

BLESSINGS ALWAYS

September 14, 2022

Association Minister Message

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BALM. "Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?" (Jeremiah 8:22). COVID certainly has peaked our interest in finding cures for whatever ails us. We are inundated by commercials that present a vast array of cures for diseases you have and make you think that you might have the disease that would be cured by their product. Throughout our history there have been medicine salespersons who have come into communities attempting to sell their so called cures. Home remedies certainly catch our attention that promise elimination of pains and a variety of diseases. Scientific discoveries have given life-extending relief that certainly would be called miracles. Think of the many vaccines now available that have almost eliminated certain diseases and supplements that strengthen the body's immune system.

Jeremiah's words about "*BALM*" has double meaning: spiritual and physical. Certain plant elements were thought to have medicinal solutions in ancient times, as well as today. *BALM* comes from several herbs that are part of the mint family of plants and is myrrh-like compound found in the Arabian Peninsula. The *BALM* of Gilead was considered the best healing compound. It was Jeremiah who was asking God why God did not provide that healing *BALM* to heal people and their contentious ways. It is this spiritual metaphor that reminds the prophet of *BALM'S* quality to heal the waywardness of his people. It was the *BALM* of Gilead that was the premier quality of healing. It is through God that ultimate spiritual, mental, and bodily healings are received.

BALM. What kind of *BALM* are we looking for to heal our souls, minds, and bodies? What is needed to comfort us, to relieve us, to bring us solace and strength? It is more than an ointment or oil. It is God's *BALM* in word and deed. Importantly, we can become the *BALM* for others in their discomfort, agony, and pain by our encouraging words, our acts of kindness, our generosity, and our respect. There is *BALM* in Gilead but also within us, from others, and to others. Jeremiah asks, "*Is there no physician there?*" The Great Physician Jesus calls us to act sacrificially and become servants/physicians to others and all creation. We can be God's healing *BALM* as instruments of care, love, and hope. *BLESSINGS ALWAYS.*