

## The Devastation of Unresolved Anger

### Part 4: General Steps to Resolve Anger II

*“And it is perfectly evident what the old nature does. It expresses itself in sexual immorality, impurity and indecency; involvement with the occult and with drugs; in feuding, fighting, becoming jealous and **getting angry**; in selfish ambition, factionalism, intrigue and envy; in drunkenness, **orgies** and things like these. I warn you now as I have warned you before: those who do such things will have no share in the Kingdom of G-d!” (Gal. 5:19-21)*

### Review

The Bible is replete with examples that illustrate that the key to anger is tension, and tension is cumulative. Five examples come to mind: *Ya’akov, Sha’ul, Kayin, Bil’am, and David.*

Jacob’s Anger Toward His Wife Rachel

Saul’s Anger Against David and His Son Jonathan

Cain’s Anger Against His Brother Abel

Balaam’s Anger Against His Donkey

David’s Anger Against the Thief

Types of Guilt and Tension in These Accounts

1. Jacob: Guilt from deception and unjust gain earlier in his life
2. King Saul: Tension from bitterness against his wife transferred to others
3. Cain: Tension from a conflict over the standards of G-d that he rejected
4. Balaam: Tension from willfulness in demanding his own way
5. King David: Tension from the guilt of having committed the same type of sin

### General Steps to Resolve Anger

When anger turns to wrath and bitterness, we are dealing with a problem that is bigger than we are. We can purpose with our minds and wills that we will not get angry, and we can feel remorseful after an outburst of anger; however, these inward struggles only prove that we must appeal to the power of G-d for the control that is needed to resolve anger. Here are the steps to do that.

**1. Accept Personal Responsibility for Your Anger**

**2. See Your Anger Through Those It Damaged**

**3. Recognize Anger as an “Alarm” From Past Guilt**

**4. Act Quickly in Correcting Past Offenses**

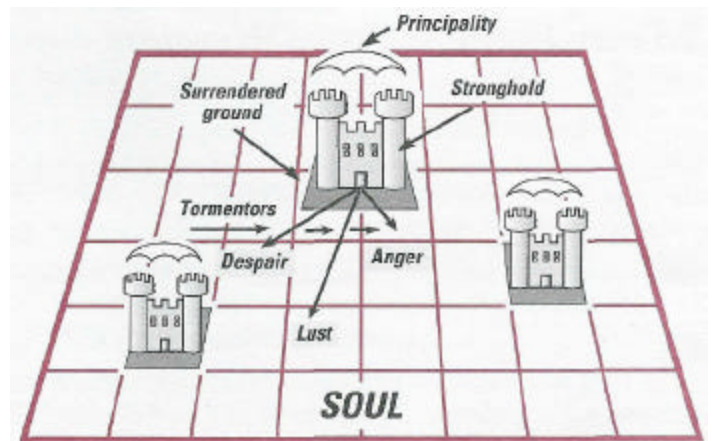
**5. Acknowledge the Anger of Your Forefathers**

**6. Regain Surrendered Ground**

When anger is allowed to turn into wrath, it becomes a spiritual problem. Willpower is no longer sufficient; we must engage in spiritual warfare to overcome. The same book that warns us not to go to bed angry (*“Be angry, but don't sin - don't let the sun go down before you have dealt with the cause of your anger; otherwise you leave room for the*

*Adversary*” Ephesians 4:26-27) also explains, “*For we are not struggling against human beings, but against the rulers, authorities and cosmic powers governing this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm.*” (Ephesians 6:12).

Every time we allow the sun to go down upon our wrath (“*before you have dealt with the cause of your anger*”), we give more “ground to Satan.” The Greek word translated “ground” actually means “jurisdiction,” that is, a legal right to squat. The Adversary then has the legal right to build strongholds of false ideas on that ground and use it as a base of operation to torment our souls in other areas with destructive emotions such as unfounded fears, tension, depression, unexplained anger, lust, self-rejection, pride, habits, insomnia, etc.



#### 1. Confess the sins that caused the anger.

For this step, we must stop thinking about the reasons we got angry and stop blaming the one who caused the anger; then we must trace the anger back to the initial sins that produced the tension and guilt. It is these sins that we must confess; then we will be able to put away all anger, wrath, and malice and show kindness to one another with forgiveness. It is good to be specific because G-d promises, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

#### 2. Claim the power of the blood of *Yeshua*.

Because we are all guilty of breaking G-d’s commandments with anger, lust, and other sins, we are deserving of the eternal judgment of hell. However, G-d Who created us loved is so much that He sent His Son Messiah *Yeshua* to pay the price for our sin with His death. His sacrifice for us is effective only if we receive it. We can do that by telling G-d that we cannot save ourselves but that we are now receiving His Son as our full payment for our sin. (John 3:16.) G-d will hear this prayer and give you eternal life. Then as a child of G-d, you can claim the blood of *Yeshua* for the specific sins that gave ground to Satan. The Bible states: “They [believers] overcame him [the Adversary] by the blood of the Lamb [*Yeshua*] and by the word of their testimony . . .” (Revelation 12:11).

#### 3. Ask G-d to take back the ground that was surrendered.

Once you are a believer and you claim the blood of *Yeshua* for the specific sins that gave ground to Satan, Satan has no more legal authority over that ground, but he will continue to operate on it until you ask G-d to take back the ground and give you the wisdom to tear down the false ideas that Satan constructed on it. With such a prayer, you effectively resist Satan and G-d promises, “. . .Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). It is important to remember that we cannot take back the ground, but G-d can. Psalm 23:3 gives the assurance that, “He [*Adonai Roi*] restoreth my soul. . .” These steps should be repeated with each area of ground that we surrendered to Satan.

#### 4. Tear Down the “Strongholds of Satan” and Replace Them with “Obedience of Messiah”

Scripture assures us that we can tear down the strongholds of Satan and replace them with obedience to Messiah: “*For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through G-d to the pulling down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of Gd, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Messiah.*” (2 Cor 10:4-5)

## 7. Fully Forgive Your Offenders

Now that G-d has forgiven you of your enormous debt against Him, it should be an easy matter for you to forgive the comparatively minor offenses of others against you. To help us do this, *Yeshua* gave a parable about a king who, checking up on his servants, found that one of them owed him a huge debt.

The king demanded payment, and when the servant could not pay, the king commanded that he and his wife and children be sold as slaves in lieu of the payment. The servant fell to his knees and worshiped the king and said, "*L-rd have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.*" The king had compassion on him and forgave him the entire debt. That same servant went out and found a fellow servant who owed him a small amount of money. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded immediate payment. His fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, "*Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.*" The servant rejected his plea and had him thrown into prison.

When the king learned what this servant had done, he called him in and reproved him for not doing to his fellow servant what the king had done for him. Then he reinstated the huge debt and sent him off to prison with instructions that the tormentors (torturers, Greek, that is demons) were to afflict him until he paid every last penny. *Yeshua* concluded the parable by saying, "*So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses*" (Matthew 18:35; see also vv. 21-35).

## 8. Learn How to See Benefits From Anger-Causing Events

Many times anger and bitterness come because of tragedies that happen to us or other people. We secretly or openly wonder, "*Why does G-d let innocent people suffer?*" Meanwhile, G-d sees these events from a completely different perspective ("*As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*" Isaiah 55:9) He knows that our true happiness is not based on the value or quantity of our possessions or on our personal abilities or appearance, but on the number of positive character qualities we exhibit in our lives. Character qualities such as gratefulness, kindness, and diligence bring true happiness. (See the (Be)Attitudes in Matthew 5)

It is proper and wise, therefore, to ask the question after a tragedy, "*Why did G-d let it happen?*" In order to find an answer, we should ask the following questions.

### 1. What character qualities can this tragedy develop in my life?

Tragedies have a way of helping us see the importance of people and relationship rather than temporary possessions and money. They teach us patience, kindness, understanding, endurance, contentment, and how to be grateful for what we have. Most of all they teach us to be more humble, and this quality is essential for success and happiness.

### 2. Are there failures in my life that have caused this tragedy?

Self-examination is vital if we are to have any measure of true happiness or success. When we fail to see the faults in our lives, other people will react to them in ways that will usually make us angry. If we find them ourselves and correct them, we remove this unnecessary cause of anger.

### 3. How can I help others with the lessons of this tragedy?

Once we go through a tragedy, we have a new sensitivity to others who are going through similar problems. There is a joy in being able to help them in the same way that we were helped in our tragedy. When they see the gentleness and understanding that earned through hardship, they will listen to what we have to say.

## 9. Exchange Your Personal Rights for G-d's Control

With the root causes of anger removed and that ground regained, we can now deal with the immediate causes of anger. These are usually related to personal rights. Our life is actually made up of many personal rights. We have the right to our possessions, to express our own opinions, to dress the way we choose, to use our free time in the way we want, and many other rights.

If anyone denies or violates any of our rights, we tend to react to them in anger. The character quality of meekness is directly related to rights. Meekness is the opposite of anger because a meek person is one who yields his rights to G-d. Meekness is actually defined as *"our strength under G-d's control."* It is best illustrated by a horse that has learned how to submit to the slightest direction of its master. Notice the special promises and importance that G-d gives to learning meekness:

- G-d anoints messengers to proclaim the Gospel to the meek. (See Isaiah 61:1)
- Meekness and lowliness of heart are qualities that *Yeshua* uses to describe himself. (Matthew 11:29)
- By practicing meekness, we find true rest for our souls. (See Matthew 11:29)
- G-d will guide the meek with clear direction. (See Psalm 25:9)
- Meekness increases the outward attractiveness of a person. (See 1 Peter 3:4)
- The meek will increase their joy in the L-rd. (See Isaiah 29:19)

No one had more claim to personal rights than the Son of G-d. Yet He set these all aside in order to come into the world, live a life of complete obedience to His Heavenly Father, and then die a cruel death on the cross. He pleads with us to have the same mental attitude by entrusting all of our rights to Him and then purposing to thank Him for whatever happens. Then, when somebody damages our property or our reputation or violates any other right, we can remind ourselves that we gave those things to G-d along with the rights to them. Therefore, He is in control, and He must have some very important things to teach us by allowing this person to damage what belongs to Him. At this point it would be important to ask, *"Why did G-d allow this offense to happen?"* and then answer the three questions above.

## 10. Establish a Structure of Accountability

Someone has wisely observed, *"We do not get what we expect, we get only what we inspect."* If we are left alone to accomplish a goal, we will often give up in the struggle. However, if someone is there to encourage, direct, exhort and, where necessary, reprove, we can expect far greater results.

If we are serious about conquering anger, we will become accountable to those around us for daily victory, and we will ask an older, wiser friend to help us achieve this important goal. One wise father asked his wife and children to let him know any time they detected symptoms of anger. Another father who could not seem to conquer anger suddenly found the ability to do it when he agreed to pay each family member \$20 each time he got angry. He quickly learned that he could not afford to get angry!

Whether or not we have someone holding us accountable for anger resolution now, we in be certain of one thing: G-d is keeping careful records of each time we get angry, and in the coming judgment, we must answer to Him for all our actions. *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Messiah; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."* (2 Corinthians 5:10) *"Moreover, I tell you this: on the Day of Judgment people will have to give account for every careless (idle) word they have spoken."* (Matthew 12:36)