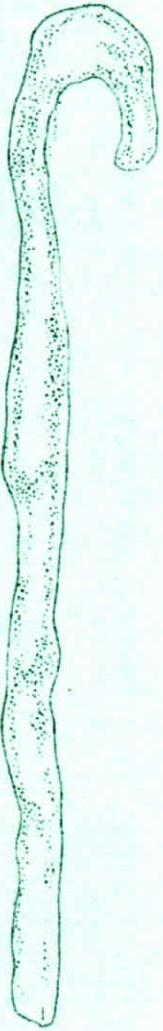


SHEPHERD

(S)



In the days of Jesus, people thought it was a good thing to be a shepherd.

A shepherd usually cared for about 15 sheep. He might have as many as 100 like the man in Luke 15:4.

Some shepherds had no real home. These men moved around with their sheep. They went to a new place whenever their sheep needed new pasture. There were no fences around most of the land. Gardens had walls around them. Vineyards had walls around them. But the shepherd could take his sheep to all the other land - wherever he found grass.

In the hot, dry months, the shepherd went higher and higher up the mountain. He tried to find some shaded valley where the grass was still green.

When it was cold and wet in Israel, the shepherd went south to the desert.

Sometimes these shepherds fought one another. They usually fought over some good water supply for the sheep.

TURN CARD OVER

~~There were other~~ shepherds who had homes in the villages. These men took their sheep out to pasture in the day. In the warm, summer months they might stay out on the hills all night with the sheep. But in the cold, wet months they would bring the sheep back near the village to the sheepfold.

Most families in the land of Jesus had at least some sheep. Someone in the family had to be the shepherd to watch and care for the sheep. It might be the father who took care of the sheep. It might be one of the sons. As soon as a boy was old enough, he probably had the job of taking care of the family sheep.