

Shepherds



Photo of some beneficiaries during the March 6 food distribution.

“Would a shepherd really leave 99 sheep to look for one lost one?”

This was the question posed to Tazedirte* group members, some of whom were shepherds before they lost flocks and herds to years of drought. When we ask about shepherding, their eyes reminisce.

Without hesitation, the shepherds always answered, “yes”. They would leave the 99 in safety, then go look for the lost one. One of the most experienced shepherds said he would look for a week or two, then he would cry because of

the lost sheep. But he would be filled with great joy when the sheep is found!

We visit a few huts each morning to follow up on the food subsidy project with Tazedirte group members. We're welcomed warmly into open-sided huts that serve as living rooms and sit on mats or a few household chairs while we go over questions. Their replies confirm that food often runs out at home, and thankfully the project has removed this food insecurity momentarily. We also ask about health and religion.

A cloud of fear looms over these men that prevents them from openly pursuing Christianity. Through a Christian Tuareg translator, I asked one father that if he was to die today, would he be sure he would go to heaven? He said he didn't know but added that if someone was to show him how to be sure, he would follow that way. Then, when some neighbouring men came to listen in on the interview, the same father, in reply to another question, proclaimed that he followed Islam and it showed him the way to heaven.

We share that the God we know is looking for His lost sheep, like a good shepherd. Please pray for courage for these men to seek the truth. Please pray for us as well as we seek to walk with the Holy Spirit in sharing about the Good Shepherd with these men.

May the Lord grant all of us courage and grace as we share of His love in each of our lives.

Ace & Cecilia

** Tazedirte means patience in Tamajaq, the language spoken by Tuaregs*

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