

Dear friend:

Anger is a God given emotion. It serves an important purpose in the society that we live in. Anger is an effective psychological and sociological tool to fight the injustice and evil in the society. Anger within healthy boundaries is good for the well-being of the society. However, like all tools, it has to be used wisely and within controls. Uncontrolled anger can often lead to harmful and dangerous consequences. The Holy Scripture says the following about anger:

If you become angry, do not let your anger lead you into sin, and do not stay angry all day.

Do not use harmful words, but only helpful words, the kind that build up and provide what is needed, so that what you say will do good to those who hear you. *Ephesians 4:26, 29*

Uncontrolled Anger led to the First Murder

It is told in the Scripture that uncontrolled anger of Cain, the eldest son of Adam and Eve, the first man and woman created by God, led him to kill his younger brother Abel:

After some time, Cain brought some of his harvest and gave it as an offering to the Lord. Then Abel brought the first lamb born to one of his sheep, killed it, and gave the best parts of it as an offering. The Lord was pleased with Abel

and his offering, but he rejected Cain and his offering. Cain became furious, and he scowled in anger.

Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why that scowl on your face? If you had done the right thing, you would be smiling; but because you have done evil, sin is crouching at your door. It wants to rule you, but you must overcome it." Then Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out in the fields." When they were out in the fields, Cain turned on his brother and killed him." *Genesis 4:3-8*

Constantly check if your anger is within healthy limits. If not, you are in danger zone. Doctors caution that uncontrolled anger can lead to the following physical problems:

- Increased blood pressure
- Aggravated heart disease
- Ulcers in the stomach
- Increased stress resulting in insomnia and psychopathic problems

Besides ill-health, anger can also cause other problems in your life, like:

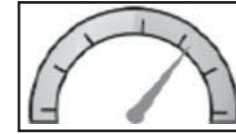
- Problems in relationship
- Loss of job, friends and finances
- Friction in your family life
- Physical assault and abuse



A Self Check-up

Here is a self check-up to find out if your anger is moving you to the danger zone.

- Are you in the habit of talking faster than your mind?
- Do you pant, yell, rant and feel choked when angry?
- Do you hurt others with sarcasm or plot revenge or use abusive words?
- Are you in the habit of throwing and damaging valuables or resort to self destruction?



If the answer to any of the above questions is 'yes', then you are at risk!

Causes

Now to bring your anger under control, you also need to know what triggers your anger.

Some of the main causes for your emotional outbursts are:

- Disagreement (most of us always want to have our way)
- You would have suffered pain, hurt or some loss or feel misunderstood, and this causes you to be angry.
- You are stressed and frustrated with life.
- Keeping your feelings bottled up inside for a long period of time.

- You perceive unfairness, injustice and are provoked.

Practical Tips to Overcome your Anger

- Take time out to ask yourself, "Is my anger justified"?
- Recognize that you are responsible for how you behave when you are angry
- Accept some situation as beyond your control and let it go
- Learn to love and forgive yourself and others.

Godly Wisdom

God has given us the following words of wisdom to help us control our anger.

- *Remember this, my dear friends! Everyone must be quick to listen, but slow to speak and slow to become angry.*
- *Human anger does not achieve God's righteous purpose.*
- *A gentle answer quietens anger, but a harsh one stirs it up.*
- *People with quick tempers cause a lot of quarrelling and trouble.*
- *Don't be envious of evil people, and don't try to make friends with them.*
- *Don't make friends with people who have hot, violent tempers.*

James 1:19-20; Proverbs 15:1; 29:22; 24:1; 22:24

The Holy Bible tells us how Joseph, a wise and upright man, forgave his brothers who did evil to him and sold him to slavery in Egypt when he was a young boy. God blessed this upright youth to become the prime minister of Egypt next only to the mighty 'Pharaoh' of Egypt.

While Joseph was the prime minister, there was a great famine in all the land. His brothers were at the mercy of Joseph. Now, Joseph, instead of being angry with his brothers for doing evil to him, chose to forgive them and won their hearts:

Then Joseph said to them, "Please come closer." They did, and he said, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.

Now do not be upset or blame yourselves because you sold me here. It was really God who sent me ahead of you to save people's lives. This is only the second year of famine in the land; there will be five more years in which there will be neither ploughing nor reaping.

God sent me ahead of you to rescue you in this amazing way and to make sure that you and your descendants survive. So it was not really you who sent me here, but God. He has made me the king's highest official. I am in charge of his whole country; I am the ruler of all Egypt.

Genesis 45:4-8

Arvind's Experience

Here is a true life story of how Arvind overcame his anger:

"My father was a chronic alcoholic and would always beat my mother and me. Once he almost killed my mother when I was 13 years of age. I hated my father for this. This hatred made me an angry person. And soon, it affected my relationship with friends and people around me. But, deep within me, I desired to be free from my hurting past, negative thoughts, and uncontrollable anger. One day, a friend of mine invited me to a prayer meeting. I liked the way they prayed for one another, and also for my anger. In these meetings, I came to know more about the Lord Jesus Christ and His teachings which tell me to love and forgive others. I realised that Jesus loved me enough to die for my sins and I invited Him to be my Saviour. Through the grace of Jesus, I forgave my father and was soon healed from my anger. Today, I thank Jesus for His healing power and the freedom I experience."

The best way to control one's anger is to ask God's help and trust Him completely. The Scripture gives us this following promise:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Never rely on what you think you know. Remember

the Lord in everything you do, and he will show you the right way.

Proverbs 3:5-6

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