

Guided Meditation on Psalm 23 - Restoring My Soul

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(The following script was transcribed from the 1996 tape recording.)

This tape contains guided meditations ... on Psalms 23 and 27 ...

Psalm 23 on this side ...

and Psalm 27 on the other side.

In this meditation ... we will follow the imagery of Psalm 23 ...

to a place that is both calming and refreshing ...

where our souls can be restored ...

where God is our shepherd.

Please review the introductory material on the card ...

before listening to the meditation for the first time

particularly if you are unfamiliar with guided meditations.

Set aside 35 minutes when you will not be interrupted ...

find a comfortable position ...

and we will begin the meditation.

When you are ready ... please close your eyes ...

and turn your attention to your breathing ...

Breathe in ... and breathe out ... (2)

The rhythm of your breathing ... may not match my rhythm ... and that's ok.

Breathe in ... and breathe out ...

Keep your attention focused on your breathing

Breathe in ... and breathe out ...

Feel the cool air .. as you inhale through your nose ...

and the warm air .. as you exhale ...

Breathe in ... and breathe out ...

*Imagine your lungs expanding ... and contracting
notice your chest rising ... and falling ...
Breathing in ... and breathing out ... (2)*

*Let each breath .. be longer than .. the previous one
Each breath .. deeper than the previous one.
Breathe in ... and breathe out ... (2)*

*Each breath is a gift ... from the source of all breaths.
Each deep breath, each soul-breath, is a gift from the source of all souls.
Breathe in ... and breathe out ...
As you breathe in, receive this gift from the source ...
As you breathe out, return your breath to the source ...
Breathe in ... and breathe out ...
Continue to breathe ... slowly ... and deeply,
Continue to draw slow ... easy breaths,
Breathing in ... and breathing out ... (2)*

*As we turn to the theme of this meditation ...
allow yourself to follow ... my words and my images.
At the same time ... continue to breathe ... slowly and deeply
Breathe in ... and breathe out ...
When you need to turn away from other thoughts ...
and return to the meditation ...
You can do this simply ...
by turning your attention back again to your breathing
by focusing on your breathing
Breathe in ... and breathe out ... (2)*

*Now, while you are relaxed,
imagine yourself taking a journey ...
to the most wonderful of places ...*

Perhaps it's a meadow ... lush and green
With a pond nearby ... clear and blue
The sun is shining ...
The air is fresh and cool ...
The visual images ... the smells ... the sounds that you hear
Are all the most beautiful ... and the most peaceful.
Perhaps this is a place in your imagination ...
or maybe a place that you were at ...
at a time ... when you were high on life.
Let yourself feel the warmth of the sun ...
feel the coolness of the air ...
feel the serenity of the water ...
the lushness of the grass ...
This is a place where you could stretch out safely ...
where you can be at peace.
Breathing in ... and breathing out ... (2)

Miz·mor l'Da·vid·
A psalm of David
A·do·nai ro·i,
Adonai is my shepherd
lo ech·sar·
I lack nothing
Bin·ot dé·she yar·bi·tzéi·ni,
You provide me with green pastures ... where I can stretch out
al mei m'nu·chot y'na·ha·léi·ni,
You lead me to cool, calming waters
nafshi y'sho·veiv,
You restore my soul
yan·chéi·ni b'ma·g'lei tzé·dek,

You guide me on true paths

l'má-an sh'mo·

For that's what a shepherd does

Breathe in ... and breathe out ... (2)

Our lives are often in turmoil ...

and we need a quiet place to go ...

a place with green pastures ...

a place with still waters ...

At many times in our lives ...

we feel that our souls are depleted ...

and we need to find a place ...

where they can be restored·

There are times that we feel ... that we have left the path

the path that's right for us,

and we need some guidance to return to that path·

Our needs seem very complicated ...

But in many ways they are very simple ...

We need what a shepherd provides ...

Breathing in ... and breathing out ... (2)

We need what a shepherd provides ...

and we have access to a shepherd·

Miz·mor l'Da·vid·

A·do·nai ro·i,

lo ech·sar·

With You as my shepherd ...

I have what I need·

Bin·ot dé·she yar·bi·tzéi·ni,

You provide me with a safe place ...

A place to stretch out ...

A place where I need not have any cares

Al mei m'nu·chot y'na·ha·léi·ni,

You offer me a fountain of clear water ... to refresh my thirst ...

My physical thirst ... my spiritual thirst·

A pond of still waters ...

that help me still the turmoil that is around me ...

and the turmoil that is within me·

Let yourself feel ... the stillness of the waters ...

and let their calmness ... enter you·

Imagine the stillness ... within you ...

Feel the serenity ...

Breathing in ... and breathing out ... (2)

Let us now go down to the stream ...

And drink from its waters ...

Drink mayim chayyim

Life-restoring waters

Imagine your spiritual thirst being satisfied

Let yourself drink ...

Let yourself feel ... renewed life and strength

At this moment, my God, you are restoring my soul

Nafshi y'sho·veiv,

You restore me to health ... when my body stumbles

and to spiritual health ... when my spirit falters·

With You ... my soul can be nourished ... when it is depleted ...

*Can become radiant ... when it is tarnished
Can be expanded ... when it has been restricted
Can be liberated ... when it is burdened
Take a moment ... and stay with the feeling ... or your soul being restored
Nafshi y'sho·veiv,
You restore my soul ...
at this moment ...
and every moment ...
Breathe in ... and breathe out ... (2)*

*Yan·chéi·ni b'ma·g'lei tzé·dek,
You lead me in true paths·
As we pass through our days ...
And our weeks ...
And our months ...
We often go astray ... in many directions ...
Sometimes we don't know which way to go ...
But You know how to bring us back to a straight path,
a true path,
a path that's right for us·*

*L'má·an sh'mo·
These are all the things ... that a shepherd does·
Breathing in ... and breathing out ... (2)*

*Gam ki ei·leich b'gei tza·má·vet,
Even in times of deepest trouble ...
when things look as black as they can be
I need not fear any evil
lo i·ra ra,*

ki At-tah im-ma-di

No harm can come to me

For You are with me ...

You are there to guide ... and to comfort me

Shiv-t'cha u-mish-an-té-cha

héim-mah y'na-cha-mú-ni

Your presence ... Your touch ...

Remind me that You are there ...

Breathing in ... and breathing out ... (2)

Let yourself now feel God's gentle touch ...

A touch of comfort ... a touch of guidance ...

A touch of love ... a touch of companionship ...

Breathing in ... and breathing out ... (2)

Our needs are very simple ...

We need food and sustenance ...

We need safety and shelter ...

We need assistance and guidance ...

We need to be taken care of ...

We need someone ... who's there for us ...

And that's what a shepherd does

Breathing in ... and breathing out ... (2)

Ribbono shel olam

Help us to realize ... that You are always there ...

Help us to find a place ... where we can find You ...

Help us to realize ... that if we accept Your presence in our lives ...

That all of our basic needs will be addressed ...

*Help us understand ... that whenever we look for You ... You are present
Breathe in ... and breathe out ... (2)*

Ta·a·roch l'fa·nai shul·chan ...

né·ged tzo·r'rai·

With You in our lives ...

our lives can be a feast in the presence of all of our troubles

Di·shán·ta va·shé·men ro·shi·

Each of us can always feel special

Our heads anointed with oil

As the prophet Samuel anointed David·

Ko·si r'va·yah·

Our cup ... is always overflowing ... with Your love ...

Ach tov va·ché·sed yir·d'fú·ni ...

kol y'mei chay·yai·

It won't be troubles that are chasing us ...

but goodness ... kindness ... and peace

V'shav·ti b'veit A·do·nai

l'ó·rech ya·mim·

Every day ... every moment ...

we will live in the house of Adonai ...

and do so forever

Breathing in ... and breathing out ... (2)

Remember the place that you went to in this meditation ...

Focus your attention on it ...

And stay there for a few moments ...

Feel its calmness ... its serenity ...

its restorative power ...

Breathe in ... and breathe out ...

Remember this place ...

And remember that you can always find it ...

When you slow down your breathing ...

When you turn inward ...

And look for the place where your shepherd is ...

Where you can find the calm waters ...

in your turbulent world ...

Where your soul can be restored ...

For that's what a shepherd provides ...

Breathing in ... and breathing out ... (2)

Yih·yu l'ra·tzon im·rei fi,

v'heg·yon lib·bi l'fa·né·cha,

A·do·nai tzu·ri v'go·a·li.

May the words of my mouth

and the meditations of all of our hearts

echo Your own words, Adonai,

Your own meditations,

for You are the source of our strength - tzuri,

the source of our salvation - goali·

Amein·

*As we close the meditation ...
continue to take deep breaths ...
until you consider yourself ready ...
to return to your physical surroundings ...
and then you can open your eyes.*