

Balm of Gilead: God's Healing Antidote for Your Wounded Heart

Many of God's people are hurting from other people's acts against them.

Some are even hurting from their own acts against themselves.

In Jeremiah 8:21-22, the prophet cried out:

*For the brokenness of the daughter of my people am I broken;
I mourn; dismay has taken hold of me.
Is there no balm in Gilead?
Is there no physician there?
Why then has not the health
of the daughter of my people recovered?*

The truth is that there is a balm for hurt now.

A physician is here.

Recovery is available for the health of God's people—all daughters and sons.

When Jeremiah spoke the words above, the people of Judah had turned away from worshiping God. Instead, they turned to worshipping idols.

They committed evil acts against one another.

So God removed the hedge of protection around them. He allowed idol-worshipping nations to conquer them.

These foreigners dragged most of God's people out of their homes and land, making God's people their slaves.

God's people spent many years in bondage. However God, in His great mercy, turned the situation around.

He compelled those foreign nations to release His people so they could return home.

Through the prophet Jeremiah, the Lord spoke words of restoration and recovery to His wounded people:

I will bring it health and healing, and I will heal them; and I will reveal to them the abundance of peace and truth. I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel, and will build them as at the first. I will cleanse them from all their iniquity whereby they have sinned against Me. And I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned and whereby they have transgressed against Me. It will be to Me a name of joy, praise, and honor before all the nations of the earth which shall hear of all the good that I do to them; and they will fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure for it (Jer. 33:6-9).

I believe the Lord is speaking these same words of hope and healing to His people. Will you receive them?

Here are 4 steps to apply God's words of comfort to yourself in the midst of hurt:

1. Return to God.

You may have turned to other things to numb your hurt, such as food, alcohol, drugs, sex or other destructive behaviors outside of God's will.

The enemy has lied to you that if you allow yourself to feel that pain, you won't survive.

He keeps you enslaved to him through the fear of death (see Heb. 2:14-15).

But Jesus already conquered death! You have eternal life in Him.

So the enemy's threat is an empty one:

- You shall live and not die.
- You shall declare the works of the Lord.
- Destructive habits can never heal your pain. Only Jesus can.

Refuse to hide your wounds anymore; you aren't fooling anyone anyway.

Expose your wounds to the Lord and allow Him to heal them. Write a letter to Him about your hurt. No one has to see your letter but you. But get all that pain out on paper.

Don't be like the people spoken of in Matthew 13:15:

For this people's heart has grown dull. Their ears have become hard of hearing, and they have closed their eyes, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts, and turn, and I should heal them.

2. Receive God's forgiveness—and pass it on.

When we declared Jesus as our Savior, we accepted His life as the sacrifice for our sins. Isaiah 53:5 says,

*But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.*

Jesus went through death and emerged on the other side, resurrected. Old things have passed away. The new has come!

Because Jesus paid our sin debt, we are now right with God. We

are the Lord's own special treasure.

In Mark 11:25-26, Jesus gave us a directive:

And when you stand praying, forgive if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven may also forgive you your sins. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your sins."

Whether you feel like doing it or not, the Lord's command is clear: Forgive.

Remember, Jesus already set the example. His enemies lied upon Him, spat upon Him, mocked Him and beat Him. They crucified Him on the cross.

But here is an astonishing truth: While He was on the cross, Jesus had to bear the punishment for every sin humankind has ever committed or will commit against one another. That includes your sin and the sin of the person who hurt you.

Through the Holy Spirit's strength, Jesus could still say in the midst of His agony: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

Remember what Jesus did. Release the person of their sin against you, knowing that the Lord has promised to repay all for what they have done in these earthly bodies.

Trust in Him to make all things right—whether your eyes behold it or not.

3. Resist the enemy.

Because Jesus is your Lord, you belong to Him—body, soul and spirit. Because of your love for Him, you recognize that you do not have the right to follow your old, sinful nature.

Jesus has given you a new nature. You are the righteousness of

God in Christ

1 John 2:5-6 exhorts us,

But whoever keeps His word truly has the love of God perfected in him. By this we know we are in Him. Whoever says he remains in Him ought to walk as He walked.

Consider your ways:

- What has the Lord told you to do?
- What has the Lord told you to stop doing?

That's the Holy Spirit speaking to you. He is your Comforter and your guide. He gives life to your mortal body.

He is here not only to reveal the right way for you to go every day, but give you the strength to take that better way.

Psalm 107:20 reminds us: "He sent His word and healed them and delivered them from their destruction."

Healing is found in God's word, whether it is the written word or the "just in time" word the Holy Spirit speaks to you. When you obey God's word every day, it is like applying healing balm to your wounds.

However, when you don't do what God has told you to do, you are hurting yourself (see James 4:17).

In those moments of disobedience, you elevate how your flesh feels above your submission to God's authority in your life.

That is a dangerous condition. When you do this, your flesh becomes your idol.

The enemy stirs up your flesh because he wants you to rebel against God. But once again, Jesus provides a pure example to follow to take back your authority:

Then Jesus said to him, "Get away from here, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve" (Matt. 4:10).

4. Remember the reward.

Never forget that this world and everything in it is temporary. Your hurt will not last forever:

- Temporal (earthly) things are temporary
- Spiritual (heavenly) things are eternal

You are a citizen of heaven, even as you walk this earth. As a citizen of heaven, you've got a target on your back.

1 Peter 5:8-10 warns us:

Be sober and watchful, because your adversary the devil walks around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him firmly in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. But after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called us to His eternal glory through Christ Jesus, will restore, support, strengthen, and establish you.

As you live this life, the Lord's love is perfecting, establishing, strengthening and settling you. What you will become is truly glorious!

Romans 8:15-18 confirms the wonderful news:

For you have not received the spirit of slavery again to fear. But you have received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified with Him.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Never forget that glory is on the other side of the pain of this world.

So set your mind on things of the Spirit. Of the Spirit, you will the benefits of abundant life:

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-control

Even as you reap the benefits of abundant life in this world, you’ll be assured of an even greater reward in the next one, when you meet your heavenly Father face to face. {eoa}

*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** can testify to God’s healing power to end binge-eating. She is an author and the creator of the Christian weight-loss website . Visit today for inspirational health and weight-loss tips.*

This article originally appeared at .