

## Get Rid of All Anger

*<sup>31</sup>Get rid of all bitterness and rage and anger and quarreling and slander, along with all malice" (Eph. 4:31).*

In this week's *Torah* Reading (*Parashat Beha'alotcha*) Miriam and Aaron "spoke against Moses" (*Nu. 12:1*) and *Adonai* responded to them in person: "<sup>8</sup>I speak with him face to face, plainly and not in riddles. He even looks at the form of Adonai! Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?" (*Nu. 12:8*) As a result Miriam is stricken with "tza'arat, like snow" (*Vv. 10*, a skin disease or in the KJV, *leprosy*). Here we see that the consequence of speaking against God's Leader is leprosy. How much of their complaint may have been driven by verbalized anger and jealousy? Later in Numbers Balaam expresses extreme anger against his donkey. Did you know that there are at least twelve references to anger/angry in the Book of Wisdom (the Proverbs), thirty-one in the Psalms and eleven in the New(er) Testament? In Ephesians we hear: "Be angry, but do not sin – do not let the sun go down before you have dealt with the cause of your anger" (*Eph. 4:26, CJB*). A casual interpretation might erroneously lead one to think that there is a measure of anger that is acceptable as long as we resolve it "before the sun goes down." The truth is that we are commanded to: "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you..." (*Eph. 4:31, KJV*) Scripture tells us in no uncertain terms to "Get rid of all anger."

Not only does anger bring about leprosy but it is also a major destroyer of relationships. Anger is one of the common denominators among juvenile delinquents and broken marriages. It is a chief contributor to health problems and a major factor in loss of productivity, accidents, and turnover in the workplace. When a husband expresses anger, he damages the spirit of their marriage: "<sup>19</sup>Husbands, love your wives and do not become harsh toward them [*be not bitter, KJV*]" (*Col. 3:19*). When a father is angry, he destroys the children's trust in him: "<sup>21</sup>Fathers, do not provoke your children, so they will not become discouraged" (*Col. 3:21*). When an employer expresses anger, he decreases the employee's desire to achieve, and productivity **WILL** go down. Anger is a calamity we seldom talk about in mixed company or from the pulpit. Anger is not limited to one age group, culture, race, economic level, social status, educational background, or any other classification. It is a universal problem. When ten thousand men across the US were asked if they had a problem with anger, 95% admitted they did. This is not just a problem in our day, it has been here since Genesis. It was the *first evidence* of the Fall of Man, which resulted in the *first murder*. Therefore, unresolved anger is a giant (a *Goliath*) that *Every Person Must Conquer*. Anger is a *Deep-Rooted Problem*; therefore, it is no small task to help a person resolve anger: "A violent-tempered person will be punished; if you try to save him from it, you make things worse" (*Proverbs 19:19, CJB*). The only hope of resolving anger is to get at the root of its cause and deal with anger and wrath in a wise and effective way.

Anger is directly related to sexual immorality/pornography, lust, greed, and jealousy: "<sup>21</sup>For from within, out of the heart of men, come evil intentions, sexual immorality, theft, murder, <sup>22</sup>adultery, greed, wickedness, deceit, lustfulness, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. <sup>23</sup>All these evil things come from within and make the man unholy" (*Mk. 7:21-23*). "<sup>5</sup>Therefore, put to death what is earthly in you—sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desire, and greed—for that is idolatry. <sup>6</sup>Because of such things God's wrath is coming upon the sons of disobedience" (*Col. 3:4-6*). "<sup>3</sup>For the time that has passed was sufficient for you to carry out the desire of the pagans—living in indecency, lusts, drunken binges, orgies, wild parties, and lawless idolatries" (*1 Pet. 4:3*). **Thus, there is a significant relationship between anger and lust** because both are expressions of unrestrained emotions and focus on present fulfillment with little or no thought of future consequences. The primary Greek word for *anger* is *orge*, which is the root of the English word *orgy*. It is defined as *an excitement of the mind* or *violent passion*. These are the very same emotions in lust and porn. When a man sows immorality (or gets involved in pornography), he also exposes his family to *similar temptations*. When he tries to discipline children for their actions, he often overcorrects with a destructive spirit of anger. There is also an obvious relationship between anger and violence. If anger develops into hatred, one is guilty of becoming a murderer in his heart: "<sup>15</sup>Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in Him" (*1 John 3:15*). What is in a person's heart is always expressed in his actions: "<sup>35</sup>The good man from his good treasury brings forth good, and the evil man from his evil treasury brings forth evil" (*Matt. 12:35*). "<sup>21</sup>You have heard

*it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever commits murder shall be subject to judgment.'* <sup>22</sup>*But I tell you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be subject to judgment (tza'arat). And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca' shall be subject to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be subject to fiery Gehenna" (Matt. 5:21-24).*

Anger carries a very high price tag: it damages both the health of the person who is angry and those to whom it is directed. It damages vital relationships, results in financial loss, and *results* in unwise judgment and destructive behavior. Anger causes: ***Heart Disease, Atherosclerosis, Hypertension, Kidney Damage & High Cholesterol.***

### **Things to Think About**

- *Adonai* only permits Balaam's Blessing Upon the Children of Israel in Numbers 24 (the *Ma Tov* prayer).
- How Important is a blessing? {<sup>14</sup>*Bless those who persecute you—bless and do not curse" (Ro. 12:14)*}
- Should both blessings and curses proceed out of our mouth? {<sup>10</sup>*From the same mouth comes blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, these things should not be" (James 3:10)*}
- Whom should we bless? {<sup>8</sup>*Finally, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, tenderhearted, humble-minded. <sup>9</sup>Do not repay evil for evil or insult for insult, but give a blessing instead—it is for this reason you were called, so that you might inherit a blessing" (1 Peter 3:8-9)*}

♪ *Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you – poo-poo, poo-poo-pee-doo, Ephesians 4:32* ♪. ***Shabbat Shalom!***