

The Balm of Gilead

by

**George
Whitefield**

*The Balm of GILEAD displayed, or,
CHRIST the Physician of Souls.*

A

SERMON

PREACHED IN THE Orphan-Hospital Park, ON *THURSDAY*. EVENING, 8TH.
JULY, 1742.

JEREMIAH, Chap. viii. Ver. 20, 21, 22. Ver. 20. The Harvest
is past, the Summer is ended, and weave not saved.

21. For the Hurt of the Daughter of my People am I hurt,
I am black: Astonishment hath taken hold on me.

22. Is there no Balm in Gilead? Is there no Physician there?
Why then is not the Health of the Daughter of my People
recovered?

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THERE are some of the Prophets that have had particular
Names given them, according to the particular Tenor and
Purport of their Prophecies. *Isaiah* hath therefore given him the Name
of the *Evangelick* Prophet, because he saw the Redeemer's Glory, and
spoke of it in a more explicite Manner, at least more frequently than
the other Prophets. *Jeremiah* he hath ob-

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rained the Name of the *Weeping Prophet*, the *Mourning Prophet*, because
he seems to be a Man of an exceeding tender Heart; he seems to be a

Man of an exceeding loving Heart; he seems to be a Man of a Public Spirit, that made other Peoples Sorrows, in a great Measure, his own. He lived in a Time when *Jerusalem* was brought very low, and the Inhabitants were visited by God in a man grievous Manner: This made him write his Book of *Lamentations*; and the View he had of their Misery, extorted these Words from his tender Heart, that I have read to you. His Grief was so great, that we are told he wished his *Head were Waters, and his Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that he might weep Day and Night for the Slain of the Daughter of his People*. He had more Concern for them than they had for themselves; his Concern was so great, and made such a deep Impression on his Soul, that it even affected his Body; for, in the 21st Verse, he says, *For the Hurt of the Daughter of my people, am I hurt*. God wounds me when he wounds them; they are as near me as mine own Soul; I am so concerned, *that I am Black, my Visage is quite altered*; yea, says he, *astonishment hath taken hold on me*. I am amazed to think what will become of this wicked People; what will be the End thereof: He then begins to consider their desperate

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Condition, and begins to consider what was the Cause of their Misery; he finds, 'tis not God's Fault; but their own Fault; he says, *Is there no Balm in Gilead? Is there no Physician there?* Yes, there was Balm in Gilead, there was a Physician there, if People had Grace to apply it; *Why then, is not the Health of my People recovered?* How comes it to pass, since God is ready to help, seeing he is a God of Love, that *the Harvest is past, the Summer is ended, and we are not saved?* The Answer is, Because of the People's Unbelief. This then was the Language of *Jeremiah's* Heart, and this I doubt not but is the Language of some of your dear Hearts now; there are many of your stout-hearted; many of your Hearts are harder than a Piece of the nether Milstone; it was never yet broken by the Law, you never felt the Want of the Physician; the Physician hath nothing to do with you, because you have nothing to do with him. There are many of you that come, and have no Concern at all; tho' ye come to hear. join in Singing or Prayer, yet you have no Concern for your Souls. I must needs say, the Consideration of such Peoples Case, often makes my Bowels yearn within me, Astonishment takes hold on me, when I consider how black ere long they will appear before an angry God. You will be made then to

cry

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cry out, *The Harvest is past, the Summer is ended, and we are not saved:* We are damn'd for ever, the precious Opportunities we once enjoy'd are over, and God hath commanded his *Angels to take us and cast us as Bundles into Hell Fire.* This will be the Language of some of you: But I believe there are some of you I'm sure the Lord hath not suffered me to preach to you in vain, seeing himself hath wounded you by the Law: There are some of you begun to feel, that neither your own, Works nor Doings can recommend you to God; the Terrors of God hath taken hold an you, you have been struck with them; Others, when I ask, What you feel? Ye cannot say, as many lately told me, I feel the Wrath of God on me, and an absent Christ: Shall I never see the Face of my once crucified, but now exalted Saviour again? Shall I never feel his Mercy towards me any more? *Is there no Balm in Gilead, is there no; Physician there for me?* Is there no Comfort for my Soul in the Gospel? The Land of *Gilead* was a Place where there was a great deal of Balm, there it was that People sought for Balm; and there were Physicians there, ready to apply it. Your Language is, Shall I hear of Christ's Promise, and never regard whether it be applied to me or not? Your Night may be long, your Hour

dark

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dark and tedious; and the Devil will tempt you too, that if you shall be damned, you shall be damned for something. I doubt not, but this the Experience of many of you. You may ask me, whence is it that I am not restored to Soul-health, since you tell me, that *there is Balm in Gilead.*, and that *there is a Physician there,* that my Soul is not recover'd? That I am not restored to the Comforts of GOD, and settled in Peace from Christ? I tell you, 'tis because of your Unbelief, that ruining, that Soul-damning Sin of Unbelief. *There is Balm in Gilead; there is a Physician there;* I mean, the Blood of Christ is ready, that is the poor Sinner's Balm; that alone can cure the Sinner's Heart; the Holy Ghost is ready to apply it. O hungry, thirsty, wounded Soul, *only believe and thou shalt be saved;* keep not at such a Distance from him; tell him, the greater Sinner thou art, the more need thou hast of this Balm; the more sick thou art, tell him the more need thou hast of such a Physician. Whenever you come to the Day of Judgment, you will find GOD will acquit himself of every Man's Damnation, and they shall be made to own that 'tis just; and every one that is saved shall be made to own that their Salvation is of God. The Reason why you continue in this disconso-

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late State; is because of Unbelief; 'tis said Jesus Christ *could not do many mighty Works among the Jews, because of their Unbelief*. Faith it hath an overcoming Power in it, it hath an Almighty Power in it; *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*. The Advice I would give to you that are in such Distress is to apply close to the Redeemer, and let the Language of your Hearts be, Lord Jesus Christ, give us Faith! Lord Jesus Christ, give us Faith to apply thy Blood to our Souls! One Grip of Christ will save your Souls; one Act of Faith will save your Souls to all Eternity: 'Tis therefore only Unbelief that is the Cause of your Misery; this is the reigning and damning Sin, this is that Sin that makes the World ly in Misery. 'Tis true your Case is bad, who can bear it? But blessed be God, tho' 'tis bad, 'tis not desperate. I offer thee the Redeemer's Grace, O Man, Woman, Child; however bad your Case be, one Drop of this Blood will cleanse thy Soul; this is an universal, sovereign Remedy, you shall never be recovered from it by licking yourselves whole; you shall never be recovered by your own Doings, it must be by the Blood of Jesus applied to your Souls. This is the Advice I give to you that are wounded; say not 'tis God's Fault, but 'tis your own Fault. But what shall I

say

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say to you that are not wounded, that continue still unhurt, that continue still untouched, when there is such a blessed — Harvest of Souls in *Scotland? Say not ye, says our Saviour, there are yet four Months, and then cometh Harvest: Behold I say unto you, Lift up your Eyes, and look on the Fields, for they are white already to Harvest*. Blessed be God, we can lift up our Eyes and see a great Ingathering of Souls to the Lord; *The Harvest Time does not last always; by and by the Harvest will be past; by and by the Summer will be ended*: And if thou do'st not believe, thy Soul shall be damned; thou shalt find on Balm in Hell; thou shalt find, O Sinner, *no Physician there*. Thou will then find, crying in vain, tho' thou cryest to Eternity, *The Health of thy Soul will never be recovered, when once the Doors are shut*; When God's Gulph is fixed between thee and these Souls that are gathered into God's Granery, then thou shalt eternally remain in Hell. Would to God, every awakned Sinner would know the Time of their Visitation, before 'tis eternally hid from their Eyes! Would to God, when young Boys and Girls are going to Heaven, when your neighbours are going there, that ye may follow them, *For if ye be found*

Tares, then ye shall be taken out among the Wheat, and cast into Hell; as I told you before, That

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the Tares shall be gathered together in Bundles, and cast into Hell Fire! When others are going in Drovers to Heaven, you will go to Hell. Would to God that some Sentence, some Word or another would reach your Hearts! Sinners, do you know where you are, and on what Ground you are standing? God stands with a glittering Sword over thy Head, let God but cut the Thread, and thou shalt drop into Hell; *The Harvest will not always last, and the Summer will be soon ended*, and an eternal Winter will follow in Hell. How will you appear before God in Judgment? God now calls aloud to your Souls, God now gives you the Alarm, God is carrying on a Work, which I hope the Ears of all that hear it will tingle; God is answering the Prayers of his People an hundred Years ago. That 'tis the Work of God, I have no more Doubt of this, than I doubt that I stand in this Place; that 'tis a real Work, for it hath all the Marks of the Divine Signature upon it. If Persons examine with Impartiality the Work now in *Scotland*, and compare it with the work in *New England*, they will find they run paralel to one another; thousands thousands of Souls there, have been lifted under Christ. By Letters that I have lately received from Abroad, I understand the like Work hath been in *Caro*

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lina, the poor *Negroes* there have been, as it were, in an Agony about their Souls, and have come to great Joy and Peace in believing: And the Writer, further, says, they even outdo the *white People* for Piety. And People that doubt of the Reality of this Work, I would re-commend to you the Reading of that Book, intituled, *The Marks of the true Spirit*, published by Mr. *Edwards* Minster there.

I am going to the *West* again; and would to GOD, I could say the same Work is in *Edinburgh!* I'm afraid many here are resting contented, that others are going to Heaven, altho' they are not going in Company with them; *Awake, Awake, put on Strength, O Arm of the Lord*: Now the Redeemer is revealing his Arm, he is displaying his sacred Arm. Say, Let not me perish and be damn'd, when others, young and old, are taking hold of thee; Let no my Soul remain untouch'd break my hard Heart, cut my rocky Heart in Pieces; break my Heart until I *mourn as for an only Son, and be in Bitterness, as one is in Bitterness for a First-born*. O it grieves

me to see so little Awakenings among you! O what a deep Hell will you get, what a hot Furnace, shall you have, better you had been born in *Turky*, than born in that Place where the Gospel is preached; as our Saviour says to the Jews, *Wo*

unto

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unto thee, Chorazin, *Wo* unto thee, Bethsaida; for if the mighty Works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in Sackcloth and Ashes. And since the Time of the Ingathering of Souls is come as to to others, this will indeed increase your Damnation, if ye do not come to Christ.

Little Lambs of the Flock, now is the accepted Time, now is the Day of Salvation; *your Harvest Day, your Summer Time will soon be over*; O my little Boys and Girls, your Time may be soon gone, and there is a Hell for little Boys and Girls, as well as for old Folk: There are little Boys and Girls that are coming to Christ in the *West*. Young Lads and Lasses, how soon will your *Harvest and Summer be past*, awake out of your Sleep; it will be a dreadful Thing to lift up your Eyes in Torment, and there say, I will never see the Face of Christ again; I thought I came near it, one Day I was at the Gate of Heaven, but I stept back; and now I am in Hell. O how dreadful will that be! would to God, that every one of you, had that Concern for your Souls; as I have for you! I think I see the Lord calling the Angels to *gather you in Bundles, to be cast into Hell*.

You that are of Middle Age, *Your Harvest will soon be past*, one Step or two more, and you will go to Hell. O do you be-

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lieve the Truths I am speaking from Time to Time! What signifies all these, if ye are not made better? GOD Almighty knows it was Love to CHRIST brought me here to you. If my Heart do not deceive met. I could lay down my Life for you; it grieves me to think I must condemn many of you; and it grieves me to think that *Negroes* and *Indians* will go to Heaven before you. O this fills me with Grief! O look up to God, that this City may be as famous for awakening; as other Cities have been. It may be, ye are too polite to come to Christ. Cursed be that Politeness that keeps you from CHRIST: You will be made to curse it, that kept you from stoopping to Christ. Blessed be God, I see some Concern among you. O that this may be a Night of hearing Souls! O that this may be the Time wherein the Fetters on your Souls may be knocked

off! Would to God, this may be the Time wherein I may be helped to put in my spiritual Sickle, and draw Souls to Christ. Come to Christ, he is a tender Physician, he will heal you of your Diseases, young Men and young Women. He will heal you, O old gray-headed Sinners. Well then, *Will you believe and be saved, or not, and be damned?* Have you a mind to go to Hell? Will you prefer the Devil to Christ? The World ap-

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pears most beautiful in your Eyes besides Christ. Are others going to Christ whether will ye choose Heaven or Hell, Life or Death? They are laid before you; perhaps this may be the last Time; perhaps this Night *the Harvest may be past, and the Summer may be ended.* This Night God's Arm may lay hold on Vengeance; awake then, thou that sleepest, come, come, come! Away to the Redeemer, the LORD is now coming among you; the Lord Jesus is Pleading with your Hearts; saying, Give me your Hearts, ye Lambs; ye little Children; Come, take this Blood; when ye are hurt, I am hurt. What shall I say? I think I could go to the Mouth of Hell to pull you out. O may the Lord draw you out of the Mouth of the *roaring Lion who goeth about seeking whom he may devour!* O may you come in Scores to Christ! It may be the Devil is keeping you from coming to Christ; May the Lord sound an Alarm in your Hearts before the *Harvest is past and the Summer is ended!* O that I may go and give a good Report of you in the *West*, as well as in other Places! There hath been some little moving among you, but I fear the most of you have not yet been awakened: You may have good Desires, but you may go to Hell with these; you may be good civil People, you may go with a false Politeness to

Hell.

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Hell. Awake: and see if thy Soul be deeply wounded for Sin; see if thy Soul hath got a fast Hold of CHRIST; perhaps this may be the last Night you may have. I am sure the Lord is striving with your Hearts, he is saying, See your bleeding Saviour, see how your Sins have put him to Death. *Now you may mourn as for an only Son, and be in Bitterness as for a first-born.* What have you done? You have brought Christ from Heaven to Earth; he died, that ye with his Blood may be healed; *With his Stripes we are healed.* He died, that he might be a Physician to the dead Heart. Come, ye weeping Prodigals, come, ye weeping Men and Women, *Here*

is the Balm of Gilead, here is the Physician; here he comes with his Blood in his Hand, clothed with Love; he comes to heal thy sin-sick Soul. It may be some of you have fallen asleep, may the Lord, effectually awaken you, and bring you to CHRIST!

Now, shall I marry you to Christ, before I go to the *West*? Shall I go and tell them that ye have a mind to go to Heaven, as well as your countrymen, and that the Lord is awakening you also? Shall I tell them, *That the Harvest is great, and call others to drag in the Net?* Or shall I tell them, *That there is no Harvest?* Come then: Now, now, is the accepted Time, now,

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my little Children, my dear Friends, now GOD is getting himself the Victory in many a Heart; now the redeemer is come down with Power; now Jesus hath *cast the Net on the right Side of the Ship*. O if my Eyes were seeing you coming to Christ, and laying hold on him, and washing in that Fountain, that cleanses from all Sin and Uncleaness! I do not care to leave you yet. I want to have all this Company coming together to Christ. If you do not come to Christ now and hear him, you will be made to cry in Hell, when too late, *and shall not get a Drop of Water to cool the Tip of your Tongues!* O Sirs, *There is no Balm of Gilead there!* O how stupid are People, that say they are afraid of the Wrath of God, and yet will not fly from the Wrath to come! When ye are afraid of having your Bodies wet, and not afraid of your Souls, 'tis a Sign ye are asleep. May this be a Night of the Redeemer's Power; and may many of you be brought to Christ, and rejoice with the dear redeemer! To whom with the Father, and the ever blessed Spirit, be all Praise, Power, Honour and Glory, forever and ever. *Amen.*

FINIS



THE BALM OF GILEAD

II



