



"Do you trust me?"

In the Disney version of the story of Aladdin, those are the famous words of Aladdin to Jasmine when he persuades her to step off her balcony and on to the seemingly impossible floating carpet where Aladdin stands, hand outstretched toward the tentative Jasmine. Finally she takes his hand and takes that step of faith (trust) onto his impossible carpet and into the beginning of their magical, romantic adventure together.

While we may "trust" in the laws of physics, or that the sun will rise in the morning easily enough, our greatest issues of trust do not concern things or events as much as they do relationships. Our greatest trust issues are with other persons. Maybe (as in the case of Jasmine) someone we do not know is asking us to trust them ... and we're just not too sure about that! Maybe someone has "broken our trust" and we are not sure if we can ever trust them again. Maybe we feel abandoned by someone, because we do not see their presence or help in our immediate situation and we are not sure if they even care about us.

Such was the case with Job (a man in the Old Testament who trusted God and was very blest by God) after he had lost all his great wealth, his sons had been killed, his body had become covered with painful and festering sores, and his own wife was offended by him and she told him to curse God. Though he would NOT curse God (because some small part deep down inside of him refused to relinquish his faith in God), Job did cry out to God, "WHY? Why have you so afflicted me?! What have you got against me?"

When we suffer for seemingly no reason we could also well question God, "WHY? Do you even care?!" God's answer to Job was not to his question of "Why?" but rather to question back to Job and make him think about why HE should trust God. "Where were you when I ... [did all the impossible and powerful work of creating EVERYTHING?]" In other words, "If I am big and powerful enough to create the entire universe out of absolutely nothing ... am I not also big and powerful enough to care for and about you ... even to rescue you?"

If, in our distress and suffering, we cannot see God in our lives, it's not because He is not there, but, like a tiny sugar ant crawling in the palm of your hand cannot really "see" you, God is so BIG (and the separation caused by our sin so distant and dark) that we can't "see" Him, even though He is holding us right in the palm of His hand. That is the nature of our natural near-sighted (nearly blind!) sin-broken relationship with God; we can't "see" Him.

Yet He has given us His Word (the Bible) that He is, indeed, with us; and does, indeed, care about us and love us; and can and has, indeed, done what is necessary to rescue us. He has done all the work. He doesn't ask us to DO ANYTHING! All He asks is, "**Do you trust me?**" "Do you trust me when I tell you that I love you?" "Do you trust me when I tell you that I am big and powerful enough to rescue you?" "Do you trust me when I tell you I have done just that when I sent my Son to live, die, and rise again to bring you into His eternal resurrection?" "Do you trust me, when I promise you that I will bring you through even 'this' (whatever your desperate and seemingly impossible 'this' is)?"

Aladdin took Jasmine's hand, and in trust (faith) she did not take it back, but allowed Aladdin to take her on a seemingly impossible journey. He had proven himself trustworthy to her earlier, so now she continued in faith in him. In the same way, only with much more evidence and reason to continue in faith in God's Son, the writer to the Hebrews puts it this way;

"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." (Hebrews 4:14-16)