

Doctrine of Anger

1. Definition: Anger is a mental attitude precluding rational thought. It therefore makes difficult the application of doctrine.

1.1 Anger can be a fleeting emotion.

1.2 Anger happens to both believers and unbelievers.

1.3 All people get angry.

1.4 Anger often hangs around and when it does it becomes a sin.

1.5 Consequently, the believer must maintain an awareness of the need to rebound this sin as with all sins.

1.6 We must not think we have to wait until we stop seething.

2. Etymology: Anger is defined by Webster as “a strong feeling of displeasure, hostility ... indignation, or ire.”

2.1 The Greek THUMOS (θυμος) describes a strong passion resulting in wrath or anger.

Mat 2:16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

Luk 4:28 And all they in the synagogue at Nazareth, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

Acts 19:28 And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

2Co 12:20 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

2Co 12:21 And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

Gal 5:20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

2.2 The Greek ORGE is the mental impulse of indignation and wrath.

Mar 3:4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

Mar 3:5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

Luk 21:23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

2.2.1 ORGE can also mean judicial punishment or discipline, as found in Paul's admonishment to submit to the authorities of the land.

Rom 13:4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute **wrath** upon him that doeth evil.

Rom 13:5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

Rom 13:6 For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

2.2.2 ORGE is an emotion common to the human race. The admonition of Eph 4:26 is to not let anger become a sin. In Eph 4:26 the word for wrath is PARAGISMOS, meaning a *wrath* yielding "frustration and exasperation." We will see more of PARAGISMOS later in this doctrine.

Eph 4:26 Be ye **angry**, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your *wrath*:

2.2.3 In Eph 4:31 and Col 3:8 we see how similar ORGE and THUMOS are in meaning and application.

Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath (THUMOS), and anger (ORGE) and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

Col 3:8 But now ye also put off all these; anger (ORGE), wrath (THUMOS), malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

2.3 With reference to the difference between THUMOS and ORGE: ORGE signifies the spirit panting, as it were, in the body with rage, passion and heat.

2.3.1 On the other hand, THUMOS can signify indignation which has arisen gradually and has become settled. ORGE also means the "natural juices" that flow and seethe, as in the immediate emotional response to a precipitate situation.

2.3.2 In summary, these two words represent the emotion of anger or indignation which must be *nipped in the bud* at the mental attitude level. This is only done by rebound.

2.3.3 As we have seen in Rom 13:4, ORGE over time came also to mean judicial punishment, which is not a sin.

2.3.4 Notice how ORGE is used to describe what a pastor-teacher should not be, i.e., “not soon angry.”

Tit 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry (ORGE), not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

2.4 ANAPH in the Hebrew means to breathe through the nose, like the snorting of a bull; it also means anger as a strong feeling of indignation. It is an onomatopoeic word like *buzz*. In the case of ANAPH, the bull or cow when angry and preparing to charge often makes a sound like ANAPH. Notice how ANAPH is used first with reference to Judah in Egypt when speaking to Joseph, and Jacob’s description of Simeon and Levi in their dealing with the men of Shechem.

Gen 44:18 Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh.

Gen 44:19 My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?

Gen 44:20 And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him.

Gen 44:21 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.

Gen 49:5 Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations ...

Gen 49:7 Cursed be their **anger**, for it was fierce; and their **wrath**, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

2.4.1 Simeon and Levi, Jacob’s second and third sons by Leah, were brothers in violence. Jacob could never forget their cruel massacre of the Shechemites.

2.4.2 They revealed their true characters that day, for they violently attacked and destroyed men they had previously made helpless by strategy and deceit. At that time they were censured by their father.

2.5 PAROGISMOS in the Greek means wrath and indignation, characterized by frustration and exasperation, i.e. that emotion of anger which seethes alongside.

2.5.1 It is used in Eph 4:26 to explain what we are to avoid.

Eph 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your **wrath**:

3. It is not a sin to experience the emotion of anger, unless we permit the emotion to continue and thereby prevent proper thinking and/or action.

3.1 God being “slow to anger” is an anthropopathism.

Neh 9:17 And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to **anger** (APH), and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.

3.2 In general, usage in the English Bible distinguishes anger from wrath, the latter being the more explosive, as an active manifestation of displeasure.

4. Anger results in self-induced misery and failure; it also hurts others.

4.1 Both “overt and sneaky” anger need to be named as sin if we are to maintain fellowship. By sneaky, or repressed anger, I mean that anger resident in your soul but never expressed, or that described by the axiom “Many an unkind word is said in jest.”

Pro 21:19 It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.

Pro 22:24 Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:

Pro 25:24 It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a quarrelsome wife and in a wide house.

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

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

5. Anger and wrath are related and replete with cruelty.

Pro 27:4 Wrath is cruel and anger is overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?

5.1 Wrath in Pro 27:4 is CHEMAH, meaning furious heat-- unbridled anger. Anger is APH, from ANAPH, meaning a strong feeling of anger and indignation. CHEMAH would seem to describe that held within, whereas APH would seem to describe expressed anger--the bull is about to charge.

6. Uncontrolled anger can certainly frustrate the ministry of a believer.

1Ti 2:8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

7. Anger leads to revenge when it goes underground. The story of Absalom avenging Tamar by murdering Amnon is an example.

2Sa 13:22 And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad: for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar.

2Sa 13:23 And it came to pass after two full years, that Absalom had sheepshearers in Baalhazor, which is beside Ephraim: and Absalom invited all the king's sons.

2Sa 13:24 And Absalom came to the king, and said, Behold now, thy servant hath sheepshearers; let the king, I beseech thee, and his servants go with thy servant.

2Sa 13:25 And the king said to Absalom, Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he pressed him: howbeit he would not go, but blessed him.

2Sa 13:26 Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us. And the king said unto him, Why should he go with thee?

2Sa 13:27 But Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.

2Sa 13:28 Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant.

2Sa 13:29 And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded ...

8. Anger is ever present in churches full of people negative to the Word of God.

2Co 12:20 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, **wraths**, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

8.1 In 2Co 12:20 THUMOS is the word translated “wraths.”

9. Anger characterizes the life of a reversionist.

Gal 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Gal 5:20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

9.1 In Gal 5:20 the word translated “wrath” is THUMOS.

10. We are therefore to put off anger and wrath as part of the maturing process.

Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

Eph 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

11. Fury is used in Scripture to express the burning anger and rage of man. It is also used of God in the sense of an anthropopathism. Examples:

11.1 The fury of man

Gen 27:43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran;

Gen 27:44 And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;

Est 1:10 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

Est 1:11 To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on.

Est 1:12 But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.

11.2 The fury of God

1Sa 4:3 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

1Sa 4:4 Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.

Psa 145:8 The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.

