

When Anger Happens

Scriptures to guide our thoughts in healthy ways and help us vent anger toward God while trusting his compassion.

Choosing God's Way (or not):

Gen. 4:6-10: ⁶ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? ⁷ *If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?* But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it." ⁸ Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. ⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?" ¹⁰ The LORD said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground." *God reaches out to help us learn how best to act when things don't seem fair.*

Psalm 35:1-9 "Contend, LORD, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me. ² Take up shield and armor; arise and come to my aid. ³ Brandish spear and javelin against those who pursue me. Say to me, "I am your salvation." ⁴ May those who seek my life be disgraced and put to shame; may those who plot my ruin be turned back in dismay. ⁵ May they be like chaff before the wind, with the angel of the LORD driving them away; ⁶ may their path be dark and slippery, with the angel of the LORD pursuing them. ⁷ Since they hid their net for me without cause and without cause dug a pit for me, ⁸ may ruin overtake them by surprise-- may the net they hid entangle them, may they fall into the pit, to their ruin. ⁹ Then my soul will rejoice in the LORD and delight in his salvation."

Psalm 37:10-17 "A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found. ¹¹ But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity. ¹² The wicked plot against the righteous and gnash their teeth at them; ¹³ but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he knows their day is coming. ¹⁴ The wicked draw the sword and bend the bow to bring down the poor and needy, to slay those whose ways are upright. ¹⁵ But their swords will pierce their own hearts, and their bows will be broken. ¹⁶ Better the little that the righteous have than the wealth of many wicked; ¹⁷ for the power of the wicked will be broken, but the LORD upholds the righteous."

Psalm 69:27-30 "Charge them [*enemies*] with crime upon crime; do not let them share in your salvation. 28 May they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous. 29 But as for me, afflicted and in pain-- may your salvation, God, protect me. 30 I will praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving."

Romans 12:19-21 "Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. 20 On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

One-Line Wisdom (Truth to reinforce or remind ourselves):

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

Proverbs 15:1 "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

Proverbs 22:24-25 " 24 Do not make friends with a hot-tempered person, do not associate with one easily angered, 25 or you may learn their ways and get yourself ensnared."

Proverbs 29:20 " 20 Do you see someone who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for them. "

Proverbs 29:22 "An angry person stirs up conflict, and a hot-tempered person commits many sins."

Proverbs 29:25 "Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe."

Proverbs 29:26 "Many seek an audience with a ruler, but it is from the LORD that one gets justice."

Romans 12:14 "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse."

Ephesians 4:26-7 "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold."

Romans 12:17 "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.

Romans 12:18 "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

Prayers to Be Who God Asks Us To Be (fake it-make it):

Psalm 5:8 "Lead me, LORD, in your righteousness because of my enemies-- make your way straight before me."

Psalm 138: 7-8 "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life. You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes; with your right hand you save me. 8 The LORD will vindicate me; your love, LORD, endures forever-- do not abandon the works of your hands."

Psalm 86:14-17 "Arrogant foes are attacking me, O God; ruthless people are trying to kill me-- they have no regard for you. 15 But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness. 16 Turn to me and have mercy on me; show your strength in behalf of your servant; save me, because I serve you just as my mother did. 17 Give me a sign of your goodness, that my enemies may see it and be put to shame, for you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me."

Giving It (ALL) to God (honesty God can handle about things we can't):
Lamentations 3:61-66 "LORD, you have heard their insults, all their plots against me-- 62 what my enemies whisper and mutter against me all day long. 63 Look at them! Sitting or standing, they mock me in their songs. 64 Pay them back what they deserve, LORD, for what their hands have done. 65 Put a veil over their hearts, and may your curse be on them! 66 Pursue them in anger and destroy them from under the heavens of the LORD."

Matthew 5: 38-40 "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' 39 But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. (*An "eye-for-an-eye" is actually a limit, not a law. We are to "seek no more than" this if we are in positions of power over others.*)

Matthew 5:40-42 "And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. 41 If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you." (*Keep our eye on what matters to God, not this world.*)

Matthew 5: 43-45 "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."

Giving Voice to Anger (to God in prayer instead of others who may not)

Psalms 3:1-8 "LORD, how many are my foes! How many rise up against me! 2 Many are saying of me, "God will not deliver him." 3 But you, LORD, are a shield around me, my glory, the One who lifts my head high. 4 I call out to the LORD, and he answers me from his holy mountain. 5 I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the LORD sustains me. 6 I will not fear though tens of thousands assail me on every side. 7 Arise, LORD! Deliver me, my God! Strike all my enemies on the jaw; break the teeth of the wicked. 8 From the LORD comes deliverance. May your blessing be on your people."

Psalm 7:6 "Arise, LORD, in your anger; rise up against the rage of my enemies. Awake, my God; decree justice."

Psalm 9:15-20 "The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug; their feet are caught in the net they have hidden. 16 The LORD is known by his acts of justice; the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands. 17 The wicked go down to the realm of the dead, all the nations that forget God. 18 But God will never forget the needy; the hope of the afflicted will never perish. 19 Arise, LORD, do not let mortals triumph; let the nations be judged in your presence. 20 Strike them with terror, LORD; let the nations know they are only mortal."

Giving Voice to Pain (God is a great listener):

Psalm 6:2-9 "Have mercy on me, LORD, for I am faint; heal me, LORD, for my bones are in agony. 3 My soul is in deep anguish. How long, LORD, how long? 4 Turn, LORD, and deliver me; save me because of your unfailing love. 5 Among the dead no one proclaims your name. Who praises you from the grave? 6 I am worn out from my groaning. All night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears. 7 My eyes grow weak with sorrow; they fail because of all my foes. 8 Away from me, all you who do evil, for the LORD has heard my weeping. 9 The LORD has heard my cry for mercy; the LORD accepts my prayer."