

is there no balm in gilead

"o Lord, how long shall i cry, and you will not hear?"
hab 1:2

who among us has not been in the same situation as the prophet habakkuk? perhaps many of us are even now crying out to the Lord asking, "is there no balm in gilead?" is there no end to my seemingly hopeless situation? have i not been faithful enough in something or failed to please You? these are questions that have plagued us all at one time or the other.

if a good and all powerful God really does exist, why doesn't He answer our prayers for what we are convinced are good and right requests? it is the age-old skeptics' argument - either God is all powerful but not all good or He is all good but not all powerful.

our view is limited. it is only an "earthly" view. we see the circumstances; we suffer the circumstances; we despise the circumstances. from the human perspective we can see nothing good or fair about them. this could justifiably been the mindset of joseph when he was sold into slavery, a type and shadow of our Lord who would be sold for a measly thirty pieces of silver.

yet, through it all, joseph had grace to proclaim, "do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves... for God sent me before you to preserve life." gen 45:5 likewise God sent His Son beforehand to preserve life. no, God is not standing idly by. He did the the costliest and most loving thing of all... and no, it didn't look like it at the time.

a while back a dear friend wrote me and relayed this message. "i think i remember telling you once in my prayer chair i so wanted to know what grieved God, so i simply asked, "Lord, what grieves you the most?" and i expected Him to respond, abortion, or the Holocaust, or other physical harms that come to His people, but He answered me so quickly and clearly, "Patricia, what grieves me most is that MY PEOPLE do not trust Me."

how does the precious old hymn go?

not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share,
but our toil He doth richly repay;
not a grief or a loss, not a frown or a cross,
but is blessed if we trust and obey.

trust and obey, for there's no other way
to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

so what is the conclusion of our matter? that God has not abdicated His throne. He is still in charge. as the prophet habakkuk put it: "though the fig tree may not blossom... the fields yield no food.. the flock may be cut off... no herd in the stalls... yet i will rejoice in the Lord, i will joy in the God of my salvation." hab 3:17-18

our fig tree may seemingly be bearing no fruit because the blossoms just aren't there. these are times when faith produces a fruit far more tangible and delicious to our Lord. we plant in the natural and reap in the spirit. we sow in the dust of the earth and reap in realities reserved for us in heaven. our blossoms are

only visible now by faith and trust.

the pains we face and the burdens we bear cannot be compared to what the Godly servant job endured and he learned of God's goodness and faithfulness in the end. simply TRUST God. He is working in the background for our good and His glory. when soldiers are in battle they must trust the one standing next to them with their life; to protect them from someone sneaking up behind them. God's got a view like none other; not just into the "now," but into our past and far into our future.

stop focusing your prayers on your circumstances and allow your prayer to focus through them... to God and His faithfulness. if you will do this, you will begin to focus your prayers beyond your present problems; through the now into the eternal. then you, like the prophet habakkuk, can find the comfort only God can bring to your heart. you will find your balm in gilead. you will find it is like no healing this world can offer.