

He Restoreth my Soul

He restoreth my soul:

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Psalm 23:3

A person might assume that if we are in the tender care of the Shepherd we would never need “restoring”. Please remember who wrote this psalm. David, the Bible says, was a “man after God’s own heart,” yet he was downcast and needed restoring several times in his life. Sometimes we go through things that “cast down our soul.” In *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, author Philip Keller talks about a “cast” sheep. It’s an old English term for a sheep that has turned on its back and cannot get up without the help of the shepherd.

Keller states that if the sheep is not righted it can die within a matter of hours. That is why it is so essential for the shepherd to count the sheep and keep a close eye on his flock.

Keller says that “a heavy fat or long fleeced sheep will lie down comfortably in some little hollow or depression in the ground. It may roll on its side slightly to stretch out or relax. Suddenly the center of gravity in the body shifts so that it turns on its back far enough that the feet no longer touch the ground. It may feel a sense of panic and start to paw frantically. Frequently this only makes things worse. It rolls over even further.” Now it is quite impossible for it to regain its feet. A sheep can die within a few hours if it is hot weather. If it is cool, cloudy and rainy the sheep may survive a few days in that position.



A Cast Sheep

A cast sheep is prone to the following:

1. Extreme discomfort due to the build-up of poisonous gas in the stomach;
2. Being utterly without defense from predators;
3. Certain death unless rescued rather quickly;

Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God;
For I shall yet praise Him,
The help of my countenance and my God.
Psalm 42:11

The Good Shepherd

- Would search for the lost sheep;
- Would tenderly right the sheep onto its feet;
- Would massage the sheep, especially the limbs, for circulatory purposes;
- Would tenderly speak words of comfort to the sheep;

"He restoreth my soul." When the soul grows sorrowful he revives it; when it is sinful he sanctifies it; when it is weak he strengthens it. *"He"* does it.... *"He restoreth my soul."* Are any of us low in grace? Do we feel that our spirituality is at its lowest ebb? He who turns the ebb into the flood can soon restore our soul. Pray to him, then, for the blessing—"Restore thou me, thou Shepherd of my soul! —Charles Spurgeon

"He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." The Christian delights to be obedient, but it is the obedience of love, to which he is constrained by the example of his Master. *"He leadeth me."* The Christian is not obedient to some commandments and neglectful of others; he does not pick and choose, but yields to all. Observe, that the plural is used—"the *paths* of righteousness." Whatever God may give us to do we would do it, led by his love. Some Christians overlook the blessing of sanctification, and yet to a thoroughly renewed heart this is one of the sweetest gifts of the covenant. If we could be saved from wrath, and yet remain unregenerate, impenitent sinners, we should not be saved as we desire, for we mainly and chiefly pant to be saved *from sin* and led in the way of holiness. All this is done out of pure free grace; *"for his name's sake."* It is to the honour of our great Shepherd that we should be a holy people, walking in the narrow way of righteousness. If we be so led and guided we must not fail to adore our heavenly Shepherd's care. — Charles Spurgeon