**The Ravages of Trauma**

The effects of trauma can leave our soul injured, and it can result in feelings of abandonment, confusion, unworthiness, and mistrust toward God. The long-term wounds can affect our walk with the Lord and our most important relationships.

Having heard the tragic testimonies of women or men who were violated as young children, I marvelled that they could ever recover. And for those who were assaulted for years, and could never tell anyone, it became very confusing as to how they could relate to God.

But having fought for their lives, health and destiny, they now give glory to the Lord for helping them to overcome it. They’ve said that they needed to forgive God, for not stopping the violation. For not intervening. For not saving them. We’ll talk about this theologically challenging issue of “forgiving God” in just a moment.

First, let’s think about physical injuries that can occur in life, like from a car accident or a fall. We’ll look at a medical situation, responding to injury. We are doing this, in order to compare physical damage to someone’s body, with emotional or spiritual damage to their soul.

I want to share an example of a devastating injury, suffered by a dear friend. He had a bad virus, became dehydrated, and collapsed before he could reach his bed. The worst part was that there was no one to find him on the floor, until the next day. As he had collapsed and remained unconscious overnight, all of his weight crushed one leg. By morning, when he was taken to the hospital, certain organs were almost failing, and his leg had suffered extensive damage. It was unclear if he would survive, and if he did, it wasn’t likely that the leg could be saved. Massive prayer went up for this beloved brother, from family and dear friends in many places.

The following is a compressed narrative of his recovery, in order to show the similarities between recovering from severe physical injuries, and the process of healing a soul that has been severely damaged, through the type of abuse we’ve been discussing.

During the weeks following the accident, my friend underwent multiple surgeries, but they had to be separated by a distance of time. After each surgery, his body needed time to heal, and gradual movement needed to begin. Some weeks later, another surgery would address another aspect of the damage, and slowly, the patient recovered more movement, and began therapy. This process went on for 2-3 months, with more strategically-scheduled surgeries and hard weeks of physical therapy. He was gradually able exercise the healing tissues, and he gained the ability to walk again, with physical therapy.

The Lord answered so many of these prayers, bringing His dear son through many trials, and giving him encouragement. In the end, the Lord did a great miracle, concerning one final surgery that was 99% definitely needed. But at the last moment, after he was taken in for the surgery, it was not needed, in response to the prayers of God’s people. The doctor admitted that “only prayer” could have overcome the 99% certainty of the traumatic final surgery.

**Many Healings Take Time**

The point of this testimony is that he couldn’t be healed all at once. The doctors knew that it had to be strategic and gradual. One area would begin to heal, and then he needed time in therapy. Then another surgery, and more healing time and therapy. And all these procedures had to be done in the right order.

The healing of the damaged and traumatized soul is like this. It cannot be quickly or easily healed, apart from a miracle. There are layers of betrayal, anger, pain, confusion, fear, mistrust, and at times, the inability to trust God. It can also hinder their ability to enter intimate relationships. The abused survivor often feels like “damaged goods.”

Although God can heal miraculously, He generally heals people from the damages caused by sexual, physical or mental abuse, in a carefully constructed timetable. The Lord is the most skilled surgeon, and He knows that the broken soul cannot handle all of the healing at one time. There are too many layers that have to be carefully examined and peeled back. They need a process of healing, to recover from the unspeakable damage they endured as children or teens. Additionally, they may need continued physical and medical care, counseling, and possibly future surgeries, due to the bodily damage caused by sexual and physical abuse.

Therefore, when a sensitive counselor, hopefully a prayer counselor who knows the Lord – begins to help this wounded soul to heal, he or she approaches it in delicate layers. Not a one-time healing, nor “one size fits all.”

**Is “Forgiving God” a Permissible Response?**

This is a controversial question, and it would take more than these few words to address it, in a biblically correct way. I will briefly outline my argument for “forgiving God,” though He is not at fault, nor to blame in any way.

Normally, forgiveness is remitting someone’s sins committed against you. Forgiveness implies that someone has sinned, there was a victim of their behavior, and the victim is required to forgive this perpetrator. The Bible requires that we forgive those who have wronged us. If we do not forgive them, the Lord plainly states that neither will He forgive us our sins. So, the foundational rule is: We must forgive those who have hurt us or sinned against us.

Now, comes the opposing argument. The Lord God is incapable of sin or unrighteousness. The Scriptures declare that all His ways are “just and true,” and “His judgments are righteous altogether.” Whatever assaults we suffer at the hands of wicked men, may not be charged against the Lord, who has not sinned, nor committed injustice against us.

Although the Lord does not need our forgiveness, His heart allows it, for our sakes. In order for our heart to release any blame that we hold Pathways to Our Destiny in God 125 against the Lord, we must forgive Him. This will begin our own heart’s healing and restoration. If we cannot release the accusation against Him, our love relationship with the Lord will be greatly hindered.

In the book of Job, we see Job arguing several points, regarding the agonizing disease that has suddenly attacked him, only months after he had lost all his children in a demonically- inspired windstorm! Job’s main argument is this: If he and the Lord could meet in a courtroom, God could not convict him of sin, because Job walked uprightly with all his heart.

Job wanted his “friends” to know that this sickness was not a punishment from God, and not caused by Job’s sinfulness. And Job was correct in his answer to them. It was not a punishment from God, which we (the reader) knew in the opening verses, but Job himself did not know this, until his terrible test was ending. But Job did not accuse the Lord.

*In all this,* ***Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing****…His wife said to him, “Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!” He replied, “You are talking like a foolish woman.* ***Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?”*** *In all this,* ***Job did not sin in what he said*** (Job 1:22, 2:10).

**The Humility of God**

If victims of childhood abuse are emotionally stumbling (offended), because the Lord didn’t intervene and save them from the wicked, unnatural abuse they suffered – then His children’s trust is damaged, and they may feel abandoned. The Lord’s love for them has never wavered, not before, during, or after the timeframe when they were being abused.

The Lord wants them to see through His eyes – the anguish, anger and pain He felt, as He watched grievous sins being committed against the one He loves. The one He died for. Justice has been delayed, but it will be most severely dealt with.

If the perpetrator truly repents, then Yeshua has paid the penalty for his egregious crimes against the innocent. If he does not repent, then he will pay fully for his evil deeds.

The Lord has great humility, and He is willing to allow His children to forgive Him. This will help them to restore the loving Father-child relationship. One biblical text gives a simplified explanation of why the Lord does not always intervene. It is found in Psalm 115:16.

*The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord’s; But the earth He has given to the children of men.*

The Lord reminded me that He allowed Cain to bludgeon his brother, Abel, to death while they were out in the field. The Lord knew what was in Cain’s heart, beforehand, and He even warned Cain that He knew his jealous and resentful thoughts. This was premeditated murder.

The Lord said to Cain, “*If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you shall rule over it”* (Gen.4:7).

The Lord knew Cain’s evil plan and warned him. The Lord knew what Cain would choose to do, but after warning Cain, He didn’t stop the murder. He allowed innocent Abel to be murdered by his own brother. They were the first family of earth, meant to populate it with their offspring.