Psalm 23:3a – “He restores, . . . my soul.”

Psalm 42:5 – David prays, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul. Hope thou, . . . in God." Why is my soul, cast down? Do you have, a cast down soul? David is using a term, every shepherd would understand, when he talks about, . . being cast down. It is a position, sheep get themselves in, . . and, they can't get out of. Sheep are built in such a way, that if they fall over on their side, and then on over on their back, . . . with their legs sticking straight up in the air, . . . they cannot get out, of that position, themselves. They are helpless, . . . to get back up, on their feet, again.

That position, is called, a cast down sheep. It's frightening, when a sheep falls down on its side, . . . and, then its back. It kicks, and flails, in the air. It bleats, cries out. It knows, it is open, to attack. Any animal could come, and attack it, . . . and, it is helpless. It's a very serious condition.

When sheep lay on their back, . . gas begins to collect, in their stomach. It hardens, the stomach, cuts off the air passage, . . . and, they suffocate, in a matter of hours. Not only that, their legs go numb, in that position. On a hot day, a sheep, in a cast down position, can die, in just a matter of hours. They can't do, anything about it. They need a shepherd, . . . who **restores, their soul**.

When a shepherd, restores, a cast down sheep, . . it doesn't just happen, . . immediately. It takes time, to restore, . . . a cast down sheep. First, a shepherd will come to the sheep, laying on its back, with its legs sticking straight up, in the air. The first thing, the shepherd does, is lovingly massage, the four legs, to get some circulation back up, in the four legs. Then, he begins to talk, in a reassuring tone, to the sheep, "You're going, . . . to make it." Can’t you just hear Jesus now?

Then, he gently turns the sheep over, puts his hand under the sheep's belly, and lifts it up, . . . because, it cannot stand up on its own, . . . because, of its wobbly feet. He will lift up the sheep, and hold it there, . . while the sheep begins, to get some equilibrium. The blood begins to flow in the legs again, and it begins to get some stability. When the shepherd realizes, and can feel that the sheep, can stand on its own feet, . . that, it's got it's equilibrium back, . . . then, the shepherd will lovingly, and gently, . . . let the sheep go.

What a picture, of what God, wants to do for you! When you're on your back, and flailing around, and the grief,

guilt, or grudges, are overwhelming you, and you think you're going to die, in that position, . . . the Lord is your Shepherd. He lovingly comes, with reassuring words, and tender hands, picks up His little lamb, sets him up straight, until he can get on his own feet again, and carries it, until it's got that stability back.

Jesus Christ wants, to restore, your soul. Your Shepherd. If you've been cast down, for any reason, . . . He's the only One, who can help you, get back up on your feet again. When He restores your soul, He restores your confidence, and, your joy, and peace, and strength. We can restore, . . . a lot of things -- cars, paintings, sound recordings, buildings – but, only God, . . . can restore, . . . a soul.

Jesus Christ wants, . . to heal your soul. How does He do it? Job. 11:13-16 – "Put your heart right, reach out to God, . . . then, face the world again, firm and courageous. Then all your troubles, will fade from your memory, like floods that are past, and remembered no more." Jesus will, restore your soul. Let Him be your Shepherd, . . . and, your Savior. Let Jesus, . . . be your shepherd. Let Him, . . . restore your soul.