



July 15, 2008

Thought For the Day

***You who bring good tidings to Zion,  
go up on a high mountain.  
You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem,  
lift up your voice with a shout,  
lift it up, do not be afraid;  
say to the towns of Judah,  
"Here is your God!"  
See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power,  
and his arm rules for him.  
See, his reward is with him,  
and his recompense accompanies him.  
He tends his flock like a shepherd:  
He gathers the lambs in his arms  
and carries them close to his heart;  
he gently leads those that have young.***

Isaiah 40:9-11

I once knew a man who went by the name "Stump." He was a tall, large, strong hulk of a man with a roaring laugh. One of the things that always amazed me about Stump was his hands. They were enormous and they were extremely strong. He worked on heavy road equipment and his hands reflected the strength that was required to do that. He could crack pecans between his thumb and fingers! I have never met a man with hands as large and strong.

Having said that, maybe you can understand my amazement when I stepped onto the front porch of his house one evening and heard the most beautiful organ music coming from inside. I thought at first it must be a recording of some kind, but when his wife invited me in, there was Stump sitting at the organ, those massive hands deftly dancing on the keys. I stood there amazed. It didn't seem possible that such large strong hands could have such a gentle touch.



That is the way that Isaiah describes God. Notice his words in the center of the passage quoted above – sovereign, power, (his) arm rules – all describing the might of God. And then notice what those strong arms are doing – tending, hugging, gently leading. It is a description of awesome security. It is a picture of perfect safety. The most vulnerable and the weakest are the objects of his protective care.

When we find ourselves bruised and weakened by the experiences of life, remember who it is that reaching to hold us – the strong sovereign God with his gentle carrying hands. He will hold us and care for us. We can relax and be at peace.

*Gentle Shepherd, Come and lead us ,For we need you, To help us find our way,  
Gentle Shepherd, Come and feed us, For we need, Your strength from day to day,  
There's no other, We can turn to, Who can help us face another day,*

*Gentle Shepherd, Come and lead us, For we need you, To help us find our way.,*