



Help Me Lord, I'm Cast Down

"He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

Psalm 23:3 (NKJV)

Number 9 in the series "The Lord is My Shepherd"

Shepherds are always on the lookout for sheep that are cast down. The term *cast down* means that the sheep is lying on its back, legs in the air, unable to get to its feet without help from the shepherd. This would happen if a sheep fell or had been lying down and rolled on its back. The sheep would struggle frantically to get up, and it would be full of fear. Without help from the shepherd, it would die.

The Bible calls believers *sheep*, and Jesus is our Shepherd. So let's see what we can learn that would prevent us from becoming cast down. There are three main reasons sheep become cast down. Number one, a sheep that likes to snuggle into a soft hollow in the ground until it is comfortable, often rolls onto its back and becomes cast down. This is a warning to me not to set my affections on the things of this world or make soft choices with the purpose to not suffer. I should not seek to comfort my flesh and avoid hardship, but allow Jesus my Shepherd to lead me to places and situations where He can teach me discipline, perseverance and endurance.

Reason number two is when the sheep's coat becomes too long and too heavy, it can become cast down and lose its life unless the shepherd is there in time to get it back on its feet. Hebrews 12:1 (KJV) reads, *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."*

I do not want to be like a cast down sheep. Since I put my trust in Christ in 1976, I have often

cried out to God to help me get free from everything that was weighing me down and hindering my walk with Jesus. When I came to Christ, I had a lot of sinful habits, character flaws, and hurts in my life for years. I was like a sheep with a long, heavy coat. I was cast down. God's love, mercy and amazing grace through His Word started to shear me like a shepherd shears his sheep. Sheep struggle when they are being sheared. They do not like it at the time, but afterwards, they run and jump in their newfound freedom. Well, I confess to you, beloved, I did not always like what God took me through, but I always trusted in His love for me, knowing that He was setting me free.

Reason number three is sheep that are fat often become cast down and lose their lives. This warns me not to get fat with materialism or with my career or with pride and self-assurance and become cast down. I want to be daily on my feet, following Jesus Christ my Shepherd and serving Him with my whole heart. I hope that your goal is the same.

Beloved, if you are cast down today, surrender your life to Jesus. I mean totally surrender it, not just in words, but also in actions. He will be delighted to help you get back on your feet. Again, if you are cast down, surrender your life to Jesus. He will help you.

— *Janice McBride*

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