 worth of books for himself too!) Just because there were no Christian libraries on Kauai, and just because there were few Christian books in the public libraries, that didn't mean we couldn't help put

edifying Christian works into their home and hands and hearts!

And so Courtney began to “feed” on something of substance.

Soon a letter arrived from her telling me that her first selection was a three-pack of biographies on the lives of Fanny Crosby, Dorothy Carey, and Susanna Wesley.

Next a call came saying, “Oh, Mom, I can’t wait to discuss Dorothy Carey’s life with you!”

Then another note: “Mom, this seems like something you can share with your ladies when you teach.” It was an excerpt from a letter written by Susanna Wesley to her son, John, the founder of Methodism:

I will tell you what rule I observed...when I was young, and too much addicted to childish diversions, which was this—Never to spend more time in mere recreation in one day than I spend in private religious devotions.<sup>1</sup>

Quickly I prayed, “Oh, thank You, Lord! Now *this* is more like it! And thank You too, Lord, for Courtney’s encouraging message to me from this wonderful book about a woman who loved You too!”

And after reading the inspiring story of prolific songwriter Fanny Crosby’s life, Courtney ordered several volumes on the great hymns of the Christian faith and how they came to be written.

My friend, is there a situation you need to remedy? Are you feeding on foolishness or rooting through ashes or merely sniffing the wind? God—*Jehovah-Robi*—tells

us to beware of the inevitable stumbling and falling that is sure to result. At the same time, He invites us into the safety and shelter of His promised care—the care of *Jehovah-Robi*, the One who promises to feed and to lead us.

Do you want to be safe from the influence, ways, and lusts of the world and the flesh (1 John 2:16)? From the sin which so easily entangles us (Hebrews 12:1)? Then delight yourself in the Lord, in His provision, in His Word. Faithfully feed on the things that possess true substance and real meaning. When you remember that “all Scripture is given by inspiration by God and is profitable” (2 Timothy 3:16) and partake of such divine substance, then you are fed, you are led, *and* you are safe!



### *More Building Your Confidence Insights*

Just imagine! As one of God's precious sheep you are cherished and cared for by the Good Shepherd! By penning these two Hebrew words—*Jehovah-Robi*—which translates “the-LORD-is-my-shepherd,” David's imagery lifts our thoughts to the highest and tenderest aspect of God's nature. No other name of God carries with it the intimacy and tender friendship of *Jehovah-Robi*. Yes, you are cared for and cherished—so much so that God promises to lead you and feed you always.

Think of it! The Lord is your Shepherd...and He will take care of you. It's His promise to you!



*When fear regarding the cares of this world  
sets in, remember  
God's promise to care for you.*

