

# Free Press

WE have just finished Christian Aid week, which this year ran from May 14 through to the 20th. Many people as always supported this worthwhile cause in every way they could as rarely in human history has the need been greater amongst God's people, on the African continent and in many other parts of the world too.

In our churches we have just celebrated the period of the year when we concentrate on Jesus the Good Shepherd, and I thought this month, why not have a quick look at sheep and shepherds in biblical times 2,000 years ago. At the time of Christ, the shepherd's job was a dirty and dangerous one as often all the shepherd would have to fight off lions and other wild animals with a crook. At night, he would put the flock in a makeshift pen that had only one way in and out. The shepherd would open the door to the pen, call the sheep by name, and they would come in and settle safely for the night. Then the shepherd, once the

flock was safely gathered in, would lie down at the gate to the pen, to give his life to protect his flock.

The Gospels have several references to Jesus the Good Shepherd, and of course we all know and love Psalm 23 ("The Lord's my Shepherd; I'll not want.") The word 'want' on this occasion covers a multitude of reassurances, as Jesus tells us not to 'worry', not to 'fear', not to 'wander', but to know the security and assurance only He can give us in troubled times, in His pen.

I may well have mentioned this before, but in the Holy Land to this day the shepherd walks ahead of his flock, not behind them as in most other countries, trusting them to follow him, to recognize and obey his voice and listen to his commands. We may sometimes find it more difficult today to 'hear' Jesus in the noise and confusion and war mongering of everyday life, but when you think about it, who else can we picture literally laying down his life for each one of us.

Thought for  
the weak



with the Rev Preben  
Andersen

*Rev Preben Andersen*