

The Foot Shooter



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Man, born of woman! Of few days, and full of trouble!

(Job 14:1, YLT)

Many biblical scholars agree that Job was the first book put to parchment. Even back then man's few days were full of trouble. Not much has changed, has it?

Why do you think your life has been troublesome? The reason may be completely different than what you think. What do minds usually suggest is the cause of most troubles? What does your mind suggest?

Homemade Movies

The mind loves to play homemade movies consisting of photographs and recordings as proof that others are the culprits behind our troubles. Memories of what this one said or that one did, play hauntingly whenever the mind is not tasked or distracted. Background voice-overs comment on the movie, "If

only that would not have happened, my life would be so different. If only...if only...if only..." Such movies provoke feelings while you watch them. Anger boils into rage, sadness sinks into depression, fear turns into fright. All these emotions churn throughout the body creating tightness and tension. My mind used to replay childhood sexual abuse scenes over and over. More than once my hands balled into fists while reliving those memories. Sometimes my body shook with rage. Surprisingly, being "alone with God" in private prayer seemed to initiate these rage experiences. Strange but true.

A mental movie can play through in only a few seconds or minutes. You may be sitting at the breakfast table when a movie begins. Before you can rinse your plate, the movie is over and your day is garbage. Unlike fictitious movies that

play in theaters, *movies that play in the head are real* as far as their effects on you. The worst movies people watch do not play on the big screen, but on the mind's screen. Mental horror shows can play over and over before the turn off button is finally found—as cruel a form of torture as any.

No wonder, then, that Paul said, “The mind of the flesh is death...because the mind of the flesh is opposite to God; it is not under the law of God, and is not able to be” (Romans 8:6-7, BBE).

Events that create memories do not occur in a vacuum. Because they involve actual events that occurred in human interaction, a villain who appears in your movie may have his own mental drama recalling the same event you show in your movie, except that in his version you are the villain and he is the innocent party! It is likely that both accounts are slanted by self-interest.

We are great at hiding from ourselves. We invariably view ourselves in the most flattering light, and vigorously defend whatever fault is ours by combining blame shifting with denial. “Well if he hadn't done/said this, then I wouldn't have done/said that, so there!” We throw in everything from mitigating circumstances to the kitchen sink and are adept at delay tactics, too.

Mind movies frequently feature courtroom scenes in which the villain

(whom we believe wronged us in a real life event) plays the prosecutor. The prosecutor accuses the defendant (played by us) whose defense attorney (played by us) argues plenty of “yes, buts” in our defense. The judge, however, is often played by the same villain/prosecutor, because deep down in the final analysis, we really do care what the villain thinks about us. After all, it is hard not to care about what your spouse, parent or best friend thinks of you! It is true that many of these actors in homemade mental movies are actually the people we love most. Other actors are coworkers, employers, and acquaintances. Small wonder it is that we suffer inner anguish when watching our personal, specialized feature films. Can you see how carrying on an internal argument with someone who is not even present during the “conversation” may be considered just a wee bit wacky? Yet people who consider themselves “normal” engage in fantasy arguments where they utter spiffy comebacks to others who never hear them!

(Test Question) “Imaginary movies are harmless daydreams that stay in the imagination, and do not affect our outward lives. True or False?”

False. “As a man thinks in his heart so is he.” (Proverbs 23:7) “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Matthew 12:34) Many other verses could be cited but you catch the drift. What goes on in your mind affects

your outer life tremendously. It impacts how you feel and influences how you interact with others. For more examples, please refer to B Movies (movies about the boss, movies about the ex-boss, movies about the dream boss, etc.).

It appears that God is a frequent attendee of homemade mental movies. He commented, "And again, The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain." (1 Corinthians 3:20 NKJV) The word "vain" means "empty, futile, worthless." Based upon past reviews, I predict that he will give your next block(head)buster a big thumbs-down. Every movie your mind makes is just plain trash. That's Headywood for you.

Throughout your personal history, there is an unseen contributor to almost every trouble you have experienced. Self is so good at what it does that it has taken many years and tears to finally accept that you are your own worst enemy. Of course, this is not the true you that you are in your essential nature. It is a conceptualized, false "you" that is really not you at all. It is the conceptualize "you" that formed in your thinking.

When you realize how deeply your self-inflicted problems originate, you become open to the possibility that there is a driving force behind it all. This force is the underlying cause behind many of your troubles. When your eyes are open to see it, then *self* becomes visible as the true culprit. Self is the

"foot shooter" or the "foot tripper" that you have not only tolerated, but defended all your life. One could go as far as to say that in a certain sense, self is the devil disguised as you.

There Are Some Troubles You Did Not Cause

Now that you accept your part in the problems that trouble you, it is time to see that there are some troubles that have independently come upon you. While it is true that you are your own worst enemy, (and by "you" I mean that false sense of you, the ego-self), it is also true that *there are some troubles you did not cause*. There were wrongs that were done to you well outside your control. It is true that you are a victim pertaining to wrongs you have suffered about which you had no vote. There is a way to resolve these troubles as we shall soon see.

Have you considered how powerless you were over the choice of your parents, your country, your race, or your economic/social origins, in addition to whatever your inherited predispositions? These birth inherited situations were outside your volition.

The good news is that there is *grace* available for transcending origins and for helping you forgive those who wronged you. Grace can not only help you recover, it can even heal these sorrows by enabling you to forgive those

who mistreated you. This forgiving of others, however, is not something that you can do on your own. It is by recognizing that you need grace to forgive that you become open to receiving this needed grace.

Realize that most of those who wronged you were unhealed victims themselves. Had they received healing of their hurts, they would not have hurt you. It is only people who are hurting who hurt people. They project onto others what was in themselves. It is possible that this realization can aid the rising up of compassion energizing your forgiveness of them. Forgiveness of wrongs you have suffered is vitally important if your inner pain is to be healed. Jesus put it this way: "For if you let men have forgiveness for their sins, you will have forgiveness from your Father in heaven." (Matthew 6:14 BBE) Unresolved guilt is one of many results of unforgiveness.

You are as helpless in forgiving the offender as you were when you were wronged by him. For centuries, many have proclaimed that Jesus is the greatest example of someone who forgave. Notice, that he did it while in a helpless, hurting state. Jesus recognized that his abusers did not comprehend what they were doing: "for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34 KJV) It may have appeared to the small crowd of onlookers that the soldiers knew what they were doing, but the Master knew that they did not know. Had they

known that they were injuring themselves and that they were not acting in their own best interests, they could not have done what they did.

What many do not realize is that Jesus was helpless in forgiving his attackers. Some have viewed it almost as a mere formality, something he in his divinity could not help but do. What the New Testament teaches is quite different. Paul said that Jesus had "emptied himself" of his reliance on inherent divinity in undergoing his life experiences. (Philippians 2:7) Indeed, all his life he lived in complete dependence upon "Abba" (Daddy). He meant it when he said,

Of myself I am unable to do anything: as the voice comes to me so I give a decision: and my decision is right because I have no desire to do what is pleasing to myself, but only what is pleasing to him who sent me. (John 5:30, BBE)

We say of someone who is "unable to do anything" that such a person is helpless. This is the opposite of the world system. We believe we can do a lot; some of us believe we are able to do anything and everything. Even others trapped in the world system sometimes label these "I-can-do-it-all guys" as "big egos".

Jesus lived ego-free. He was dependent

entirely upon the One “who dwells in me.” (John 14:10, ISV) It is “Daddy,” said Jesus, “who says the words... [and] does the works.” In fact, when it came to forgiving his abusers, Jesus did not attempt that either. He deferred forgiveness to Abba. Jesus began this famous forgiveness quote, “*Father, forgive them...*” This was the father about whom Jesus said dwelt *in* him. Life works best when we are that dependent upon the Spirit inside us, too. Jesus was so ego-less that he never became angered by what others said about him or did to him! In all the Gospel accounts of his life, Jesus became angry only for two reasons: (1.) the way religious leaders treated common people, or (2.) the way religious leaders and merchants disrespected or blasphemed his Father.

It is amazing that Jesus did not once become angry over the way people treated him. This is self-free living. Search this out for yourself and you will find it is true.

I have known many Christians, but I have never known anyone like Jesus in this regard. Have you? Everyone I have known without exception has, at times, become angry by what others have done to them or said about them. *Everyone.*

What You Must Do, You Cannot Do

It is by letting go of your own self-perceived ability to forgive that the miracle of forgiveness happens. “Who can forgive sins, but God alone?” (Luke 5:21 KJV) This is true; only God can do it. It is the same God who forgave you who now forgives through you because his Spirit and your spirit are “one.” (1 Corinthians 6:17) Your life is to be lived by following the impressions from your spirit, not those impulses that come from self.

No matter how many times I tried to forgive others, the work remained incomplete until I ceased trying to do it. We are wrong when we *will* not forgive. We are right we *can* not forgive. It was when forgiveness happened through me that a much deeper sense of having been forgiven filled me. As I sensed my own forgiveness on this far deeper level, I soon became aware of having been released from a deep sense of guilt. I had been weighted with guilt that I was unaware I was carrying. Talk about freedom! One could say I was given what I had given. “Forgive, and you shall be forgiven.” (Luke 6:37, EMTV)

This happened 38 years after receiving the new birth. Yes, it was 2007 before I experienced what supposedly was to have taken place in 1969. Israel's wandering time in the wilderness is comparable. I have not met anyone whose experience is any different and I have personally known hundreds, a few of whom are famous. Be encouraged to

know that you are not the only one who somehow missed out on something.

One of the verses that was stressed to me in 1969 was 2 Corinthians 5:17:

“Therefore, if anyone is in the Messiah, he is a new creation. Old things have disappeared, and—look!—all things have become new!” (ISV)

Although I did experience a particular newness then, it did not encompass “all things.” I was often troubled by this verse because some old things had not disappeared. Some things had become new, enough for me to know something wonderful had occurred, but not “all things”. So I took counsel from older, wiser Christians. The same was true with them, some of them told me, so just grow in Christ, they advised. A few suggested I had not prayed hard enough, so pray again. (I did.) Hmm. I still had the old anger, among other junk. I had to suppress so many feelings and urges – often with no success. In 2007, however, I became aware that part of me was completely new in an experiential sense. This can happen to you as well. Today, years later, this newness is still pervading.

Without heart forgiveness, the mind can not be mastered. This is the heart-mind link.

There are two others you may need to include in your range of forgiveness. The first one may have caused more trouble

than all the other troublemakers in your history. This one is yourself – not the you who is your true nature, but the “you” created by your self-image through countless thoughts and feelings across the years. Self-hatred, and its big brother self-loathing, is very common in our culture. You deeply know if you have this rejection of yourself already but may not be aware of this fact yet. As soon as you do know that it is in you, you can practice forgiving yourself of all your failures, shortcomings, and wrongs you have done to yourself throughout your personal history.

The other “person” you may need to forgive has never wronged you, but it may be possible that you have a wrong concept about him. In this concept or according to a belief about him, he has let you down or wronged you. It could well be that he has failed to perform according to your belief. He is actually innocent of all charges people bring against him. This other “person” is, of course, God.

The word “forgiveness” in the Greek New Testament means *release*. Although he has not wronged you, you may still need to release him, in your heart attitude. If you see it, you can free yourself from this faulty concept. It is good to go ahead and say, “I release God from all supposed wrongs my mind has conceived about him.”

WOW! That feels good!

