**Anger**

**Facing the Fire Within**

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"Be angry, yet do not sin." Do not let your anger, give the devil a foothold. Ephesians4:26-27

**Victim Survivor Conqueror Ministry**

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**Anger**

**Facing the Fire Within**

 The day begins like any other day, but ends like no other, for on this day, he gives *full vent to his anger…* and, as a result, finds himself running for his life. He is part of a mistreated minority - grievously persecuted - not for doing something wrong, but for being perceived as a threat. Raised with privilege in the palace of a “king,” he had been spared the heartless treatment inflicted on his kinsmen. But watching the *injustice* day after day and year after year finally becomes too much for him to bear. When he sees one of his own people suffering an inhumane beating at the hands of an Egyptian, Moses is *filled with rage.* He snaps. In an instant, he kills the Egyptian and hides the body in the sand. But his angry, impetuous act is not committed in secret. When news of the murder reaches Pharaoh, Moses fears for his life and flees. (See Exodus chapter 2).

When you look at the life of Moses, you can see both the power and the problems inherent in anger. Has anger ever clouded your judgment to the point that you reacted rashly…and lived to regret it? Ultimately, you have the choice to act wisely or to *react* foolishly. In his lifetime, Moses did both. Like him, you too can face the fiery anger within and learn to keep it under control. In doing so, you will demonstrate wisdom because….

*“A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.”*

*Proverbs 29:11*

**Definitions**

**Injustice Ignites Anger**

Understandably, Moses felt anger over the *unjust* treatment of his Hebrew brothers, but what he did with that anger is what caused all the trouble. Moses allowed his anger to overpower him. Acting on impulse, he committed a crime – he committed murder. Although he was right about the *injustice,* he was wrong in his reaction. His hot-blooded volatility revealed how unprepared he was for the task Yahweh (God) had planned for him. Consequently, Yahweh (God) kept Moses on the back side of a desert for the next 40 years so that he would realize that rescuing his own people *in his own way* would ultimately fail. Moses needed to learn this vital lesson well to become the leader through whom Yahweh (God) would accomplish His own will *in His own supernatural way.* In truth, Moses had tried to earn the Israelites’ respect by coming to their rescue. Instead, his murderous rage earned only their disrespect…

*“Moses thought that his own people would realize that Yahweh (God)*

*was using him to rescue them, but they did not.”*

*Acts 7:25*

**What is the Meaning of Anger?**

What had begun as a smoldering ember in the heart of Moses quickly burst into deadly flames. Perhaps no one noticed the angry sparks flying from his eyes, but his spirit was consumed with the heat of anger…

*“Glancing this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.”*

 *Exodus 2:12*

Who hasn’t lit a candle and become entranced by the flickering flame? As it dances on the wick, it is a delight to see, but dangerous to touch. No one dares put a finger into even the tiniest of blazes.

Anger is much like the flame of a candle – it is associated with “heat” of varying degrees. Temperatures are determined by the hues of the flame, but no matter the blues, yellows, oranges, and reds, we all know that *it’s hot,* and if we hold on to it, we will get burned! And so, it is with anger: The higher the degree of heat, the more people get hurt – *including* *you…*

*“Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned?”*

*Proverbs 6:27*

* **Anger** is a strong emotion of irritation or agitation that occurs when a need or expectation is not met. According to the Bible…

*“An angry man stirs up dissension, and a hot-tempered one commits many sins.” Proverbs 29:22*

* **Angry** people in the Bible are often described as *hot-tempered* and *quick-tempered…*

*“A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel.” Proverbs 15:18*

* **Anger** in the Old Testament is most frequently the Hebrew word *aph,* literally meaning “nose or nostrils,” figuratively depicting nostrils flaring with anger. Later, *aph* came to represent the entire face as seen in two ancient Hebrew idioms:

- “Long of face” (or nose), meaning *slow to anger*…

*“The Elohim (Lord) is gracious and compassionate; slow to anger and rich in love” Psalm 145:8*

- “Short of face” (or nose), meaning *quick to anger*…

*“A quick-tempered man does foolish things” Proverbs 14:17*

In the New Testament, the Greek word *orge* originally meant any “natural impulse or desire,” but later came to signify “anger as the strongest of all passions.” It is often translated as “wrath” because of its powerful, lasting nature….

*“For those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil,*

*there will be wrath and anger.”*

*Romans 2:8*

**What Is the Magnitude of Anger?**

The next time you light a candle, allow your eyes to scan the scintillating hues and shades of the flame. Notice the light blue at the center…that’s actually the hottest part of the flame, measuring 1,400 degrees Celsius. The temperature then diminishes from the inner core to the outer sides, signified by shades of yellow, orange, then red, at 800 degrees Celsius.

Likewise, anger can run the gamut from bright red to a light blue. Anger can lightly singe…or severely scorch. It ranges from mild agitation to hot explosions, from controlled irritations to uncontrolled eruptions. In the Bible, Joseph’s two brothers displayed the destructive heat of anger…

*Simeon and Levi…have killed men in their anger…*

*Cursed be their anger, so fierce, and their fury, so cruel!”*

*Genesis 49:5-7*

**Anger is a wide umbrella word** covering many levels of the emotion….

* **Indignation is simmering anger** provoked by something appearing to be unjust or unkind and often perceived as justified. Yeshua (Jesus) became “indignant” when the disciples prevented parents from bringing their children to Him so that He might touch and bless them….

*“When Yeshua (Jesus) saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of Yahweh (God) belongs to such as these’” Mark 10:14.*

* **Wrath is burning anger** accompanied by a desire to avenge. Wrath often moves from the inner emotion of anger to the outer expression of anger. In Romans 1:18 Yahweh (God) expresses His wrath as divine judgment on those who commit willful sin…

*“The wrath of Yahweh (God) is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness” Romans 1:18.*

* **Fury is fiery anger** so fierce that it destroys common sense. The word*fury* suggests a powerful force compelled to harm or destroy. Some members of the Sanhedrin were so angry with Peter and the other apostles for proclaiming Yeshua (Jesus) was Yahweh (God) that “*they were furious and wanted to put them to death”* Acts 5:33. This is why the Bible says…

*“Anger is cruel, and fury is overwhelming” Proverbs 27:4.*

* **Rage is blazing anger** resulting in loss of self-control, often to the extreme of violence and temporary insanity. After an outburst of rage, a cry of remorseful regret or disbelief is often expressed – “I can’t believe I did that!” Yet those who continue to vent their rage toward others, including toward Yahweh (God), find themselves defeated by their own destructive decisions and ruined relationships….

*“A man’s own folly ruins his life, yet his heart rages against the Lord” Proverbs 19:3.*

**What is the Misuse of Anger?**

Periodically, everyone feels the heat of anger, but how you handle the heat determines whether or not you are misusing it. The small flame that lights a cozy campfire, if left unchecked, can just as quickly ignite a fierce forest fire. Conversely, the initial spark of anger that could be used for good, if snuffed out too quickly, can keep anger from accomplishing its designated purpose. If you are wise, you have learned how to handle your anger…and you have learned how to help others handle their anger. The Bible says…

*“Wise men turn away anger”*

*Proverbs 29:8*

* **Prolonged anger –** the“*simmering stew”*

…is held in for a long time. This anger is a result of an unforgiving heart toward a past offense and the offender. Unforgiveness left unresolved eventually results in resentment and bitterness, ultimately scalding close relationships.

**Example:** “I’ll never forgive the way he talked to me years ago.”

But the Bible says…

*“See to it that no one misses the grace of Yahweh (God) and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many” Hebrews 12:15.*

* **Pressed-down anger –** the“*pressure cooker”*

…is denied or hidden anger. Usually developing from fear of facing negative emotions, this kind of anger can create a deceitful heart and lead to untruthfulness with others. Failure to honestly confront and resolve angry feelings can result in self-pity, self-contempt, and self-doubt, ultimately searing close relationships.

**Example:** “I never get angry – maybe just a little irritated at times.”

But the Bible says…

*“Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech” 1 Peter 3:10.*

* **Provoked anger** – the “*short fuse”*

…is quick and impatient, instantly irritated or incensed. A testy temper is often expressed using criticism or sarcasm under the guise of teasing, ultimately burning close relationships.

**Example:** “I can’t believe you said that! You’re so childish!”

But the Bible says…

*“Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools” Ecclesiastes 7:9.*

* **Profuse anger** – the “*volatile volcano”*

…is powerful, destructive, and hard to control. This way of releasing anger is characterized by contempt, violence, and abuse toward others, ultimately cremating close relationships.

**Example:**  “You fool – if you do that again, you’ll wish you’d never been born!”

But Yeshua (Jesus) says…

*“I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment…But anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell” Matthew 5:22.*

**Misplaced Anger**

**Question: “Why do some people take their anger out on an innocent bystander – those who have nothing to do with the problem?”**

**Answer:** Imagine, after having a flat tire, the boss begins yelling at his employee…who in turn arrives home and yells at his wife…who then screams at their son…who in turn kicks the cat! This could be called “The Blame Game.”

Ultimately, angry people who are afraid to confront those who hurt them will often pick targets they can safely overpower. Their easy “victory” inflates their sense of power, giving them a false sense of significance.

* **Bullies** are known for misplacing their anger onto weaker, more vulnerable people. More often than not, bullying is a case of “playing it safe” and venting on someone who can’t fight back. The bully’s stored up anger generally comes from being abused by someone they feel powerless to confront.
* **Abusers** commonly spew out their anger on those closest to them – those most vulnerable to them. Almost all abusive adults were abused as children and grew up with the intense pressure of unresolved anger. When their anger ignites, for whatever reason, everyone around them feels the explosion and falls victim to their blistering, lava-like anger.
* **Self-injurious** people generally carry a sizeable amount of self-contempt and self-loathing. As children, many were falsely blamed for family problems and assigned the role of family scapegoat. They internalized the lies spoken to them, and now as adults they are quick to assume blame for all that goes wrong around them. The anger they could rightly feel toward others, they wrongly aim back at themselves – anger they are quick to receive.
* **Self-protectors** haven’t the strength of character to express their anger toward the people causing their anger. (They are the ones who kick the cat when they would really like to kick the boss!) They express anger in detrimental, subversive ways.

Unfortunately, a prevalent cause of home fires is flaming candles left unattended on furniture. The scene is sadly common. The candle melts and spreads across a flammable surface that catches fire, which quickly engulfs the room. Lighted candles convey a certain charm, putting off a warm glow, often releasing a pleasantly fragrant aroma, pleasing and delighting all present. But when the flame travels from candle to furniture, it’s frightening. So, it is with misplaced anger that engulfs an innocent person. Rather than being positive, it produces only pain. In the case of King Saul, his misplaced anger toward David resulted in the murder of 85 priests of Yahweh (God)…

*“Saul said to him, ‘Why have you conspire against me, you and the son of Jesse, giving him bread and a sword and inquiring of Yahweh (God) for him, so that he has rebelled against me and lies in wait for me, as he does today?’ Ahimelech answered the king…. ‘Let not the king accuse your servant or any of his father’s family for your servant knows nothing at all about this whole affair.’….The king then ordered Doeg, ‘You turn and strike down the priests.’ So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck them down. That day he killed eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod.” 1 Samuel 22:13-15, 18*

**What are the Misconceptions about anger?**

Every day, people leave their homes – perhaps just *for a moment –* only to return to experience the loss *of a lifetime.* Misconceptions about the fiery potential of even a small votive candle can result in utter ruin. A candle, in and of itself, is not dangerous, but miscalculations about candles can be extremely dangerous… Placing a candle next to a can of oil can be catastrophic.

Misconceptions about anger can also create a dangerous environment…resulting in devastating emotions.

Do you always view anger as negative and sinful? Do you seek to hide your anger from others…even from yourself in hopes of snuffing it out? Misunderstandings about anger give this powerful emotion a less than positive reputation! If you are blind to Yahweh’s (God’s) purposes for anger and if you are afraid of revealing your true feelings, you may be in bondage to ignorance or false guilt. The Bible says…

*“Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.”*

*Psalm 51:6*

**Anger and Sin**

**Question: “Is it a sin for me to be angry?”**

**Answer:** No. The initial feeling of anger is a Yahweh (God)-given emotion. The way you *express* your anger determines whether or not it becomes sin. The Bible says…

*“In your anger do not sin”*

*Psalm 4:4*

**Anger and Guilt**

**Question: “How can I keep from feeling guilty when I’m angry?”**

**Answer:** Your anger is a signal – like the red warning light on the dashboard of a car – indicating: *Something’s wrong, something’s wrong, something’s wrong!* And the purpose of the light is *to propel you to action*…to cause you to stop, evaluate what is wrong, and then take appropriate action. Jesus became angry at the hypocritical religious leaders who took an extreme position regarding “resting on the Sabbath” – even teaching that healing the sick on the Sabbath was an offense worthy of the death penalty. In sharp contrast, Yeshua (Jesus) intentionally and fully restored a man’s crippled hand on the Sabbath…

*“He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, and said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored” Mark 3:5.*

**Anger and God’s Nature**

**Question: “How can a God of love be a God of wrath at the same time?”**

**Answer:** Since some people don’t understand how a loving God can possess the attribute of “wrath,” let’s look at those two characteristics on a personal level. Because of Yahweh’s (God’s) great love for you, He directs His anger toward anyone or anything that thwarts His perfect plan for you. Yahweh’s (God’s) anger never operates independently of His love, but rather He expresses anger on your behalf and for your ultimate good…

*“This is what the Lord Almighty says…’whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye’”*

*Zechariah 2:8*

**Anger – People Not Appearing Angry**

**Question: “Can people be angry even when they don’t look or sound angry?”**

**Answer:** Yes. Many people have difficulty expressing or even recognizing their emotion of anger. Instead, they have learned to deny, ignore, or repress their anger by burying it deep within their hearts. However, our anger is not hidden from Yahweh (God), who sees it and understands it….

*“Nothing in all creation is hidden from Yahweh’s (God’s) sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account…The Elohim (Lord) searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts” Hebrews 4:13, 1 Chronicles 28:9.*

**Characteristics of Anger**

**Hurt Ignites Anger**

Betrayal by an enemy certainly hurts our feelings, but betrayal by a friend deeply wounds the soul. Everyone expects opposition from those on the outside, but what do you do when opposition comes from within – from among your own circle…your closest confidents…your trusted few?

One national leader knew the *hurt* of such betrayal. He had led wisely, demonstrated courage, and won the confidence of his people. *He was there for them –* and they knew it.

However, his authority was undermined by a subordinate who created such dissension that he successfully stole the loyalty of 250 others. Those the leader had trusted throughout the years…those who knew him best…those who should have been most loyal…turned against him. In response, however, Moses did not express his anger by taking personal revenge – he did not react impulsively – but rather appealed to the Elohim (Lord) to act on his behalf…

*“Moses became very angry and said to the Elohim (Lord),*

*‘Do not accept their offering. I have not…wronged any of them.’”*

*Numbers 16:15*

Although justifiably angry, Moses had learned how to face the fiery anger within and to *act wisely rather than to react foolishly.* He restrained his rage, poured out his heart, and pleaded with the Lord to deal with his offenders. In turn, Yahweh (God) took up his cause, destroyed his betrayers, and defended his honor. Moses refused to revenge, but rather allowed the Elohim (Lord) to be his avenger because Yahweh (God) had given this promise….

*“It is mine to avenge; I will repay”*

*Deuteronomy 32:35*

**What are Your “Anger Cues”?**

When it comes to “picturing” anger, perhaps the most poignant illustration would be one of those cragged, gargantuan land formations that sputter with steam and spew molten rock – *the volcano.*

Like anger, before a toxic flow emerges, there is a gurgling beneath the surface, a swirling series of events that creates instability and sets the stage for an explosive outburst. Scientists have learned how to look for “cues” that a volcano is about to erupt, including the release of steam and gases, small earthquakes and tremors, and swelling of the volcano’s slopes.

Similarly, the human body has a *physical reaction* when it experiences anger. These *anger cues* can alert you when you begin to feel angry. Discerning your own anger cues can help you avoid trouble. Likewise, being aware of the signs of anger in others can alert you to defend yourself, just like a firefighter defends himself by wearing fire-retardant clothing.

A biblical example of an anger cue is Jonathan’s loss of appetite when he was hurt and grieved over his father’s unjust, shameful treatment toward his close friend David….

*“Jonathan got up from the table in fierce anger…he did not eat,*

*because he was grieved at his father’s shameful treatment of David.”*

*1 Samuel 20:34*

**Anger Cues Checklist**

In seeking to identify your anger cues, place a check mark beside the following questions that are true of you:

 Do you a decreased appetite?

 Do you have tense muscles?

 Do you feel unusually hot or cold?

 Do you have increased perspiration?

 Do you feel flushed

 Do you clench your teeth?

 Do you experience dry mouth?

 Do you clench your fists?

 Do you use loud, rapid, or high-pitched speech?

 Do you become silent-shutting down verbally?

 Do you experience an upset, churning stomach?

 Do you walk hard and fast or pace back and forth?

 Do you feel your heart racing?

 Do you breathe faster and harder than normal?

 Do you use language that is inappropriate, harsh, or course, including gossip and sarcasm?

Once you have identified your anger cues, you will be in a better position to quickly identify when you are angry. Then you can direct your energies to produce a positive outcome…

*“Godly sorrow brings repentance…and leaves no regret… See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done.”*

*2 Corinthians 7:10-11*

**What Are Symptoms of Unresolved Anger?**

 A volcanic crater contains toxic gases, a steaming underbelly, and razor-sharp rock fragments. Deep within the heart of unresolved anger, the darkened deposits of a critical spirit –*bitterness* and *depression* (among others) – can be found.

When volcanologists excavate and analyze material inside a crater, they work as quickly and efficiently as possible, being aware that the longer they stay, the higher the risk of injury or even death. And so, it is with *unresolved* anger…The longer it’s allowed to fume and fester, the more dangerous – and even deadly – it can be for you and those around you.

*Prolonged* anger fans the flame of bitterness and fuels unforgiveness. Refusing to face your feelings in a healthy way prolongs *unresolved* anger until it eventually becomes *harbored* anger.

Unresolved anger not only creates a rift between you and Yahweh (God), but also damages your body, destroys your emotions, and demoralizes your relationships. Whether you recognize it or not, extended anger can cause significant physical, emotional, and spiritual problems. Yeshua (Jesus) said…

*“I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.”*

*Matthew 5:22*

 Unresolved anger is known to produce in many people some of the following physical, emotional, and spiritual symptoms:

* **Physical Symptoms**

 -Blurred vision

 -Insomnia

 -Headaches

 -Intestinal disorders

 -Heart disease

 -Overeating

 -High blood pressure

 -Stomach disorders

* **Emotional Symptoms**

 -Anxiety

 -Fear

 -Bitterness

 -Insecurity

 -Phobias

 -Compulsions

 -Worry

 -Depression

* **Spiritual Symptoms**

-Loss of confidence: Feeling insecure about your relationship with Yahweh (God) and your ability to respond wisely to difficulties

-Loss of energy: Lacking strength for your service to Yahweh (God) and others

-Loss of faith: Failing to believe that Yahweh (God) is working in your life

-Loss of freedom: Becoming a prisoner of your emotions and unable to serve Yahweh (God) freely

-Loss of identity: Becoming like the person toward whom you are bitter rather than becoming like Messiah (Christ)

-Loss of perspective: Allowing your emotions to distort your thinking

-Loss of sensitivity: Failing to hear the Spirit of Yahweh (God) speaking to your heart

-Loss of vision: Losing a sense of Yahweh’s (God’s) purpose for your life

Unresolved anger produces bitterness. And the Bible links bitterness with being in bondage to sin…

*“I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin.”*

*Acts 8:23*

**Do You Have Hidden Anger?**

Most volcanic craters are about as deep as a football field is wide – *100 yards.* They are dark, mysterious places with deposits tracing eruptions from hundreds, even thousands of years before. One of the most well-known volcanoes in recent history has been Mount St. Helens in Washington State. The rumbling and raging mountain sent a pyrotechnic blast of ash and molten rock over more than 230 square miles and, in May of 1980, killed 57 people.

Other eruptions of Mount St. Helens have since occurred, but not with such catastrophic results. Actually, they have served to clue scientists in to an interesting fact: The magma driving the most recent volcanic activity was likely left over from the 1980s eruption.

In similar ways, the hidden anger from childhood hurts can *directly* affect present-day outbursts. Many people live life unaware that they have hidden anger – suppressed anger that only occasionally surfaces. While this hidden anger is usually rooted in past childhood hurts, the underlying effects are always ready to surface and can sizzle up an already simmering scenario. For example, when someone says or does something “wrong,” the one with suppressed anger often overreacts. When someone makes an innocent mistake, the magnitude of anger is out of proportion to the mistake.

If you have hidden anger, you can find yourself at one extreme or another – from feeling hopeless to feeling hostile – and yet be totally unaware of why you are experiencing these feelings. The Bible makes it clear that some of our motives and emotions are hidden from our own view…

*“Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.”*

*Psalm 19:12*

**7 Clues to Find Hidden Anger Checklist**

Place a check mark beside the questions that are true of you:

\_\_\_ Do you become irritable over trifles?

\_\_\_ Do you smile on the outside, yet feel upset inside?

\_\_\_ Do you deny ever being impatient?

\_\_\_ Do you have to have the last word?

\_\_\_ Do those close to you say that you blame others?

\_\_\_ Do you feel emotionally flat?

\_\_\_ Do you become easily frustrated?

If you find you have hidden anger, follow this clear directive from the Word of Yahweh (God)…

*“You must rid yourselves of all such things as these:*

*anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.”*

*Colossians 3:8*

**Anger and Irrational Thinking**

 **Question: “Why do some angry people become irrational in their thinking?”**

 **Answer:** When people are angry, their problem-solving ability plummets because…

* Inside the body, epinephrine (adrenaline) is released by the adrenal glands, immediately preparing the body for “fight or flight.” However, if “fight or flight” does not occur, the highly energized body has difficulty calming down. (This is why angry people experience racing heart, shaking hands, and fast breathing.)
* The angry person’s hormones then travel from the brain to the adrenal glands, signaling the need for tension reduction by the release of cortisol. However, cortisol raises blood pressure above the norm, which makes rational thinking more difficult.

King Saul provides an example of irrational thinking in his anger toward his son Jonathan…

*“Saul’s anger flared up at Jonathan and he said to him, ‘You son of perverse and rebellious woman! Don’t I know that you have sided with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the mother who bore you? As long as the son of Jesse lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he must die!” 1 Samuel 20:30-31*

**Do You Act or React When You Are Angry?**

Scientists are continually developing technology to help them “act” in preparation for a volcanic eruption, rather than simply “react” to its deadly blast and lava…after the fact.

In recent years monitoring devices known as “spiders” (because of their spindly legs) have been used to crawl around the interior of craters and measure seismic activity. The creator of the device, Rick LaHusen, a hydrologist at the Cascades Volcano Observatory in Vancouver, Canada, observed: “They can analyze their data in real time and decide what’s important and what’s not important and prioritize it.”

People who choose to act rather than react to anger share some similarities with the analytical “spiders” – reason rules the day, and predetermined preparedness can help avert great tragedy.

When you are angry, does reason rule the day or do tense emotions take over? Do you allow the mind of Messiah (Christ) within you to make choices that lead to *appropriate actions…*or do you have knee-jerk reactions that lead to *inappropriate reactions?* If you have never evaluated what happens when you feel angry, or if you don’t know how others perceive you when you are angry, seek God’s wisdom and understanding…

*“If you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of Yahweh (God). For the Elohim (Lord) gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.”*

*Proverbs 2:3-6*

*Appropriate actions* express your thoughts and feelings with restraint, understanding, and concern for the other person’s welfare….

*“A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of understanding is even-tempered.”*

*Proverbs 17:27*

*Inappropriate reactions* express your thoughts and feelings in such a way that stirs up anger in others and produces strife. The biblical Book of Wisdom paints this graphic picture….

*“As churning the milk produces butter, and as twisting the nose produces blood,*

*so, stirring up anger produces strife.”*

*Proverbs 30:33*

To help assess whether you *act* in or *react* to anger, take time to answer the following questions and place a check mark beside those that are true of you:

**Appropriate Actions Inappropriate Reactions**

\_\_\_ Do you use tactful, compassionate words? \_\_\_ Do you use tactless, condemning words?

\_\_\_ Do you see the other person’s point of view? \_\_\_ Do you see only your point of view?

\_\_\_ Do you want to help the one who angers you? \_\_\_ Do you want to punish the one who angers you?

\_\_\_ Do you focus on your own faults? \_\_\_ Do you focus only on the faults of others?

\_\_\_ Do you have realistic expectations? \_\_\_ Do you have unrealistic expectations?

\_\_\_ Do you have a flexible and cooperative attitude? \_\_\_ Do you have a ridged and uncooperative attitude?

\_\_\_ Do you forgive personal injustices? \_\_\_ Do you have difficulty forgiving injustices?

\_\_\_ Do you act in a gracious way, \_\_\_ Do you manipulate or intimidate to control the

 trusting God with the outcome? outcome?

\_\_\_ Do you trust Yahweh (God) to exercise \_\_\_ Do you insist on justice according to

 justice according to His timing? your timing?

Even though a situation may evoke anger, those who allow the Lord to be their strength will respond appropriately….

*“As Yahweh’s (God’s) chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with*

*compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”*

*Colossians 3:12*

**Anger and Logical Thinking**

 **Question: “Can anger have a long-term impact on the ability of a person to think logically?”**

**Answer:** Yes, the adrenal glands get a real workout with anger. The presence of cortisol (a stress reducer) indicates high stress in the body. When cortisol levels are high for extended periods of time, systems in the body begin to break down.

* High levels of cortisol (often the result of anger and stress) are directly linked to damage of the hippocampus, a part of the brain vital for learning, recall, and logic.
* High blood pressure levels experienced for a prolonged period of time are also linked to a loss of brain tissue.

How appropriate that today science substantiates truths found in Scripture….

*“He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.”*

*Proverbs 13:3*

**Causes of Anger**

**Fear Ignites Anger**

Imagine leading thousands of people through the desert with all of them looking to you to meet both their physical and spiritual needs. While setting up camp at the base of a mountain, Yahweh (God) calls you to climb the mountain and meet with Him because He plans to give you the Ten Commandments and other beneficial laws.

As you meet with Yahweh (God), unbeknownst to you, the very people Yahweh (God) has instructed you to lead have turned their hearts away from Him. They melt their precious gold, mold a golden calf, and merrily worship it! Now, Yahweh (God) interrupts your meeting to inform you that your people have turned against Him. Flushed with anger and fear, you rush down the mountain to confront them.

Exodus 32:19 states….*”When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain.”*

Moses reacted in anger because he was full of fear. He was afraid Yahweh’s (God’s) righteous anger against his disobedient people would result in their destruction. (That very day 3,000 disobedient Israelites died, and the people were struck with a plague.) He knew they needed to….

*“Worship Yahweh (God) acceptably with reverence and awe, for our ‘Adnoai (God) is a consuming fire.’”*

*Hebrews 12:28-29*

**What are the 4 Sources of Anger?**

Throughout the natural world, unexpected fires can be started and fueled by at least four sources: seeping oil, seeping gas, molten lava, or coal bed methane (a flammable gas that can cause mining explosions). In a similar way, anger is typically started and fueled by at least 1 of 4 sources: hurt, injustice, fear, or frustration. Therefore, anger is a secondary response to 1 or more of these 4 roots.

Probing into buried feelings from your past can be painful. Therefore, it can seem easier to stay angry than to uncover the cause, turn loose of your “rights,” and grow in maturity. When you are seeking to uproot problematic anger, you must have perseverance because…

*“Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”*

*James 1:4*

**Hurt: Your heart is wounded.**

Everyone has a Yahweh (God)-given inner need for *unconditional love.* When you experience rejection or emotional pain of any kind, anger can become a protective wall keeping people, pain, and *hurt* away.

**Biblical Example… The Sons of Jacob**

Joseph was the undisputed favorite among Jacob’s sons. Feeling hurt and rejected by their father, the ten older sons become angry and vindictive toward their younger brother…

*“Israel (Jacob) loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made a richly ornamented robe for him. When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him”*

*Genesis 37:3-4*

**Injustice: Your right is violated.**

Everyone has knowledge of right and wrong, fair and unfair, just and *unjust*. When you perceive an *injustice* has occurred to you or to others (especially to those you love), you may feel angry. If you hold on to the offense, the unresolved anger can begin to take root in your heart.

**Biblical Example…King Saul**

King Saul’s *unjust* treatment of David evoked Jonathan’s anger. Jonathan, son of Saul, heard his own father pronounce a death sentence on his dear friend David…

*“Why should he be put to death? What has he done? Jonathan asked his father. But Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him (Jonathan). Then Jonathan knew that his father intended to kill David. Jonathan got up from the table in fierce anger”*

*1 Samuel 20:32-34*

**Fear: Your future is threatened.**

Everyone is created with a Yahweh (God)-given inner need for *security.* When you begin to worry, feel threatened, or get angry because of a change in circumstances, you may be responding to *fear.* A fearful heart reveals a lack of trust in Yahweh’s (God’s) perfect plan for your life.

**Biblical Example…King Saul**

Saul became angry because of David’s many successes on the battlefield. (Read 1 Samuel18:5-15, 28-29.) He was threatened by David’s popularity and *feared* he would lose his kingdom…

*“Saul was angry…’They have credited David with ten of thousands, ‘he thought, ‘but me with only thousands.’…Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with David but had left Saul”*

*1 Samuel 18:8, 12*

**Frustration: Your performance is not accepted.**

Everyone has a Yahweh (God)-given inner need for *significance.* When your efforts are thwarted or do not meet your own personal expectations, your sense of significance can be threatened. *Frustration* over unmet expectations of yourself or of others is a major source of anger.

**Biblical Example…Cain**

Both Cain and Abel brought offerings to Yahweh (God), but Cain’s offering was clearly unacceptable. Cain had chosen to offer what he himself wanted to give rather than what Yahweh (God) said was right and acceptable. When Cain’s self-effort was rejected, his *frustration* led to anger, and his anger led to the murder of his own brother…

*“In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Elohim (Lord) looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So, Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast…Now Cain said to his brother Abel, ‘Let’s go out to the field,’ And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him”*

*Genesis 4:3-5, 8*

**Anger and Inappropriate Anger**

**Question: “What does Yahweh (God) want me to do about my inappropriate anger?**

**Answer:** Yahweh **(**God) wants you to examine the true source of your anger. It is *hurt, injustice, fear, frustration,* or a combination of these? Then evaluate whether you are using anger to try to get your inner need for love, for significance, or for security met.

Have you been **hurt** by rejection or someone’s unkind words? If so, ask…

-*Am I using anger* to try to intimidate or coerce someone to remain in a relationship with me?

Have you been a victim of an **unjust** situation where you felt powerless? If so, ask…

-*Am I using angry,* accusatory words to cause someone to feel guilty and obligated to me?

Have you been **afraid** because of a situation you can’t control? If so ask…

-*Am I using anger* to overpower and control someone in order to get my way?

Have you been ***frustrated*** because of something you can’t do? If so, ask…

-*Am I using angry* threats and shaming words to manipulate someone to meet my demands?

In searching your heart, decide that you will not use anger to try to get your needs met. Instead, repent and no longer look to others to meet your needs. Enter into a deeper dependence on the Elohim (Lord) to meet these Yahweh (God)-given needs, because…

*“The Elohim (Lord) will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-water garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.”*

*Isaiah 58:11*

**What Causes a Sudden Increase in Anger Intensity?**

When most people envision a raging inferno, they imagine a wild forest fire or rows of homes engulfed by flames. But in 1999 an entirely different kind of fire broke out in North Delta, Canada, as a roaring fire filled 250,000 cubic yards in a landfill.

The fire caused by tons upon tons of loosely piled waste, which created a single, 50-foot column deposited in a way that violated two important permit requirements.

The local fire department responded to the North Delta landfill fire several pumper trucks that worked around the clock for 24 hours to put the fire out-*or so they thought.*

But a few days later the fire actually intensified when flames broke out on the steep face of the landfill following a 50-yard by 100-yard sinkhole that fell about 10 feet where the flames had originally been concentrated.

Anger can also intensify, seemingly coming out of nowhere, warranting close examination of its cause.

Although a person’s ways of expressing anger may change slightly over time, they seldom change dramatically. A dramatic change would not be typical. When there is a major change, there is also a major cause.

If someone is uncharacteristically impatient, irritable, or provoked, be aware that *changes in mood and behavior can result from…*

**Drug abuse** (steroids, cocaine)

**Head injury** (sports, fall, car accident)

**Medications** (certain antidepressants)

**Chemical deficiencies** (hormonal imbalances)

**Illness or disease** (brain tumor, brain cancer)

**Physical stress and emotional trauma** (post-traumatic stress disorder)

**Spiritual rebellion** (blatant refusal to acknowledge, worship, or obey God

Sudden changes of behavior warrant a close examination as to what could be a physical cause, especially in the brain. Be prudent-don’t judge too quickly-and seek knowledge because…

*“Every prudent man acts out of knowledge, but a fool exposes his folly.”*

*Proverbs 13:16*

**Do Expectations Lead to Anger?**

When it comes to anger, *unrealistic expectations* can be harmful-much like trying to put out a fire with gasoline. When it came to battling the Canadian landfill blaze, any expectation of quickly extinguishing the fire proved futile.

A thick haze of smoke chocked out the fresh air and sunlight for miles. Of greater concern was a gas pipeline dangerously close to the billowing flames, posing a serious threat to life and property. Even the water supply was threatened by the pooling of leachate (the liquid drainage from the landfill).

After consulting with firefighting specialists, authorities decided to excavate the burning material and transport it to another area where it could be fully immersed in water.

How easy to adopt the unrealistic expectation…that we have the power to determine what people *should* do or how situations *should* be. “My destiny should be *this;* therefore, people should do *that.*” Typically, we pray and *expect Yahweh (*God) to do everything we ask. We want to be the fire chief, when in reality He alone is the One in charge.

The primary problem with unrealistic expectations centers around the simple word *pride.* We would be wise to ask the Lord, “Do I act as though I am the center of my world and everything revolves around me? The Bible describes angry reactions from unmet expectations….

*“What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask Yahweh (God). When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures…*

*’Yahweh (God) opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’”*

*James 4:1-3, 6*

**Unrealistic Expectations**

**Anger toward circumstances**

“I expected good things would always come my way…but my life is clearly not what I had expected.”

**Anger toward others**

“I expected you to always be here for me, to love and support me…but now I feel alone and lonely.”

**Anger toward yourself**

“I expected to always excel…but now I am struggling and feel like a failure.”

**Anger toward Yahweh (God)**

“I expected Yahweh (God) to protect me from pain and provide health and wealth as He promised…but He hasn’t answered my prayers.”

The more we expect Yahweh (God) and people to do what we want, the angrier we become when they fail us. Truth is, the more we try to control others, the more control we give them over ourselves. The more demands we put on others, *the more power we give them* to anger us. Instead, we need to humble ourselves and submit to Yahweh’s (God’s) sovereignty over our lives and over the lives of others. We need to leave our desires and our destiny in His hands-where they rightly reside.

The Bible says we are to lay our hopes and expectations before the Elohim (Lord) and allow Him to determine what we should receive….

*“Find rest, O my soul, in Yahweh (God) alone; my hope comes from him.”*

Psalm 62:5

**Anger over Unrealistic Expectations**

**Question: “Since the Bible says, ‘Ask and you will receive,’ I was told that all I had to do was name and claim what I wanted-in Yeshua’ (Jesus’) name. If I would sincerely ‘believe,’ I could expect to ‘receive’…which clearly hasn’t happened! I’m angry with Yahweh (God). Why hasn’t He answered my prayers?”**

**Answer:** Your anger at Yahweh (God) is based on *unrealistic expectations****.*** While you were completely sincere, those who taught you this expectation were sincerely wrong. The *Name it-Claim it* theology is not biblical.

When you look at the *whole counsel of God-*reading all Scriptures on the same subject in their accurate context-you will see the “believe and receive” doctrine doesn’t measure up as biblically accurate.

Consider the apostle Paul, whose pedigree was impressive, yet he knew what it was to lack health and wealth. Although 100% in the will of Yahweh (God), he was also weak and *“in want.”* He said…

*“I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength”*

*Philippians 4:12-13*

**Anger over Loss**

**Question: “How can I handle my anger over the losses in my life?**

**Answer:** When you experience significant loss in your life, you will go through a time of grieving.

**Admit your feelings**-your hurt, sense of injustice, fear, or frustration.

**Release to Yahweh (God)** all the pain you feel, along with the situations beyond your control.

**Trust Yahweh (God)** to give you the grace and insight to deal constructively with each loss.

**Release your expectation** that life must go your way.

Pray, Lord, thank You for being sovereign over my life. Whatever it takes, I want to respond to You with a heart of gratitude and to accept the unchangeable circumstances in my life. I chose to stop making myself and those around me miserable by being angry over something none of us change. Instead, I thank You for what You are going to teach me through this loss…And thank You for Your promise that somehow You are going to use this loss for good. In your holy name I pray, Amen.”

Repeatedly remind yourself to…

*“Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is Yahweh’s (God’s) will for you in Messiah Yeshua (Christ Jesus).”*

*1 Thessalonians 5:18*

**What is the Root Cause of Anger?**

The root cause of extended anger is typically based on a “wrong” premise about “rights.” The root cause of the nearly catastrophic Canadian landfill blaze was also based on a wrong premise about rights: Unscrupulous business chose to operate their landfill in their own illegitimate way rather than yielding to the official permit requirements for landfills

.

When we feel that our real or perceived “rights” have been violated, we can easily respond with anger. But what are our legitimate rights? One person would answer, “Happiness.” Another would say, “Freedom to live life my way.”

Yet this was not the mind-set of Yeshua (Jesus). Ye yielded His rights to His heavenly Father. Based on the bible, *we have the right to live in the light of Yahweh’s (God’s) will as revealed in His Word.* Other than that, we are to yield our rights to the Elohim (Lord) and let Him have His way in our hearts. We are told to…

*“Trust in the Elohim (Lord) with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;*

*in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.”*

*Proverbs 3:5-6*

**Wrong Belief:**

“When I am hurt, fearful, frustrated, or treated unfairly, *I have the right* to be angry until the situation changes. It is only natural for me to be angry about the disappointment in my life and to express my anger in whatever way I choose.”

**Right Belief:**

“Since I have trusted Messiah (Christ) with my life and have yielded my rights to Him, I choose not to be controlled by anger. My human disappointments are now Yahweh’s (God’s) appointments to increase my faith and develop His character in me.” The Bible says…

*“Now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith-of greater wroth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire-may proved genuine.”*

*1 Peter 1:6-7*

**Steps to Solution**

**Frustration Ignites Anger**

On that hot, dry day, Moses’ frustration reached a boiling point. He had led more than a million of his people through the vast desert. But for all of his efforts, they continually complained…criticizing his leadership and condemning him for their plight: “*If only we had died when our brothers fell dead….! Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible place?” Numbers 20:3-5*

**Key Verses to Memorize**

Firefighters know the danger of letting a flame get out of control. They are trained to respond quickly. You must also respond quickly in order to control the flame of anger before it consumes your life and destroys your relationships. For this reason…

*“Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that Yahweh (God) desires.”*

*James 1:19-20*

**Key passage to Read and Reread**

*“’In your anger do not sin’; Do not let the sun go down while you are angry, and do not give the devil a foothold…. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of Yahweh (God), with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage, and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Messiah Adnoai (Christ God) forgave you.”*

*Ephesians 4:26-27, 29-32*

**How to Measure the Amount of Your Anger**

Before firefighters respond to any alarm, they measure the intensity of the emergency and then rally the necessary resources.

A 1-alarm fire is considered the least serious, usually dispatching to the scene two pumper trucks, a rescue unit, a ladder truck, and a supervising chief. A 2-alarm fire doubles the response of a 1-alarm call.

In situations considered 3-alarm to 5-alarm fires, besides adding more of the above, trucks storing oxygen and area lighting are also sent to the scene, along with a crew for media relations and food and water replenishments for firefighters.

Similar to the standard procedure of firefighters, taking time to measure your anger is necessary for knowing how to put the fire out.

Have you seriously thought about *how much* anger you are holding inside your heart and *toward whom* you feel angry? See the pie-shaped outline on the following page. Divide the pie into segments and put a specific name inside each segment to represent the amount of anger you feel toward the different people in your life (past or present). See the sample “Anger Pie,” which shows general categories.

As you think about your own anger, consider what the Bible says….

*“Man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that Yahweh (God) desires.”*

*James 1:20*

**How to Analyze Your Anger**

Fire investigators have the responsibility of analyzing the aftermath of a fire to determine where the fire started, what started it, and why it got out of control. The goal is to formulate a plan to prevent such fires from getting started in the future and to control and extinguish them should they break out again. Likewise, analyzing your anger will help you determine where it started, what started it, and why it got out of control should it break out again.

To better understand your anger, each time you feel angry, stop and ask yourself key through-provoking questions. Analyzing your thoughts and actions can help you move from being controlled by your anger to benefiting from your anger. As you practice patience and gain understanding, you will be able to use your anger for Yahweh’s (God’s) purpose, which, in turn, will prevent foolish displays of anger you later regret. Remember…

*“A patient man has great understanding, but a quick-tempered man displays folly.”*

*Proverbs 14:29*

**The Anger Quiz**

As you answer each question, think for a moment and answer as honestly as you can…

* What triggers your anger?
* How do you generally express your anger?
* What do you desire when you are angry?
* Is the way you express your anger working for you? Do you get what you desire?
* Do you ever lose control of your anger? If so, when was the first time you did…and what happened?
* Are you able to calm your anger? If so, what do you do?
* Have you allowed your anger to escalate? If so, what happened?
* Is your anger harming your relationships? If so, how?
* Has your anger ever caused any health problems? If so, what?
* Do others point out your anger even if you don’t see it? If so, when, and what do they say?
* Does your anger ever become physical? If so, how and how often?
* When you get angry, do you feel safe?
* When you get angry, how safe do others feel?
* Did anyone in your childhood home have an anger problem? If so, who, and how were you impacted back then?
* As a child, how did you feel when you were on the receiving end of someone’s anger?
* Do you think anger from your childhood could still be impacting you today? If so, how?
* Do you have difficulty forgiving those toward whom you have anger? If so, explain.
* Do you have someone wise to talk with about your anger?
* Do you ever pray about your anger? If so, what do you pray?
* What is your view of Yahweh (God) in the midst of angering situations?
* How do you think you should respond to Yahweh (God) when you feel angry?
* How do you think you should respond to others when you feel angry?
* What can you learn from a recent anger problem that will help you better handle your anger in the future?

When you honestly analyze your anger, you are taking the first step toward controlling your temper rather than letting your temper control you…

*“Better a patient man than a warrior,*

*a man who controls his temper than one who takes a city.”*

*Proverbs 16:322*

**How to Resolve Your Anger toward Yahweh (God)**

When a raging, fiery inferno engulfs a home with a tragic loss of life…the gut-wrenching pain can be punctuated by a finger pointing…*upward*. However, harboring anger toward Yahweh (God) for our heartaches is like blaming our losses on the fire chief – the one who has devoted his entire life to helping, not hurting, us.

No one escapes hurt and pain in life – *no one*. During catastrophic times, the promise you are to cling to is that your loving God is unfolding His perfect plan for your life, and He uses *all* circumstances to accomplish His purposes…*even the painful ones*.

Have you ever blamed Yahweh (God) for the pain and heartache in your life? Have you pointed a condemning finger and pronounced judgment on Him because He has not stopped evil or suffering?

In the Bible, a man named Job seriously questioned Yahweh (God)…so much that we can hear anger in his bitter complaint: *“Even today my complaint is bitter; his [God’s] hand is heavy in spite of my groaning. If only I knew where to find him; if only I could go to his dwelling! I would state my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments.” Job 23:2-4*

But…is anger toward Yahweh (God) justifiable? While He understands our anger, notice how He sets the record straight by answering Job with these words: *“Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge?...Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him?...Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself?”* Job 38:2; 40:2, 8

What is the answer to intense anger against Yahweh (God)? Can it be resolves? And if so, how? The sure way to resolve your anger toward Yahweh (God) is to gain a full understanding of the character, purpose, and plan of Yahweh (God).

Resolving Anger toward Yahweh (God)

* **Know God’s Character.**

**- He is just**… *“He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful Adnoai (God) who does no wrong, upright and just is he.” Deuteronomy 32:4*

**- His ways are just***… “Just and true are your ways, King of the ages.” Revelation 15:3*

**- He is love**… *“Yahweh (God) is love.” 1 John 4:8*

- **He loves**… *“We love because he first loved us.” 1 John 4:19*

* **Know Yahweh’s (God’s) Purposes.**

**- He brings good out of evil**… *“We know that in all things Yahweh (God) works for the good of those who love him.” Romans 8:28*

 **- He turns your sorrow into joy**… *“You turned my wailing into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.” Psalm 30:11*

 **- He uses your suffering** to produce perseverance, character, and hope… *“We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because Yahweh (God) has poured out his love into out hearts.” Romans 5:3-5*

**- He uses your troubles** to teach you compassion… *“The Father of compassion and the Adnoai (God) of all comfort…comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from Yahweh (God).” 2 Corinthians 1:3-4*

* **Know Yahweh’s (God’s) Plan.**

**- He will grant eternal life to you** and all who entrust their lives to Messiah (Christ)... *“My Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:40*

**- He will bless you** if you persevere under trial…*”Blessed is the man who persevered under trial.” James 1:12*

**- He will bring His righteous judgment** on those who are evil… *“The Elohim (Lord) knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment.” 2 Peter 2:9*

**- He will, one day, make everything new** for His true believers… *“The dwelling of Adnoai (God) is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and Yahweh (God) himself will be with them and be their Adnoai (God). He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” Revelation 21:3-4*

 Job, who at one time had anger toward Yahweh (God), ultimately realized that he had misplaced anger. With deepest remorse, he admitted this wrong…

*“I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted…*

*My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you.*

*Therefore, I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.”*

*Job 42:2, 5-6*

**Anger That Yahweh (God) Allows Evil**

**Question: “I’m angry at Yahweh (God) for allowing bad people to cause so much pain. Since Yahweh (God) had the power to create the world, why doesn’t He stop evil in the world?”**

Answer: Yahweh (God) allows evil because He allows people to exercise “free will.”

* Yahweh (God) did not create us to be robots with no choice to do anything except what the Creator has programmed.
* He created us to be “free agent” human beings who have choice over what we think, say and do. We can’t have it both ways, in that Yahweh (God) allows us freedom but we can’t do anything wrong…That’s not freedom!

If you have read the last chapter of the book of Revelation, you know that Yahweh (God) has appointed a time in the future when He will put an end to evil and suffering.

* The bad news is that until then, evil will always be in opposition to good and will seek to harm and destroy those who do good.
* But the good news is that Yahweh (God) always uses harmful experiences to accomplish His purposes. He did so in the life of Joseph, whose evil brothers sold him into slavery. Years later when the frightened brothers came face-to-face with him – by then prime minister of Egypt, who had saved both the Egyptians and the Hebrews from famine – Joseph said…

*“Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of Yahweh (God)?*

*You intended to harm me, but Yahweh (God) intended it for good to accomplish*

*What is now being done, the saving of many lives.”*

*Genesis 50:19-20*

**How to Resolve Your Past Anger**

We’ve all seen pictures of people walking on hot coals, appearing to defy nature by taking a short, yet potentially scorching, journey with feet unscathed. It’s no mystery that the “trick” to salvaging the soles is to move fast, never lingering long enough for the fiery coals to begin burning the skin. If for some reason the treacherous trek is prolonged, *pain and injury* will ensue.

Failure to resolve past anger operates in much the same way. The longer it resides in your heart, the more painful and injurious it is for you and for others. That’s because unresolved anger produces bitterness. And bitterness is like a bed of hidden coals burning deep wounds into your soul and spirit, making rubble of your relationships. This thief of emotion snatches joy from your heart and steals peace from your spirit – it even robs your mind of reason…

*“When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered,*

*I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you.”*

*Psalm 73:21-22*

**Putting Away Past Anger**

**REALIZE Your Unresolved Anger.**

* **Admit** you have harbored anger in your heart and confess it as sin.
* **Ask** Yahweh (God) to reveal all of your unresolved anger.
* **Admit** to a wise, nonjudgmental friend or counselor that you have buried anger.
* **Ask** Yahweh (God) to help you see your sin as He sees your sin.

Say to the Lord… *“I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin.” Psalm 38:18*

**REVISIT Your Root Feelings.**

* Did you **feel hurt**: rejected, betrayed, unloved, ignored?
* Did you **experience injustice**: cheated, wronged, maligned, attacked?
* Did you **feel fearful**: threatened, insecure, out-of-control, powerless?
* Did you **feel frustrated**: inadequate, inferior, hindered, controlled?

Pray to the Lord…

*“Search me, O Yahweh (God), and know my heart: test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:23-24*

**RELEASE Your Rights Regarding the Offense.**

* **Release** your right to hear “I’m sorry” for the offense.
* **Release** your right to dwell on the offense.
* **Release** your right to hold on to the offense.
* **Release** your right to keep bringing up the offense.

Remember…

*“He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.” Proverbs 17:9*

**RECOGNIZE Your Need to Forgive**

* **Make** a list of each of your hurts – release each one to Yahweh (God).
* **Pray** for those who persecute you – for whatever is broken in them.
* **Give** your desire for revenge to Yahweh (God) – do not strike back or retaliate.
* **Release** those who have hurt you into the hands of Yahweh (God) – forgive as Yahweh (God) forgave you!

Be faithful to…

*“Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Elohim (Lord) forgave you.” Colossians 3:13*

**REJOICE in Yahweh’s (God’s) Purpose for Allowing Your Pain.**

* **Thank Yahweh (God)** for the ways He will use this trial in your life – truly for your good.
* **Thank Yahweh (God)** for how He will use your resolved anger for the good of others.
* **Thank Yahweh (God)** for His promise to restore you after a time of suffering.
* **Thank Yahweh (God)** for His promise to use all the pain to make you strong, firm, and steadfast.

Give thanks that…

*“The Adnoai (God) of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Messiah (Christ), after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.” 1 Peter 5:10*

**RESTORE the Relationship…When Appropriate.**

(Note: Sometimes reconciliation is not appropriate…such as with an unrepentant abuser or between two people involved in an adulterous affair.)

* **Confess your anger** both to Yahweh (God) and to the person with whom you have resisted or have not wanted reconciliation.

Write out the confession first to get the wording just right.

“I realize I’ve been wrong in holding on to my anger and refusing to allow Yahweh (God) to restore our relationship. I’m deeply sorry. Will you forgive me?”

* **Keep the encounter free of anger** and accusatory statements.

Instead of “You did\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” statements, use “I felt (sad, hurt, devastated, etc.) when (event) happened.”

* **State your desire** for a renewed reconciliation within a right relationship.

“I sincerely want us to have the best relationship possible – a healthy, supportive, positive relationship that is right in Yahweh’s (God’s) sight. Is that what you desire?”

Realize it is Jesus who said…

*“I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment…Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.” Matthew 5:22-24*

**RECEIVE Yahweh’s (God’s) Love for You…Personally.**

* **Personalize** Bible verses that reveal Yahweh’s (God’s) love for you:

Lord, thank you for saying to me, *“I have loved you with an everlasting love.” Jeremiah 31:3*

Yahweh (God), *“Because of [your] great love [I am] not consumed, for [your] compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” Lamentations 3:22-23*

* **Read** these Scriptures daily for eight weeks:

*“The Elohim’s (Lord’s) unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him…I will sing of the Elohim’s (Lord’s) great love forever…The Elohim’s (Lord’s) love is with those who fear him [revere him].” Psalm 32:10; 89:1; 103:17*

* **Rely** on the Elohim (Lord) to meet your inner needs for love, significance, and security:

Lord, *“I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.” Psalm 13:5*

* **Thank Yahweh (God)** each day for His unconditional love:

Lord, *“How great is the love [you have] lavished on [me], that [I] should be called [a child] of Yahweh (God)!” 1 John 3:1*

Pray with the apostle Paul…

*“That you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how hide and long and high and deep is the love of Messiah (Christ), and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of Yahweh (God).” Ephesians 3:17-19*

**REFLECT Messiah (Christ’s) Love.**

**Reflect the love of Yeshua (Jesus) by praying** for every person who hurts or angers you…

* “Lord, may **my heart** be a reflection of Your heart.”
* “Lord, may **my mind** be an expression of Your mind.”
* “Lord, may **my will** be an illustration of Your will.”
* “Lord, may **my love** be a demonstration of Your love.”

Jesus gave this proclamation to His disciples and, therefore, to us…

*“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:34-35*

**Anger and Reconciliation?**

**Question: “I feel angry at the thought of having to reconcile with someone I trusted – someone who played me for a fool. With no remorse, no repentance, no restitution, [s]he remains untrustworthy, so how can I forgive and be reconciled?”**

**Answer:** Forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation. Forgiveness focuses on the offense, whereas reconciliation focuses on the relationship. Forgiveness requires no relationship. However, reconciliation requires a relationship in which two people, in agreement, are walking together toward the same goal.

The Bible says…

“Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?” Amos 3:3

* **Forgiveness** can be given by one person.
* *Reconciliation* requires at least two people.
* **Forgiveness** is extended in one direction.
* *Reconciliation* is reciprocal…involving a two-way direction.
* **Forgiveness** is a decision to release the offender.
* *Reconciliation* is the effort to rejoin the offender.
* **Forgiveness** involves a change in thinking about the offender.
* *Reconciliation* involves a change in behavior by the offender.
* **Forgiveness** is a free gift to the one who has broken trust.
* *Reconciliation* is a restored relationship based on restored trust.
* **Forgiveness** is extended even if it is never, ever earned.
* *Reconciliation* is offered to the offender because it has been earned.
* **Forgiveness** is unconditional, regardless of a lack of repentance.
* *Reconciliation* is conditional and is based on repentance.

You can forgive your offender, but you cannot reconcile with someone who remains unchanged. As the Scripture instructs…

*“Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man,*

*do not associate with one easily angered.”*

*Proverbs 22:24*

**How to Rid Yourself of Childhood Anger**

Ask a group of 5-year-old boys what they want to be when they grow up and the odds are high that more than one will say a fireman. Adults smile at the endearing aspiration, knowing full well the odds are just as high that the little boys standing before them probably won’t actually become *firefighters*.

The struggles and hurts of life have a way of shattering the innocence of youth, and the anger experienced perhaps by even a 5-year-old boy can affect him as a 50-year-old man if it is not resolved. Often a direct connection can be found between *present* pain and anger and *past* pain and anger, dating even all the way back to early childhood. Many of us assume when we reach adulthood, our childhood pain will magically disappear and no longer affect us. *Surely, the years have suffocated the last smoldering ember,* we reason. However, this disappearing act doesn’t “just happen.” We must recognize our pain from the past and resolve it, because…

*“The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him,*

*and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.”*

*Matthew 12:35*

**Resolving Childhood Hurts**

**The next time anger wells up in your heart, ask yourself…**

* “Am I feeling *hurt*?”
* Example: “The dearest person in my life is rejecting me.”
* “Did I ever have these same feelings when I was a child?”
* Example: “My father basically ignored me and strongly favored my brother.”
* “How did I feel when my father ignored me?”
* Example: “I felt sad, mad, and rejected.”
* “How did I express my anger?”
* Example: “I picked on my brother and was mean to him.”

**Face the anger still residing in your heart because of childhood hurts…**

* Ask Yahweh (God) to reveal buried hurts from your childhood.
* Ask close family members and friends to describe what situations seem to hurt you and make you angry.
* Acknowledge that your prolonged, unresolved anger over past hurts is wrong, even if you think it is justified.
* Take personal responsibility to overcome your childhood hurts.
* Surrender your hurtful childhood experiences and feelings to Yahweh (God).
* Ask forgiveness from those whom you have hurt or offended.
* Forgive and pray for those who have hurt you.
* Pray for Yahweh (God) to purge you of your hurtful ways and fill you with His unconditional love for others.

**If your heart yearns for love and acceptance, remember…**

* Psalm 66:20 – *“Praise be to Yahweh (God), who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!”*
* Psalm 32:10 – *“Many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord’s unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.”*
* Psalm 36:7 – *“How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings.”*
* 1 John 4:9-10 – *“This is how Yahweh (God) showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved Yahweh (God), but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”*

Resolving Childhood Injustices

**The next time you feel the surge of anger over a particular situation, ask yourself…**

* “Am I feeling a sense of *injustice*?”
* Example: “The person I’m dating mistreats me.”
* “Did I ever have these same feelings in my childhood?”
* Example: “Yes. When my father abused my mother, my brother and me.”
* “How did I feel when my father abused all of us?”
* Example: “I felt angry and powerless to stop it.”
* “How did I express my anger?”
* Example: “I bullied other kids.”

**Face your anger from the past and begin to see how your present anger is connected to the injustices you experienced in childhood…**

* Ask Yahweh (God) to reveal all unresolved feelings over the injustices you experienced as a child.
* Ask close family members and friends how they know when you are angry over an injustice.
* Acknowledge that your feelings of injustice may be directed toward Yahweh (God).
* Take responsibility for your feelings of anger at injustice.
* Release your anger to Yahweh (God) over past injustices and replace the anger with Yahweh’s (God’s) peace.
* Ask forgiveness from anyone you have treated unjustly.
* Forgive and pray for those who have been unjust toward you.
* Mediated on how Yahweh (God) can use your awareness of injustices committed against you and against others for good.

**If your anger is rooted in unjust treatment, and you are committed to justice, remember…**

* Psalm 9:16 – *“The Elohim (Lord) is known by his justice.”*
* Luke 18:7 – *“Will not Yahweh (God) bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?”*
* 2 Thessalonians 1:6-7 – *“Yahweh (God) is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well.”*
* Psalm 37:6 – *“He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.”*

**Resolving Childhood Fears**

**The next time you feel threatened or angry over an unwanted, uncomfortable change in circumstances, ask yourself…**

* “Am I feeling *fear* about my future?”
* Example: “I’ve lost my job, and I don’t know how I will support my family.”
* “Did I ever have these same feelings in my childhood?”
* Example: “Yes, when my parents died, I went to live with my grandmother.”
* “How did I feel about my parent’s death?”
* Example: “I felt angry because everybody else had a mother and father to protect them and to provide for their future.”
* “How did I express my anger?”
* Example: “I was resentful and disrespectful toward my grandmother.”

**Face your anger at Yahweh (God) for taking your parents and leaving you with the fear of an uncertain future,** as well as any other fears you experienced in childhood…If you have difficulty recalling your childhood feelings of fear, ask Yahweh (God) to bring those memories to your mind…

* Ask Yahweh (God) to reveal where your fears and insecurities reside. (Be completely honest.) Do they reside…?
* In your finances?
* In close family ties?
* In your good education?
* In your accomplishments:
* In what others say about you?
* Ask your current family and good friends if they have noticed times when you have expressed distress or feelings of insecurity as a result of fear.
* Acknowledge that placing your trust in anything other than Yahweh (God) produces anger at Him when your security idols fail, and you experience fear.
* Ask forgiveness for your failure to trust Him.
* Learn to place your trust only in the Elohim (Lord) for your security.
* Memorize Scriptures that reassure you of Yahweh’s (God’s) faithfulness.
* Begin developing a grateful heart for all that the Elohim (Lord) has provided, thanking Him daily for His generous gifts.

**If your heart yearns for security and you desire to rid yourself of fear, remember…**

* Psalm 112:7-8 – *“He will have no fear of bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Elohim (Lord). His heart is secure, he will have no fear; in the end he will look in triumph on his foes.”*
* Isaiah 41:10 – *“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your Adnoai (God). I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous hand.”*
* Proverbs 3:26 – *“The Elohim (Lord) will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared.”*
* Romans 8:15 – *“You did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship.”*

**Resolving Childhood Frustrations**

**The next time you feel anger when your personal efforts are stymied or unaccepted by others, ask yourself…**

* “Am I feeling *frustrated*?”
* Example: “My associate made negative remarks about my speech at our business luncheon.”
* “Did I ever have these same feelings in my childhood?”
* Example: “Yes. When my parents expected me to behave perfectly and to not express my true feelings.”
* “How did I feel when my parents had these expectations?”
* Example: “I felt like they accepted me only when my behavior was acceptable, so I ended up feeling angry and insecure all the time.”
* “How did I express my anger?”
* Example: “I got mad at them and at myself and would bang my head a lot or scratch my arms.”

**Face your past frustrations from childhood and realize that not measuring up to your own or someone else’s standards indicates performance-based acceptance and can be a major source of anger…**

* Ask Yahweh (God) to reveal the buried anger you have toward your parents or others in your past who frustrated you by accepting you only on the basis of your performance.
* Ask yourself…
* “Do I set unrealistic standards for myself?”
* “Do I tend to stuff my anger?”
* “Do I need to control people and circumstances?”
* “Am I a caretaker?”
* “Am I a perfectionist?”
* “Am I a procrastinator?”
* “Am I a people pleaser?”
* “Am I a workaholic?”
* Ask your family and close friends how they know when you are frustrated.
* Understand that frustration is only a nice-sounding word for the anger that deeply damages your self-worth and sense of significance.
* Understand that it takes concentrated commitment and great effort to uncover deeply buried frustrations and root them out of your life.
* Realize you can never earn Yahweh’s (God’s) love, but He loves you unconditionally.
* Allow yourself to feel your anger at being frustrated and ask God for courage to express your anger in acceptable ways.
* Forgive those who frustrated you in the past and release your anger to Yahweh (God). Accept the sufficiency of His love to affirm your value.

**If you feel a sense of frustration with life and long to feel accepted and significant, remember…**

* Proverbs 21:3 – *“To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the Elohim (Lord) than sacrifice.”*
* Galatians 1:10 – *“Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of Yahweh (God)? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Messiah (Christ).”*
* Psalm 25:9 – *“He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.”*
* Lamentations 3:22-23 – *“Because of the Elohim’s (Lord’s) great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”*

**How to Apply the Quick Answer to Anger**

Members of a First Response Team know the importance of having a “quick answer.” In the face of calamity, firefighters must provide a quick response but remain cool under pressure.

When you sense a surge of anger, it’s vital that you learn to respond quickly. If not, your anger could blaze out of control.

The possibility of out-of-control anger remains ever present. A spark of irritation can be ignited *intentionally* by hurtful people or even *unintentionally* by those who love you. Yahweh (God) wants you to seek His answer for anger quickly before it burns the bridges of your relationships because…

*“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”*

*Proverbs 15:1*

**The Quick Answer to Anger**

If I had to boil down all efforts to manage anger to the most basic steps, I believe I could reduce the solution to two points: one question and one action step.

**Step 1. Ask…**Can I change this situation?

**Step 2. Action…**If you can, change it. If you can’t, release it.

Let’s go back to the first step: Can you change what angers you? Answer *yes* or *no* – that’s it.

Now consider the second step: If you answered *yes*, you are angry about something you can change – so change it.

**If the door squeaks**, oil it.

**If the faucet leaks**, fix it.

If you answered *no*, you are angry about something you cannot change – so release it.

**If your house burns down**, release it (the fear).

**If your loved one dies**, release it (the hurt).

If your house does burn down, only as you emotionally release the pain of your loss can you rebuild your life…and possibly your home. Being angry because of a burned house or the death of someone dear will not change the situation. It will only make matters worse.

How do you release your anger? First, list what angers you – every person…every situation. Then, go to Yahweh (God) in all humility, refusing to demand your rights, rejecting any thought of revenge, and surrendering the situation and yourself to the Lord – past, present and future. Although you may feel completely powerless, in reality you have the power to release your pain and anger to Him.

**The “Releasing Your Anger” Prayer**

“Lord Jesus, thank You for loving me. Thank You for caring about me. Since you know everything, You know the strong sense of (hurt, injustice, fear and/or frustration) I have felt about (name or situation). Thank You for understanding my anger. Right now, I release all of my anger to You. I trust You with my future and with me. In Messiah’s (Christ’s) name I pray. Amen.”

*“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”*

*1 Peter 5:7*

**How to Alleviate Your Present Anger**

Like a firefighter’s hose spraying water on a fire, working through the following eight “A’s” can do much to douse the potentially dangerous effects of anger in your life. Firefighters are always equipped with a variety of hoses, each designed to handle different sized fires, with one goal in mind – alleviating threatening flames.

* Handlines are small hoses 1.5 to 1.75 inches in diameter.
* Booster lines are larger, rubber-jacketed hoses stored on reels.
* LDH (large-diameter hose), measuring about 5 inches in diameter and useful for supplying water

Because “anger is one letter short of danger” (this saying is more than a catchy phrase), these words reflect a painful truth. Too many times the tongue has not been tamed, conversations have escalated out of control, and people and relationships have been damaged, if not destroyed. Proverbs tell us…

*“As charcoal to embers and as wood to tire,*

*so is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife.”*

*Proverbs 26:21*

**Acknowledge Your Anger**

* **Be willing** to admit you have anger.
* **Be aware** of when you feel angry.
* **Become aware** of how you suppress or repress your anger either because of fear or pride.
* **Be willing** to take responsibility for any inappropriate anger.

Realize… *”He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.” Proverbs 28:13*

**Ascertain Your Style**

* **How often do you feel angry?**

(Often? Sometimes? Seldom? Never?)

* **How do you know** when you are angry?
* **How do others know** when you are angry?
* **How do you release** your anger?

(Do you explode? Do you criticize? Do you joke or tease? Do you become sarcastic…defensive…teary-eyed?)

As you seek to identify the way you express your anger, pray… *”Test me, O Elohim (Lord), and try me, examine my heart and my mind.” Psalm 26:2*

**Assess the Source.**

* **Hurt**: Is the source of your anger hurt feelings from the words or actions of others?
* **Injustice**: Is the source of your anger the unjust actions of someone toward you or another person?
* **Fear**: Is the source of your anger fear due to a recent or anticipated loss?
* **Frustration**: Is the source of your anger frustration over blocked plans, hopes, or dreams?

Commit to total honesty before Yahweh (God)… *“I know, my Adnoai (God), that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity.” 1 Chronicles 29:17*

**Appraise Your Thinking.**

* **Are you expecting others to meet your standards?**
* “She should take better care of her children?”
* “He ought to notice what I do for him.”
* “He must be here before 7:00 p.m.”
* “She’d better not call during dinner!”
* **Are you guilty of distorted thinking?**
* Exaggerating the situation
* Assuming the worst
* Labeling one action based on other actions
* Generalizing by saying “you never” or “you always”
* **Are you believing lies?**
* “Yahweh (God) is punishing me for my past.”
* “I don’t deserve to be loved or successful.”
* “My future depends on my ability to keep this job.”
* “Yahweh (God) isn’t really interested in whether I’m fulfilled or not.”
* **Are you blaming Yahweh (God) or others?**
* “This situation is someone else’s fault, not mine.”
* “He is responsible for this mess.”
* “She let this happen.”
* “Yahweh (God) let me down.”

Remember… *”A wicked man puts up a bold front, but an upright man gives thought to his ways.” Proverbs 21:29*

**Admit Your Needs.**

* **Do you use manipulative anger** as a ploy in an attempt to feel *loved*?
* **Do you use explosive anger**, insisting on certain conditions in order to feel *significant*?
* **Do you use controlling anger** to demand your way in order to feel *secure*?
* **Do you know that only Messiah (Christ) can ultimately meet all of your inner needs** for love, significance and security?

Rest assured… *“My Adnoai (God) will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Messiah Yeshua (Christ Jesus).” Philippians 4:19*

**Abandon Your Demands.**

Instead of demanding that others meet your inner needs for love, significance and security, learn to look to the Lord to meet your needs.

* *Look to the Elohim (Lord)* to meet your need for love.

“Lord, though I would like to feel more love from others, I know You love me unconditionally, and you will love me forever…”

*“I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.”*

*Jeremiah 31:3*

* *Look to the Lord* to meet your need for significance.

“Lord, though I would like to feel more significant to those around me, I know I am significant in Your eyes…”

*“I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Elohim (Lord), ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’” Jeremiah 29:11*

* *Look to the Elohim (Lord)* to meet your need for security.

“Adnoai (Lord), though I wish I felt more secure in my relationships, I know I am secure in my relationship with You…”

*“The Elohim (Lord) is with me; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?” Psalm 118:6*

* *Look to the Elohim (Lord)* to meet all of your needs for life and godliness.

“Lord, though I wish others would be more responsive to my needs, I know You have promised to meet all of my needs…”

*“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.” 2 Peter 1:3*

Constantly remind yourself…

*“Yahweh (God) is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” 2 Corinthians 9:8*

**Address Your Anger**

* Determine whether your anger is really justified.
* Has a wrong been committed?
* Has anyone suffered hurt or injury?
* Has an injustice occurred?

Consider… *“This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘Give careful thought to your ways.”*

*Haggai 1:5*

* Decide on the appropriate response.
* How important is the issue?
* Would a good purpose be served if I mention it?
* Should I acknowledge my anger only to the Lord?

Remember… *“[There is] a time to be silent and a time to speak.” Ecclesiastes 3:7*

* **Depend on the Holy Spirit for guidance.**
* Ask for counsel about your anger.
* Ask for insight about your anger.
* Ask for wisdom about your anger.

Feel confident about the role of the Holy Spirit in your life… *“The Spirit of truth…will guide you into all truth…and he will tell you what is yet to come.” John 16:13*

* **Develop constructive dialogue if you need to confront an offender.**
* Don’t speak rashly with a heart of unforgiveness.

Do…Think carefully or “care fully” before you speak cautiously.

* Don’t use “you” phrases such as: “How could you?” or “Why can’t you?”

Do…Use personal statements such as “I feel…” or “I need…”

* Don’t bring up past grievances.

Do…Stay focused on the present issue.

* Don’t assume the other person is wrong.

Do…Listen for feedback from another point of view.

* Don’t expect instant understanding.

Do…Be patient and keep responding with a gentle tone of voice.

*“Through patience a ruler can be persuaded,*

*and a gentle tongue can break a bone.”*

*Proverbs 25:15*

**Alter Your Attitudes.** (Read Philippians 2:2-8)

* Have the goal to be like-minded with Messiah (Christ). …..…………………………………..v. 2

“*Make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being in one spirit and purpose.”*

* Do not think of yourself first. …………………...……………………………………………..v. 3

*“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit…”*

* Give the other person preferential treatment. …………….……………………………………v. 3

*“…but in humility consider others better than yourselves.”*

* Consider the interests of the other person. …………….……………………………………….v. 4

*“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”*

* Have the attitude of Messiah Yeshua (Jesus Christ). …....……………………………………..v. 5

*“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus…”*

* Do not emphasize your position or rights. .…………………………………………………….v. 6

*“Who, being in very nature Yahweh (God), did not consider equality with Yahweh (God) something to be grasped…”*

* Look for ways to serve with a servant’s heart. …….…………………………………………..v. 7

*“…but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.”*

* Speak and act with a humble spirit. ...………………………………………………………….v. 8

*“And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself…”*

* Obey the Word of Yahweh (God) and submit your will to His will. .………………………….v. 8

*“…and become obedient…”*

* Be willing to die to your own desires. …………………………………………………………v. 8

*“to death – even death on a cross!”*

**Anger and Regaining Trust**

Question: “How can I regain the trust of my wife when I’ve pushed her around and then blamed her for provoking me to anger?”

Answer: She needs to hear you take full responsibility for your wrong choices and to hear how your wrong choices are going to become right choices.

* Verbalize that you were totally wrong for reacting to her in anger. Admit your harshness is totally your fault.
* Confess your harshness as selfishness and an attempt to control her.
* Ask if she would be willing to truly forgive you. (This may take time, so do not be demanding of her.)
* Demonstrate the depth of your remorse by the strength of your resolve to change. (Promises and tears won’t build trust, but actions will.) Develop a plan to act differently when you are angry.
* Share your plan with her and then *be consistent* in carrying it out.

The way to gain trust is to prove, over time, that you are trustworthy – not just when the relationship is easy, but when it is hard…when you feel frustrated, when getting your way has failed. Consistency is the key.

Consistently responding without any harshness can, over time, change her heart and regain her trust…

*“Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.”*

*Colossians 3:19*

**How to Communicate Your Anger to Another**

A fire extinguisher is an effective tool for putting out small fires, but proper procedures must be followed. Remembering the acronym PASS will ensure that you are operating the extinguisher appropriately with maximum firefighting results:

**P – Pull** the pin.

**A – Aim** the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the flames.

**S – Squeeze** the trigger while holding the extinguisher upright.

**S – Sweep** the extinguisher from side to side, covering the area of the fire with the extinguishing spray.

Learning how to convey anger appropriately will better help you put out the fires of your inflammatory relationships.

Before communicating your anger toward someone, take time to evaluate whether addressing it is necessary and appropriate and whether you think it will prove beneficial. Some people simply do not know how to handle anger directed toward them. They become either hostile and defensive, or weak and placating. Neither response solves anything. In fact, the result can be as if someone has pumped oxygen into your anger, enflaming it all the more.

If you want merely to vent your feelings and to release some pent-up steam, then pour out your heart to God and maybe to another trusted person, but not to the person with whom you are angry. If you decide to arrange a meeting, you will need to do certain things in preparation…

*“Righteous goes before him and prepares the way for his steps.”*

*Psalm 85:13*

* **Choose to be proactive…**
* Examine your motivation.
* Be realistic in your expectations.
* Know what you want to accomplish.
* Assess the legitimacy of your request.
* Rehearse how you will approach the subject.
* Anticipate possible reactions from the other person.
* Think through how you might respond to those reactions.
* Decide whether you are willing to live with any negative repercussions.
* Talk with a wise and trusted person if you are uncertain what to do.
* **Choose a time and place to talk…**
* Select a time and place convenient for both of you in an atmosphere conducive for listening and sharing.
* Meet on “neutral turf” so that both of you are likely to feel equal in power and importance.
* Allot sufficient time to address the concerns you both have.
* Commit the time to Yahweh (God) and seek His wisdom and understanding.
* **Choose to communicate your desires for open and honest communication and resolution…**
* Express your pain and anger in a loving, non-accusatory way without criticizing the person’s character…utilizing the “Sandwich Technique.”

*Bread of Appreciation*

*Meat of the Matter*

*Bread of Encouragement*

* Evaluate the willingness of the other person to receive your rebuke without becoming angry or defensive. Are they willing to understand your hurt, fear, frustration, or indignation over an injustice?
* Give opportunity for a response without interruption or defensiveness on your part.
* Affirm what is being said by repeating and clarifying spoken statements.
* Request any desired changes in behavior that you believe will resolve the present problem and prevent future problems.
* Agree to change any problematic behavior on your part.
* Promote fairness and objectivity, openness and optimism.
* Extend total forgiveness unreservedly and willingly.
* Value differences in goals, desires and priorities.
* Applaud the person’s willingness to listen to you, to resolve the problem, and to work toward improving your relationship.

Always keep in mind…

*“A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.”*

*Proverbs 25:11*

**Control When Confronting**

**Question: “How can I spiritually control my temper when confronting?”**

**Answer:** The Bible says you are to… *“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” Colossians 4:6*

Demonstrate the grace of Yahweh (God) by saying to yourself…

* “I placed my anger on the cross with Messiah (Christ).”
* “I am no longer controlled by anger.”
* “I am alive with Messiah (Christ) living inside me.”
* “I will let Messiah (Christ) forgive through me.”
* “I will let Messiah (Christ) love through me.”
* “I will let Messiah (Christ) reveal truth through me.”

Make this your reality… *“I have been crucified with Messiah (Christ) and I no longer live, but Messiah (Christ) lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20*

**How to Answer Common Questions about Anger**

Ropes and ladders…axes and saws…are among the tools used by firefighters to rescue people, to free them from the bondage of burning buildings and the threat of being unable to escape. Firefighters are thoroughly trained in the area of rescue operations and through experience have come to know what tools are needed for what situation, all with the goal of helping others.

Likewise, turn your anger into a blessing, helping others understand they’re not alone in their struggles…instilling hope that they, too, can be set free from raging anger. As you learn to face the fiery anger within and learn to act rather than react. Yahweh (God) will not only use your anger to accomplish His purposes, but you will also be in a position to offer help and hope to others.

The questions below will help prepare you to give biblical answers to those who live in bondage to anger and who come to you for help and hope…

*“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason*

 *for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”*

*1 Peter 3:15*

**Anger and Self-Control**

**Question: “What should I do when I feel my anger getting out of control?”**

**Answer:** Whenever you feel reason and self-control are giving way to irrational and unbridled behavior put on the brakes and call a truce in order to take time out. Unless you do something to intervene in the process, the direction of the conversation will not change but will only escalate.

**Stop and take a deep breath…**

* Hold up your hands to indicate you are “surrendering” for the time being by calling a halt to what is taking place.
* State slowly in a low tone of voice (remember, “slow and low”) that either you are getting too upset to think clearly or that the conversation is not going in a positive direction and does not seem to be resolving anything.
* Explain that you need to calm down and regain a cool head. Then take a walk around the block, retreat to a quiet place to listen to music, take a shower, or do whatever helps you regain your composure.
* Agree on a time to resume the conversation once you have regained your composure and have processed what has been said.
* If you reach an impasse where agreement between the two of you is not possible…
* Agree to have different opinions on the subject but refuse to let those differences become a problem in the relationship.
* Remember, if two people agree on everything all the time, their relationship runs the high risk of becoming stagnant and void of growth.
* Decide to engage in stimulating conversations where varied opinions are expressed in order to develop listening skills, to learn from others, to think through your own opinions, and to practice expressing those opinions to others in a clear and concise (non-offensive) manner.
* Commit to valuing, accepting, and respecting each other as you grow in your understanding of one another…

*“A fool finds no pleasure in understanding but delights in airing his own opinions. …Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.” Proverbs 18:2; Romans 14:1*

**Anger and Workplace Threats of Violence**

**Question: “One of my coworkers has threatened to harm me. What should I do?”**

**Answer:** Some angry people lose control of their anger and cause property damage and/or personal physical harm. In extreme cases, some even murder those with whom they work. This is why you must…

* **Always** take all threats of violence seriously.
* Assume that if someone makes a threat, the person intends to carry it out.
* Most people who commit violent acts at work have given a clear indication of their intent prior to taking action.
* Develop a proactive plan to defuse the situation.
* **Always** report any threat.
* Report the threat to your supervisor.
* Report the threat to a security officer.
* Report the threat to the police if it is serious enough.
* **Always** proceed wisely and cautiously when threatened.
* Consult your company’s policy manual regarding the Code of Conduct.
* Inform the angry person of the consequences of making threats.
* Request mediation with a trained company mediator.

Remember… *”A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.” Proverbs 22:3*

**Anger and Road Rage**

**Question: “How can I overcome road rage? I get so angry at other drivers!”**

**Answer:** As drivers, we all have had someone cut in front of us, yell profanity at us, make obscene gestures toward us, or intentionally bump us. Whatever the situation, the moment you feel agitated, remove yourself from being in close proximity to the person and rehearse the truth in your mind…

* “I don’t have to become angry. I know Yahweh (God) will work this for my good as I keep my focus on Him.”
* “I refuse to let someone else control my emotions. Adnoai (Lord), I surrender my emotions to Your control.”
* “I choose to sing praises to Yahweh (God) because He is in control, and I can remain calm and cool-headed.”
* “Adnoai (Lord), I don’t know what is wrong with this person, but I pray You will make Your presence known in this situation.”
* “Adnoai (Lord), this person has a problem. I’m not going to let that problem become my problem. I choose instead to thank You for the gift of Your peace and provision.”
* “I will stay calm in the strength of Messiah (Christ). Thank You, Yeshua (Jesus), for Your Spirit within me, giving me everything I need…”

 *“I can do everything through him who gives me strength.” Philippians 4:13*

**Anger and Forgiveness**

**Question: “I was severely wronged by someone I once trusted. People want me to forgive…but how can I ignore my anger and let this person off the hook?”**

**Answer:** Picture a meat hook hanging around your neck and lying against your chest. Attached to the end of it is a burlap bag containing both your offender and all the pain this person has caused you. Do you really want to carry that person and all that pain with you for the rest of your life?

* The Elohim (Lord) wants you to take the anger and pain from the past and release it into His hands.
* Then He wants you to take the one who offended you off of your “emotional meat hook” and place him onto Yahweh’s (God’s) hook. You can forgive him without trusting him. Forgiveness is given; trust is earned.

Extending forgiveness is based on your choice to be obedient to Yahweh (God) and to release your anger to Him. Extending trust is based on another person’s trustworthiness. Forgive everyone, but trust only the trustworthy. The Elohim (Lord) knows how to deal justly and effectively with all those who bring pain into your life. He says…

*“It is mine to avenge; I will repay.” Romans 12:19*

**Forgiveness Prayer**

“Lord Jesus, thank You for caring about how much my heart has been hurt.

You know the pain I have felt because of (list every offense).

Right now, I release all that pain into Your hands.

Thank You, Yeshua (Jesus), for dying on the cross for me and extending Your forgiveness to me.

As an act of my will, I choose to forgive (name).

Right now, I move (name) off of my emotional hook onto Your hook.

I refuse all thoughts of revenge.

I trust that in Your time and in Your way You will deal with my offender as You see fit.

And Adnoai (Lord), thank You for giving me Your power to forgive so that I can be set free.

In Your holy name I pray. Amen.”

**How to Accept Yahweh’s (God’s) Aim for Anger**

Forest rangers who care for and protect national parks occasionally say they have to “start a fire to stop a fire.” Know as *backfires*, these fires help deprive the main fire of fuel and better enable forest rangers and firefighters to contain the blaze. At times Yahweh (God) works for your good in much the same way. Ephesians 4:26 (ESV) says, *“Be angry and do not sin.”*

Yahweh (God) clearly intends for you to experience the emotion of anger and to use it for some positive purpose. For example, He can use your anger to spark your awareness of a blazing spiritual problem that needs to be snuffed out. Yahweh (God) often allows fiery trials to test your faith and to develop the perseverance necessary to sustain your faith…

*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds,*

*because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.”*

*James 1:2-3*

**As you seek to allow Yahweh (God) to direct your anger** and use it for His purposes, remember…

* **Anger** can bring your true feelings to light.
* **Anger** can uncover your need to set healthy boundaries.
* **Anger** can be used to bring positive change in your life.
* **Anger** can be the lens through which you gain insight into your past hurts.
* **Anger** can be the spark that encourages healthy, appropriate, honest communication in relationships.
* **Anger** can be used by Yahweh (God) to convict others of sin.
* **Anger** can reveal your inappropriate ways of trying to meet your own needs.
* **Anger** can be used by Yahweh (God) to motivate others to make responsible decisions.
* **Anger** can be the foundation on which forgiveness is built.
* **Anger** can help you realize your need for the Elohim (Lord).

As you allow Yahweh (God) to use your anger for good, you will become an example to others and bring praise to Yahweh (God)…

*“Let your light shine before men,*

*that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

*Matthew 5:16*

* Material taken from Anger Facing the Fire Within by June Hunt Hope for the Heart

**Anger Workbook**

1. **What is the Meaning of Anger?**
2. **What does Proverbs 29:22 say about anger?**
3. **What does Proverbs 15:18 say about anger?**
4. **What is the Hebrew word for anger?**
5. **What does aph mean?**
6. **“Long of face” (or nose), means what? Give a scripture reference.**
7. “**Short of face” (or nose), means what? Give a scripture reference.**
8. **In the New Testament, the Greek word for anger is?**
9. **What is its meaning?**
10. **What does Romans 2:8 say about someone that is self-seeking? Would you view yourself as self-seeking? Would others say you are self-seeking?**
11. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_can run the gamut from bright red to a light blue. What gamut does your anger usually run?**
12. **What color is the hottest part of the flame on a candle?**
13. **How many degrees Celsius is it?**
14. **Anger can lightly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_…or severely \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**.
15. **Anger ranges from \_\_\_\_ agitation to \_\_\_\_ explosions, from controlled \_\_\_\_\_\_ to uncontrolled \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**
16. **Indignation is simmering anger provoked by something appearing to be what?**

1. **Did Jesus ever become indignant? Give a scripture reference.**
2. **Wrath is burning anger accompanied by a desire to** **what? Could your anger be considered Wrath at times? If, yes why?**

1. **Fury is \_\_\_\_ anger. Could your anger be considered Fury? If, so why?**
2. **Fury is so fierce that it destroys what? Has fury ever destroyed anything in your life? If, so why?**
3. **Rage is blazing anger resulting in loss of what? Has rage ever made you lose control? What did you lose control of?**
4. **Can anger be a good thing? Why or why not? Give an example of it being a good thing and an example of being a bad thing.**
5. **Prolonged anger is? Would you consider your anger prolonged? If, so Why?**
6. **According to Hebrews 12:15 what will bitterness do to you? Have you allowed this to happen to you?**
7. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ anger is the “*pressure cooker.”***

1. **Provoked anger** **is the** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
2. **Profuse anger** **is the** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. **What does Matthew** *5***:22 say about someone that is angry with his brother?** **Is there a brother that you are angry at? Why?**

1. **“Why do some people take their anger out on an innocent bystander – those who have nothing to do with the problem?” Have you ever taken your anger out on someone innocent? Why?**
2. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are known for misplacing their anger onto weaker, more vulnerable people.**
3. **Abusers commonly spew out their anger on those closest to them – those most vulnerable to them. Who closest to you have you spewed your anger out on? Why?**
4. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_\_ people generally carry a sizeable amount of self-contempt and self-**

**loathing.**

1. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ haven’t the strength of character to express their anger toward the people causing their anger.**

1. **“Is it a sin for me to be angry?”**
2. **What does Psalm 4:4 say about anger & sin?**
3. **“How can I keep from feeling guilty when I’m angry?”**
4. **“Can people be angry even when they don’t look or sound angry?”**
5. **Anger Cues Checklist. What do you think are your cues?**
6. **Name some of the physical Symptoms of unresolved anger.**

**39. Name some of the Emotional Symptoms of unresolved anger.**

1. **Name some of the Spiritual Symptoms of unresolved anger.**
2. **Do You Have Hidden Anger?**
3. **7 Clues to Find Hidden Anger Checklist**
4. **“Why do some angry people become irrational in their thinking?” Have you ever become irrational? When?**
5. **Do You Act or React When You Are Angry? What should you do?**
6. ***\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* expresses your thoughts and feelings with restraint, understanding, and concern for the other person’s welfare….**
7. **What are the 4 Sources of Anger?**
8. **What Causes a Sudden Increase in Anger Intensity?**
9. **Can Unrealistic Expectations cause anger?**
10. **Name four different areas where we can have Unrealistic Expectations.**

**53. What is the Root Cause of Anger?**

**54. The Anger Quiz! What questions would you ask? What would be your answers?**

**55. How do you Resolve Your Anger toward Yahweh (God)?**

**56. Name the eight R’s on How to Resolve Your Past Anger.**

**57. How can I REALIZE my Unresolved Anger.**

**58. How can I REVISIT my Root Feelings.**

**59. How can I RELEASE my Rights Regarding the Offense.**

**60. How can I RECOGNIZE my Need to Forgive**

**61. How can I REJOICE in Yahweh’s (God’s) Purpose for Allowing my Pain.**

**62. How can I RESTORE the Relationship…When Appropriate.**

**63.** H**ow can I** **RECEIVE Yahweh’s (God’s) Love …Personally.**

**64. How can I REFLECT Messiah (Christ’s) Love?**

**65. “I feel angry at the thought of having to reconcile with someone I trusted – someone who played me for a fool. With no remorse, no repentance, no restitution, [s]he remains untrustworthy, so how can I forgive and be reconciled?”**

**66. Name the two steps that you can take to help find answer to anger.**

**67. What are the eight A’s that you can use to Alleviate your present anger?**

**68. “How can I regain the trust of my wife when I’ve pushed her around and then blamed her for provoking me to anger?”**

**69. How can I Communicate my Anger to Another?**

**70. “What should I do when I feel my anger getting out of control?”**