

6545

SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL 1996

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST IN THE PROPHETS

Speaker: Bro. Stephen Palmer

Class #1

The Call of the Gospel

Reading: Isaiah 40

Dear Brethren and Sisters

Our president has explained that this is a difficult session, not so much for me but for you, and it's going to be like that throughout the week, because I've got the third class, and this is the one after lunch. So let me just explain, I don't mind if you go to sleep, but I take exception to snoring! It might wake up some of the others! So I've got the best excuse now, if you do go to sleep, it's not my fault!

In our exhortation this afternoon, what we tried to show, brethren and sisters, was that when the New Testament writers portrayed for us the Lord Jesus Christ, and when they refer to Old Testament passages, it's not just the passage that is quoted which they have in mind. When the Spirit through Mark, makes reference to Malachi chapter 3 and verse 1, it is the intention of the Father that we should go to Malachi, read the prophecy and see how it's fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Spirit does not pick verses because they happen to suit or fit; they fit because it is the Spirit of Christ in the prophets which is being drawn upon. It's not as if the Old Testament scriptures are being reinterpreted in a way which is a surprise; it was always the intention of the Spirit to be speaking of Christ in those prophecies. And the way in which inspiration works is, to direct us back and forth between the parts of scripture; and what we're going to do is compare scripture with scripture. Compare spiritual things with spiritual things; it may seem technical to some who are not use to it, but I'd stick my neck out and say this, brethren and sisters, this is the essence of bible study. This is the Spirit's way of explaining what it means; this is God speaking. If we were to understand what God is saying to us, we must listen to what He says. We could do a talk by picking a verse here, and a verse there, and fitting it in to some scheme which we think is appropriate; that's not the way to bible study. Let's use the scheme of the Spirit's own devising; let's follow it whither so ever it bloweth!

That's what we're going to try and do with the second verse of Mark chapter 1, because there is a reference to Malachi leading us into verse 3, 'The voice of one crying in the

wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make His paths straight'. Now, we all know that verse 3 of Mark chapter 1 is a quotation from Isaiah chapter 40 and verse 3; what we're going to try and accomplish this evening, an ambitious task, is to try and understand Isaiah chapter 40, in relation to the Spirit of Christ which is in that passage. And we believe that if we can do that in measure, there will be three exhortational points, major exhortational points which will come to our attention!

So we now turn to Isaiah chapter 40, and look first of all, at the first eleven verses. The picture is one familiar to us, because this is a well-known passage of scripture. It's the message of comfort to Jerusalem; her time of punishment has come to an end. Now is the time of rejoicing; Jerusalem is to receive the most distinguished visitor possible, and a special road is being prepared in the wilderness. A highway is being raised up; the valleys are being cut through, and the mountains are being made low. The crooked places are being made straight; the rough places plain; a motorway, we might say, a high quality road is being prepared in the wilderness, because along this road is going to come the One who is to visit Jerusalem. The good news of this visit is to be declared; the good news, of course, is the meaning of the gospel. This is where the gospel of the Son of God has its origin. The good tidings which are being spoken to Jerusalem; who is this visitor? who is going to travel upon this road to Jerusalem? Well, verse 5 says, 'And the glory of Yahweh shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together', so this distinguished person is going to reveal the glory of Yahweh!

Verse 9 goes on to say, 'O thou that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God. Behold, the LORD God will come'. This is a remarkable thing, isn't it? that the One who comes along this road, that is being specially prepared in the wilderness, is none other than God Himself. Well, that's a startling thought, of course, GOD WITH US was the title given to the Lord Jesus Christ. 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father', said the Lord Jesus Christ; 'We beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; and that in verse 5 is the glory referred to. So the first eleven verses speak of the Lord Jesus Christ coming and of John the Baptist in the wilderness preparing the way, preparing the road, clearing out all those things which inhibited the progress of the Lord to Jerusalem, preparing the people, turning their hearts to be receptive to the One who was going to reveal the glory of God.

That is the magnitude of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Spirit of Christ in Isaiah, is saying that the Lord is none other than 'God with us'. Not, of course, in any trinitarian sense, but in the sense of character revealed, the glory that was seen would be the glory of God Himself. Now, verse 5 says, 'And all flesh shall see it together'; Luke chapter 3 verse 6 takes hold of that and says, 'And all flesh shall see the salvation of God', for in the glory of God revealed there is salvation.

Now, we've already drawn attention in Mark chapter 1 to this reference to the word 'all'. Let's just notice again in Mark chapter 1, how that little word which is used in Isaiah chapter 40 and verse 5, 'All flesh shall see it' our attention is drawn to that in Mark. You

see, he's hitting home the spirit of the prophecy; Mark chapter 1 verse 5, of John the Baptist, 'there went out unto him all the land of Judeah', so that's a lot of people, and they went to the Jordan, and they were going to see the 'glory of God', 'the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him'. And Mark in verse 28 makes the same point! 'Immediately His fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee', and verse 33, 'And all the city was gathered together at the door'. All flesh shall see it together; the words of Mark in describing that gathering, are the echo of Isaiah's prophecy. Verse 37, 'All men seek for thee', so that's what Mark is telling us, all men did see the glory of God.

Isaiah 40 says, (it's in contrast to the glory of God); the glory of man, he says, is like the grass; 'all flesh is grass', so all flesh saw the glory of God. The glory of God is eternal, but flesh is temporal; 'and all the goodness thereof, is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withereth the flower fadeth but the Word of our God shall stand forever'. That's what Mark is trying to impress upon us, do you notice all the little phrases, 'all the city was gathered together', there is no word lost in scripture. You can see the very language of Isaiah 40, in the fabric of the gospel record.

I'm not one for anecdotes, brethren and sisters, but I've got a couple! just to keep you awake. I was in Trinidad and Tobago last week, for the Christadelphian Bible Mission, and I was in a tiny little ecclesia in the south of Trinidad, and we had a lovely day with them, and in the garden was a plant, and they gave me a leaf. And here it is! and it's not a very impressive leaf, the plant looks like tall grass; do you know what it is? The leaf of life; and they gave me this because it's an exceptional plant, and that's my point. It's an exceptional plant, they said, 'You can take this home, put it anywhere, put it in your bible (it's been in my bible for a week) and it will start to grow! And it has: you see (he holds it up) around each of these little serrations on this leaf, the roots have started to grow! And what is curious about this, is it is so exceptional. Flesh is grass, and amongst the grasses, this is a peculiarity; I don't know how long it will last for, do you know? Will it last till I get home next week? The point is, it has nutrients inside it, so that it is drawing upon the sustenance within; the wind hasn't blown upon it so it hasn't dried up, but I don't think it's an immortal plant; I'm just hoping it will last long enough to take roots back home.

When we were at the bible school in Tobago, this lovely little girl went to a rose bush and pick off a rose and gave it to me as a present. And it was very sweet of her, and I'd like to be able to show you the rose, but I can't! I put it in my bible case, and it disappeared; it's gone to dust. There was a flake or two in there yesterday, but it's just gone, disappeared! 'All flesh is grass'; people who live in dry climates will understand that better than we do, in wet Wales where grass seems always green. But in dry climates and in the middle East, when the rain comes and the grass springs up and the flowers blossom, and then the rain stops and the wind blows, and the grass withers and the flower fades. That's the glory of man compared to the glory of God.

What men saw in the Lord Jesus Christ, was the glory of God. They didn't see it in His

flesh; you remember by the end of His ministry, He seems to have looked older than His years. He wasn't even strong enough to carry the cross piece all the way; so they didn't see beauty in His flesh, what they saw was the glory of God in His character! Now here we are, brethren and sisters, we are flesh and we are like the grass, and we're in bad need of help! In Mark chapter 14, the gospel record picks up that little word all; 'All flesh shall see it together', and they did! They saw the glory of God, and there were twelve of them who saw it most particularly, for they accompanied the Lord all through His ministry. In Mark chapter 14 and verse 23 it says, 'And He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them: and they all drank of it'. Verse 27, 'And Jesus saith unto them, all ye shall be offended because of Me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered'. Verse 29, 'But Peter said unto Him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I' and verse 31, 'Likewise also said they all', and verse 50, 'And they all forsook Him and fled'; all flesh is grass, and there's the contrast between the Lord Jesus Christ and ourselves.

And Isaiah's portraying the Lord Jesus Christ, 'Behold, your God', see the character of the Eternal in the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, how are we to be delivered from such a situation? Let Peter explain in his first epistle and the first chapter. Here is the man who protested that though 'all forsook, yet he would not', but he did! Perhaps those words of Isaiah 40 meant more to him then, and in his first epistle he makes reference to Isaiah chapter 40 once again. The Spirit of Christ was speaking through the prophet, and he says in verse 23, 'Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away: But the Word of the LORD endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you'. And so Peter takes hold of the Spirit of Christ in Isaiah chapter 40, and says we've got to be born, not brethren and sisters, of the corruptible seed, (and however longlasting that is, it isn't the pattern), but of the Word of God. That is the eternal seed; that's the seed that grows up and never withers and that is the gospel that is preached unto us. And that's what Isaiah 40 is speaking about; in the contrast between flesh and spirit, flesh which withers, it's drawing us to the Spirit, by which we can obtain eternal life. Because, with the One that is travelling along this road, are a company of people.

Let's look back in Isaiah chapter 40 and see them there. We do well to remember that flesh is grass; it's not always easy. When we're young and fit, sometimes we live as if we would live forever! it's only perhaps when illness touches us or our family, that we are brought down to earth, and then our perspective changes, our focus is perhaps more keenly centred on the Word of God. Look who's with the Lord in verses 10 and 11, 'Behold the Lord GOD will come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young'. So, the Lord who was just spoken of, who is coming through the wilderness, isn't coming on His own, He in fact, is a Shepherd, a Shepherd who is leading a flock of sheep. And the character of the Shepherd is glorious to behold; it is the glory of the LORD revealed in the Shepherd of Israel, and the glory of

God is seen in the way in which He looks after His flock. You notice in verse 10 the reference to the 'hand' and the 'arm'; it's a strong hand, his arm shall rule for Him; it's a powerful arm that we're looking at. He's got work to do, He has strength to use, and verse 11 you might think, is in contrast to that, because that arm is being used to gather the lambs, to carry them in His bosom; to place this young lamb in his shirt, to carry it along, to keep it warm, to nourish it. When He leads those that are with young, He gently leads those that are with young. With those two ideas in verse 10, the idea of the strong arm and hand, and in verse 11, the gentle use of it, must go together, dear brethren and sisters.

It's an important point here, when you think about it, you might think of many different examples of this principle; that if we are going to be gentle, then we have to be strong. Let's just think of young children; when there's a young child in the family and a baby is born, the young child wants to hold the baby. Do we let it? We are very careful about how the older child handles the younger child; why? because the child is not strong enough to be gentle. The older child will jerk the arms and the head; the baby is toppling, in danger of falling; if it did stumble, the child is not strong enough to hold on to it. You have to have a strong arm to be gentle; when a shepherd is helping a ewe to give birth, He needs a strong arm. He needs to be able, sometimes, to push the legs back in, to turn the head around, to push the shoulder. He needs strength to do that, but it has to be done gently, and the stronger his arm is, the gentler, the more delicately, the more carefully he can manoeuvre that lamb. That's what Isaiah's describing, a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, coming with a strong arm; yes! with power so that He can be gentle with His lambs.

Isaiah tells us this and Mark makes reference to it in the gospel. Let's have a look at it, starting in chapter 1, we'll see this hand, first of all, being used many times; (we won't go through all the references but it's worth following up). Just look at chapter 1 and verse 31, when the Lord healed Simon's wife's mother, 'He came and took her by the hand'. The Lord didn't need to do that; you remember the incident of the centurion, 'Lord, you only need to say the word'. The Lord didn't need to touch anybody, or be touched by anybody for the miracles to be done. The fact that He did, was the measure of the gentleness with which He was leading the young. Helping people to understand who He was; that He had come to be touched with the feelings of their infirmities. One of the greatest examples is in verse 41 of chapter 1, where the Lord touched the leper; it was a measure of compassion, 'Jesus moved with compassion, put forth His hand and touched him'. This man was full of leprosy! and I have my second anecdote here, and if you've heard this before, forgive me; it made a big impression upon me! I went once, some years ago, brethren and sisters, to Ethiopia, just after the famine and I was going into the ministry of health building, and there was a man sat outside the gate begging. I went to give him some money and then I looked at him and his hand was stretched out, and most of his fingers were missing. And it struck me, you know, that this man was suffering from leprosy, and I froze; I froze! because I had to touch him to give him the money. I couldn't just drop the money on his hand, he didn't have a hand; he didn't have a cup that you could put the money into, he just had a stump. And I didn't want to touch him, I felt ashamed of myself but the man had leprosy. I know that that leprosy was

cured, (he wouldn't have been allowed to be out unless he had been on treatment for some time; so he wasn't infectious). I KNEW, I KNEW MENTALLY that he couldn't give me leprosy; he wasn't full of it like this man, he wasn't weeping with it like this man. And the Lord didn't have to touch him, but He did! because He had compassion upon him. This was the arm of the Lord; it was the glory of God, to touch the leper, and so often in the scriptures we find the Lord is holding out His hand, His touching, His lifting up of the damsel and taking her by the hand, 'I say unto thee arise'. The Lord was one with those He came to save; the arm of the Lord was gently leading those that were with young.

Well, this is made a big point of, when we come to Mark chapters 9 and 10, because there was a lesson, of course in this, a lesson which is applied to the ecclesia of the Lord Jesus Christ by Himself. In Mark chapter 9 we're told that they were 'disputing by the way'; they were having an argument, which of them would be the greatest. Pride was welling up, there was rivalry and jealousy in this little ecclesia. They were conscious of their position; they were conscious of themselves rather than of one another. And in that situation, brethren and sisters, if we'd stumbled upon that situation, I can imagine, that many of us would have been frankly, annoyed! that our brethren should behave in such a way. And that if we had sat them down, we might have given them a good telling off! and put them really in their place! But the strong arm of the Lord is used gently; His concern is not to put them in their place, so much as make them realize their place, and chose their rightful place. His concern is not with Himself to vent His annoyance,(if He had any with them), but to win them to a right way of thinking! To develop the mind of Christ in them; so in verse 35 it says, 'He sat down and called the twelve and said unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. And He took a child, and set him in the midst of them':(and then Mark and only Mark tells us this) 'and when He had taken him in His arms, He said unto them'. Now why does Mark say that? 'when He had taken him in His arms'; it's a reference to Isaiah chapter 40, 'He shall gather the lambs with His arms'. Here is the Shepherd picking up a little child with great gentleness; it says something for the Lord that this little child was willing to come to Him. We know that, (we did it today! we stretched out our arms to a little child and he stood and cried for his mother; he didn't want to come to me). The Lord had no problem, it was a measure of His gentleness; 'He took a little child in his arms and said, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth Me'. Now, what's He saying? What He's saying is this to the disciples, that if you're arguing among yourselves, who's the greatest, who's looking after these little children? If you're so concerned with your status and prestige, what about the little ones who need to be looked after? That sort of rivalry is destructive of the Spirit of Christ in an ecclesia; the Spirit of Christ in an ecclesia is the spirit of gentleness for those who can't help themselves. It stretches out to the little child in the ecclesia; dare we offend one of these little ones? that's what the Lord goes on to say. But to receive a little child, to show that Spirit of Christ, is to receive Christ Himself.

And in chapter 10, the Lord draws out the lesson in another example. In verse 13 it says, 'And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them' (that's interesting isn't it?) that He should touch them, 'and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the

kingdom of God'. To the Lord Jesus, children weren't a nuisance, they were the essence of the kingdom of God; that's what He wants us to be like little children! and He is the Shepherd who with that strong arm will gently bear us up. There's a meekness in that little child which must be present in the disciple of Christ. And verse 16 says, with another reference back to Isaiah chapter 40, 'And He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them', demonstrating before their very eyes, all flesh shall see the glory of God, and they saw it in a man taking up a little child in His arms. The Lord Jesus was demonstrating the Spirit of Christ that should be applied in ecclesial life, in family life in the Lord, that to be gentle, we have to be strong. If we are strong, it will be manifest in a carefulness and a precision in the way we work.

There are many times that we might think in family circumstances, when we're tired, when somebody does something or says something, or they have a problem and we snap at them! Or we sigh, 'not again, I've already helped you once'. Now, it's because we're not strong, it's because we haven't sufficient strength that we're reacting like that; and in ecclesial life as well, brethren and sisters, we might apply the same principle. When there's a problem, maybe a behaviour problem, what is the object of our actions? Is it to vent our feelings, to let them know what we think, to just let off steam so that we feel better about it? So we've done our part, anyway! So the object is to see a lamb that has gone astray, whose mother is too distressed to go and look for the lamb, to pick it up gently, to carry it in our bosom and to bring it back to the flock? That's the spirit that should pervade our actions; that's the spirit, not of weakness, not of weakness, but of strength! It can't be done through weakness, it can only be done through strength of character, through the Christ-like mind, putting others before self, for the judgment and discernment of scripture to be applied to win over that one who has fallen, or stumbled, or gone astray, or has been injured. To gently lead; if the shepherd went at his own pace, he would leave far behind the rest of his flock. It takes a certain amount of strength, doesn't it, to slow down to the pace of others? so that we don't leave them behind, but help them along the way!

That's the picture, brethren and sisters, remarkably that Isaiah 40 presents to us, of the glory of God, the One who was coming to Jerusalem! This isn't softness, it is strength, evident in the Shepherd of Israel. And see how the idea of the shepherd is taken up in chapter 6 of Mark's gospel record, he is as a shepherd. And here we see the shepherd in action! An outstanding Shepherd, not a hireling but One who would lay down His life for His sheep! Verse 34 of Mark 6, 'And Jesus, when He came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things.' The Lord was moved to compassion because they didn't have a shepherd; when He saw people who were leaderless, drifting, wandering astray, His reaction wasn't to say, 'Well, I told you so!'; that's just predictable; His heart went out to them, He yearned that they might be lead in the way to eternal life; He was moved with compassion as He was with the leprous man. He was prepared to touch a man who was full of leprosy; He wanted to draw His sheep to Himself. And when He causes them to sit down, Mark gives a very interesting description in verse 39, when he says, 'He commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass'. Might seem redundant to say the green grass, I

mean, what colour is grass? He could have said 'sat down on the grass', he could have said, 'sat down on the ground', if sitting down was the point, but where would a shepherd lead his sheep? But to the green pastures, so what a lovely little touch that is here in the Spirit word, to draw attention to the nature of a shepherd, who thinks of the welfare of his sheep, to such an extent that the Lord was going to lay down His life.

'Smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered'. Well, back in Isaiah 40 the tenure of the chapter changes somewhat from verse 12 onwards. It is a challenge, well, 'Behold your God' says Isaiah. Now the question is, What's He like? How would you recognize Him? What's His character? Is He like the gods of the nations? 'To whom then will ye liken God? in verse 18, 'or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?' And the answer of course, is He's like the Lord Jesus Christ; that's Who He is like. If you want to know who God is like, then look at the One whom God hath sent! Notice verse 13, here's the challenge, God is greater than flesh, is He not? 'Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being His counselor hath taught Him? With whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him, and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and showed to Him the way of understanding?' We're talking about the Creator here! He is not like any of the imaginations of men; He is not to be defined by the thoughts and intellects of the theologians of this world. He is not to be found in the commentaries of the churches!

Who would you liken God to? And that verse 13, is quoted by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians chapter 2, and let's see what he says about Isaiah 40. 1 Corinthians chapter 2 is structured around Isaiah chapter 40 (now time is running out on us, so we can't do service to this really, but let me quickly point out some things if you want to note them, if you'd like to follow them up) Verse 13 of Isaiah 40, 'Who hath directed the Spirit of Yahweh or being His counsellor hath taught Him', that verse is the last verse of 1 Corinthians 2, 'For who hath known the mind of Yahweh, that he may instruct Him?' You see, the words aren't exactly the same, but you can see that sufficiently, and even your margin will tell you that this is a quotation from Isaiah 40. He's asking us, well, what would you liken the mind of God to? What are His thoughts like? It's a contrast in Corinthians with the wisdom of this world, isn't it? It's a contrast between the wisdom of the Greeks and the wisdom of God; can you find God by going to Plato and Aristotle? Absolutely not! Can you find God by absorbing the commentaries of this world? Absolutely not! Where do you get an understanding of the likeness of God?; Go to the Lord Jesus Christ, see in the mind of Christ, the mind of God. So the answer in verse 16, 'For who hath known the mind of the LORD, that He may instruct him?' The answer comes, 'But we have the mind of Christ'. That's what Isaiah 40 we believe is speaking about; the mind of Christ is here in this chapter. That is who God is likened to. If you're interested 1 Corinthians 2 and verse 6 is a quotation from Isaiah 40 and verse 23 at the end of the verse, 'of this world nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought'. The princes that come to nought, they're mentioned in Isaiah 40 at verse 23, 'that bringeth the princes to nothing'; there it is. You see, the mind of Paul through the Spirit is not just picking out a verse at random, sort of a hap-hazard (O, I turn the scripture over and put my finger on a verse, and oh, that's the one I'll use) his mind is in the Spirit of Christ in the prophecies!



Verse 26 of Isaiah 40, at the end refers to, 'He is strong in power' (God is strong in power). 1 Corinthians 2 verse 5 says, 'that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God'. (Now, I'll just give you those hints, you might like to see what other connections you can find!) What we've been taught here, is that Isaiah 40 is portraying for us, the mind of Christ as the reflection of the mind of God. Nothing else; He is God with us! Let us look at one or two aspects then, of God who is revealed to us through Christ, in Isaiah chapter 40.

Verse 28, 'Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding'. He is in contrast with the wise of this world, with the princes of this world; they are soon exhausted but not the Creator. 'He fainteth not, His understanding cannot be searched, cannot be exhausted'. Just think about what Mark says of the Lord Jesus Christ when He comes in the power of God; Mark chapter 1 and verse 35, it says, 'And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, into a solitary place, and there prayed'. Rising up a great while before day, 'hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not'. It was in that Spirit that the Lord came to pray through our sleeping hours, that He might have the strength to gently lead us through that wilderness.

There's another lovely little example in chapter 10 of Mark, when you think of the words of Isaiah, there is no searching of His understanding; He's never exhausted, His mind is always full of energy, and look at Mark chapter 10 and verse 1. 'And He arose from thence and cometh into the coasts of Judea by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto Him again; and as He was wont, He taught them again'. That's a beautiful expression, it's only Mark that tells us the last two lines; 'they resort to Him again'. You know, you can feel us, you and I, 'Oh, no, again, not again! you know, give me a break!'. And as He was wont, He taught them again, every time they came He took every opportunity; there's no searching His understanding. 'He fainteth not', verse 29 of Isaiah 40 says, 'He giveth power to the faint', He giveth power to the faint, Mark chapter 8 verse 1, 'In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples unto Him, and saith unto them, I have compassion on the multitude because they have now been with Me three days and have had nothing to eat: And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way', that was His concern; He was a Shepherd, He had compassion, 'if I send them away they will faint'. So what does He do? He gives power to the faint and He provides food for them miraculously. That's what the Shepherd loved to do, brethren and sisters, that was the Spirit of Christ as spoken of in Isaiah chapter 40.

Finally, just look at the end of Isaiah chapter 40 and the last two verses; this is a beautiful picture of the gospel bringing that eternal hope, and fulfillment to those that follow the Lord Jesus Christ, and try to assimilate into their minds, through the power of His example, coming through the Word, the same mind of Christ. Verse 30 says, 'That even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as

eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint'. Just notice the reference to the young man, who will utterly fall', in other words, even flesh in its finest example, the young man full of energy and confidence will fall. So he did! Mark chapter 14, immediately after verse 50 which said that they all forsook Him and fled, verse 51 says, 'And there followed Him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: And he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked', now, some think this is put in by Mark, as sort of his autograph, but would the Spirit do that, brethren and sisters? Just for no purpose? Or is this reference to the young man who forsook Him, when all the disciples had run away, where did this young man come from? He'd got out of bed, he'd put a cloth about him, maybe it was John Mark, maybe he'd heard that the Lord had been taken captive. 'You've run away, I'm going to go and follow Him!' And when he gets into the heat of the situation, and sees other young men, as strong as he, they grab hold of him, they grab his coat, and he runs as fast as he can, naked and they see his shame. A young man in the prime of life, cannot stand either! Just what Isaiah 40 said in verse 30, 'But they that wait upon the Lord'.

Then in chapter 16 of Mark, there's a picture of somebody waiting upon the Lord; it's an angel but he's not described as an angel, he's described as a young man to draw the contrast and for us to see the fulfillment of what Isaiah 40 is saying. Verse 5 of Mark chapter 16, 'And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment', the first young man fled naked, this young man is clothed right down to his feet it seems, in a white garment. It was an angel, but we shall be like unto the angels, for they that wait upon the Lord, shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint'. That is the beautiful picture which the Lord Jesus Christ with His strong arm has held out to us, in all the gentleness of Christ, so that we might absorb in our own minds, His example, that just as in Him we see the likeness of God, we also might be like Him.