

were in keeping with this. Born in a manger because there was no room for Him in the great Inn of this world Was it not also in perfect harmony with this, that, when heaven would announce His birth, those who were selected to hear the "good tidings of great joy" were, not the great people of the world in that day, but "shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night"? The despised ones of the world, in the simple discharge of their duties. No soul taught of God, but will exclaim, "How suitable!" It is worthy of notice that the Lord Jesus does not speak of Himself as shepherd till he was cast out by the religious world as we see in chap. viii. 59.

If we desire to understand the Lord's teaching on the subject before us; and in any measure to appreciate the beauty of what He brings out, we must divest ourselves of our western notions of a shepherd's life and of everything not in accordance with the Scriptures and the habits of those eastern countries where the events recorded took place.

A sheepfold was a roofless enclosure with a high wall into which the shepherd took the sheep at night to protect them from the attacks of robbers and wild beasts. Judaism was, in one of its aspects, a fold,* being an earthly system of religion

*It is well known to nearly every careful reader of Scripture that the second occurrence of the word "fold," in verse 16, should be "flock," being a different word in the original.