

BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....”
John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a

Busting The Stress Of Damaged Emotions

In studying this Psalm it must always be remembered that it is a sheep in the Good Shepherd's care who is speaking. This being the case, one might well ask, "Why then this statement ... "He restoreth my soul"? Surely it would be assumed that anyone in the Good Shepherd's care could never become so distressed in soul as to need restoration.

But the fact remains that this does happen. Even David, the author of the Psalm, who was much loved of God, knew what it was to be cast down and dejected. He had tasted defeat in his life and felt the frustration of having fallen under temptation. David was acquainted with the bitterness of feeling hopeless and without strength in himself.

Now there is an exact parallel to this in caring for sheep. Only those intimately acquainted with sheep and their habits understand the significance of a "cast" sheep or a "cast down" sheep.

This is an old English shepherd's term for a sheep that has turned over on its back and cannot get up again by itself. A "cast" sheep is a very pathetic site. Lying on its back, its feet in the air, it flays away frantically struggling to stand up, without success. Sometimes it will bleat a little for help, but generally it lies there lashing about in frightened frustration.

If the owner does not arrive on the scene within a reasonably short time, the sheep will die. This is but another reason why it is so essential for a careful sheepman to look over his flock every day, counting them to see if all are able to be up and on their feet. If one or two are missing, often the first thought to flash in his mind is, One of my sheep is cast somewhere. I must go in search and set it on its feet again.

It is not only the shepherd who keeps a sharp eye for cast sheep, but also the predators. Buzzards, vultures, dogs, coyotes and cougars all know that a cast sheep is easy prey and death is not far off.

This knowledge that any "cast" sheep is helpless, close to death and vulnerable to attack, makes the whole problem of cast sheep serious for the manager.

Many people have the idea that when a child of God falls, when he is frustrated and helpless in a spiritual dilemma, God becomes disgusted, fed-up and even furious with him. This simply is not so.

One of the great revelations of the heart ... given to us by Christ is that of Himself as our Shepherd. He has the same identical sensations of concern and compassion for cast men and women as ... [the shepherd] for cast sheep.

Source: Excerpts from "A Shepherd Looks At Psalm 23" by Phillip Keller

KEY VERSE

Psalm 23:3a (NKJV)

“He restores my soul.”

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday: Psalm 23; Psalm 42

Introduction

1. The cover describes a cast down sheep as totally helpless and immobile. Has there been a time in your life where your emotions made you like this? How was the Lord a caring Shepherd to you?
2. How has your emotional health been impacted by the coronavirus crisis?

Tuesday: Psalm 23; I Samuel 24:2-7; Ephesians 4:31-32

Let God Replace Your Grudges—Forgive People Who Hurt You

3. Today’s Scripture reading describes a conflict between King Saul and David. How do you think David was able to forgive Saul?
4. Has there been a time in your life when not forgiving someone has held you back? Why is forgiveness so important in the life of a believer?

Wednesday: Psalm 23; I Samuel 24:8-12; I Peter 2:21-23

Let God Replace Your Grudges—Do Not Take Revenge

5. How was David able to not take revenge on Saul?
6. How can you let the Lord fight your battles for you?

Thursday: Psalm 23; II Samuel 11:3-5; 15-17; II Samuel 12:13

Let God Remove Your Guilt

7. Why do you think David tried to conceal his sin?
8. Why did David confess his sin?
9. Is there a sin that you feel guilty for or an emotion that you are struggling with today? How can Jesus help you with what is weighing you down?

Friday: Psalm 23; II Samuel 12:19-24; Psalm 147:3

Let God Remove Your Grief

10. Describe a time you experienced grief. How did God help you?
11. How did David deal with his grief?
12. How is it possible to worship God during times of grief?