



PEACE for the SEASON

40 DEVOTIONS FOR CHRISTMAS
JOEL OSTEEN



New York • Nashville

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“GLORY TO GOD
IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN,
AND ON EARTH PEACE
TO THOSE ON WHOM
HIS FAVOR RESTS.”

LUKE 2:14




INTRODUCTION

*Whatever is good and perfect is a gift
coming down to us from God our Father,
who created all the lights in the heavens.*

James 1:17 NLT

During the Christmas season, we're often busy making preparations for celebrating with family and friends—decorating the house, buying gifts, sending cards, baking, and cooking. It's easy to see why Christmas is one of our favorite times of the year. There's nothing like the joy that comes from sharing our love and what we have with loved ones and friends in our own special ways.






But the season can also be a time of stress and worry and disappointments for many reasons. One of the biggest challenges we all face is getting along with people, because we have different personalities and different temperaments. When somebody doesn't agree with us, when they do something we don't like, it's easy to get in conflict with them—to argue, to try to straighten them out, to prove our point. Before long, we're at odds, living offended, and there's stress and tension in the home. What's happened? We've let our guard down and lost our peace.

I want to encourage you to remember that the true Christmas spirit is wrapped up in these words from the prophet Isaiah: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Beyond the great food, beyond the


gifts, beyond the lights and music, God reminds us of the most wonderful gift that has ever been given...This gift is Jesus. The babe in the manger. The Savior of the world, who brought the promise of unconditional love, unending hope, and eternal life to every person who believes in Him.

Jesus is our Prince of Peace. He doesn't just have peace; He is peace. He gives us peace that passes understanding, peace that never changes, peace that can never be taken away. That means we can have peace when it doesn't make sense. We can have peace when things around us aren't peaceful. We can have peace in the midst of offenses and disagreements. When we stay in a position of peace, that is a position of power. We aren't moved by what others are saying or doing or situations that aren't working out like we want, because the peace inside us doesn't rise and fall with our circumstances.





Don't allow the frustrations and worries and stresses you're feeling to steal your peace in this season. Anytime you find that you don't have peace inside about something, that's a sign you should stop and give the Prince of Peace your problems and cares. Focus on His goodness, knowing that He is working behind the scenes on your behalf. Let His peace lead and guide you. You don't have to be worried about anything. When God gives you peace, nothing in the world can move you. Choose to walk and live in His perfect peace every day of your life.





SECTION I

GOD'S GOT THIS

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.”

Luke 1:26–37



DAY 1

SIMPLY BELIEVE HIS WORD

*“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel,
“since I am a virgin?”*

Luke 1:34


When the angel told Mary she would give birth to the Messiah, I’m sure she was excited, but I can hear her ask how it was possible, since she was a virgin. She was talking about the physical, but God was saying, “My promises are not dependent on man. I am a supernatural God,

and I am on the throne. What I have spoken over your life may seem impossible. It may look too big. But I've got this."

It's easy to live uptight, wondering how the difficulties and challenges are going to work out. When the medical report isn't good, or the finances are not improving, and we don't see how it can change, there's a simple phrase you have to keep down in your spirit: *God's got this*. He's on the throne. He sees what's happening. He already has the solution. You don't have to figure it out. There may not be a logical answer. In the natural, you don't see a way. That's okay, because we serve the all-powerful Creator of the universe. He has ways to do it that we've never thought of.

Instead of trying to force it to happen and living uptight, you have to let go and let God. When you turn it over to Him and say, "God, I know You've got this. I know You're in control," not only will you feel the heaviness, the weight, lift





off you, but God will make things happen that you couldn't make happen. Do as Mary did and simply believe His Word. Believing is the key.

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Father, thank You for Your promise to Mary that her giving birth to Your Son was possible because You controlled it. Thank You that Your promises to me are equally as possible because You control it. My eyes are on You alone to do what no man can do. I will simply believe Your Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.




DAY 2

LIVE OUT OF A PLACE OF PEACE

*The LORD will work out his plans for my life—for your
faithful love, O LORD, endures forever.*

Psalm 138:8 NLT

Sometimes we're trying to play God. We're trying to make our boss promote us, or make ourselves get well, or make the Christmas season perfect. But as long as we're trying to force it, living frustrated and worried, God steps



back. You need to take your hands off it and say, “God, I know You’ve got this. I’m not going to worry about my finances. I’m not going to live uptight because of the medical report. I’m not going to be frustrated because my child is off course. God, I trust Your timing, and I trust Your ways. My life is in Your hands.”

God never promised that we wouldn’t have difficulties, but He did promise He will give us strength for every battle. He says He will take what was meant for our harm and use it to our advantage. You may have a good reason to worry about something, whether it’s your health, your finances, or a relationship. You’ve done everything you can. It doesn’t look as though it’s going to work out. Stay in faith. God is saying, “I’ve got this. I’m working behind the scenes. I’m in the process of turning it around. It’s just a matter of time before you see things change in your favor.”

Now live out of a place of peace, a place of trust. It may not happen the way you thought, but God's ways are better than our ways. God knows what's best for you. He's got this.

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Father, thank You for Your promise that You will faithfully work out Your plans for my life. I receive this word and choose to stop trying to force things to happen but rather remain at rest, knowing You've got this. I declare that there is no God like You, that Your ways are the best ways. My life is in Your hands. In Jesus' name, Amen.





DAY 3

LION-PROOF

*Not a scratch was found on him,
for he had trusted in his God.*

Daniel 6:23 NLT


In the Scripture, a wise older man named Daniel was one of the three governors over the entire Persian kingdom. He was so good at what he did that the king was going to put Daniel in charge of his whole empire. In Daniel 6 is the story of how the enemies of Daniel conspired to get him

arrested and thrown into the lions' den for refusing to stop worshipping God. Daniel's attitude was, *God has me in the palms of His hands. Nothing can snatch me away. He controls the lions.*

Many years earlier, Daniel had seen his Hebrew teenager friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, get thrown into a fiery furnace and come out unharmed, without even the smell of smoke. So Daniel stayed in peace. Everyone else expected the hungry lions to tear Daniel apart, but God supernaturally closed the mouths of the lions. He made Daniel unappetizing.

Here's the key: God doesn't deliver us from every difficulty. Most of the time, He takes us through the difficulty. Daniel's faith didn't keep him out of the lions' den, but his faith made him lion-proof. That's what brought him out of the lions' den. I'm asking you to quit worrying about what





you're facing, quit losing sleep over that child who's not doing right, quit being upset because somebody did you wrong or your dream hasn't come to pass yet. Can I tell you that God's got this? As He did for Daniel, He's going to make a way where you don't see a way.

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Father, thank You that no matter what I face, You have me in the palms of Your hands and You control what comes my way. Thank You that I can stay in peace, knowing that You will either deliver me or take me through the difficulties. I will not shrink back in worry when the pressure comes. In Jesus' name, Amen.




DAY 4

THROUGH THE VALLEYS

*Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me.*

Psalm 23:4

Over the course of David's life, he walked through all kinds of dark valleys and adversities. But he knew that God is not just with you on the mountaintops. He's with you in the valleys when you're going through difficult things. He knows what you're up against. The Scripture



says God is concerned about what concerns you. A sparrow doesn't fall to the ground without God knowing about it. How much more is God concerned about what's happening in your life? Trust Him. Live from a place of peace. This is a decision we have to make on a daily basis, because every day there's something to worry or get upset about.

When we worry, we tie the hands of Almighty God. We all face situations that are bigger than us—a bad medical report, the loss of a major client, trouble in a relationship. It's easy to think of all the reasons why it's not going to work out. That's when you have to dig your heels in, switch over into faith, and say, “God, thank You for protecting my children. Thank You for fighting my battles. Thank You for healing my body.” When you're tempted to worry, turn it around and thank God that He's working.

All through the day, all through this season, keep this

phrase close to your heart: *God, I know You've got this.* He's bigger than any problem. He's lining up the right people. He's arranging things in your favor. Your attitude of faith is what allows God to do amazing things.

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Father, thank You that when I walk through dark valleys and adversities, You walk with me, and I have no reason to be worried or afraid. Thank You that You are my Good Shepherd in every situation, protecting me, guiding me, and working in me. I declare that I am staying in faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.





DAY 5

DON'T BE TROUBLED

*For he will conceal me there when troubles come;
he will hide me in his sanctuary.
He will place me out of reach on a high rock.*

Psalm 27:5 NLT


David had all kinds of things come against him—not just giants and armies, but his own family. He had many reasons to live worried, upset, and bitter. But he said, “The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear...of

whom shall I be afraid?” (Psalm 27:1). David lived with this attitude: *God’s got this. I’m not going to worry or live in fear. I know He’s bigger than any obstacle I’m facing. He will hide me when trouble comes. He will place me out of reach.*

You may have discouraging situations and difficulties coming against you, but God has placed you out of reach. They can’t defeat you. Now do as David did and remain confident. Keep your peace. You may feel like you’re surrounded by an army, but the truth is you’re surrounded by God’s favor. The forces for you are greater than the forces against you.

Is something weighing you down today? Are you worried about a situation, frustrated by what didn’t work out? Or maybe you’re down on yourself because you’re not where you thought you would be. God is saying to you, “It’s not a surprise to Me. I have new beginnings. I have healing. I have breakthroughs. I’m asking you to change your perspective.





I have placed you out of reach of that trouble. Switch over into faith.” Be still and know that He is God. He has you in the palms of His hands. Now all through the day, keep this phrase playing in your mind: *God’s got this.*

A PRAYER FOR TODAY

Father, thank You that You are my light and my salvation and the stronghold of my life. Thank You for Your promise of protecting me when troubles come and placing me out of its reach on a high rock. I will live from a place of peace, knowing I am safe in the palms of Your hands. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

