

(D)anger!

Reading: Genesis 4:1-16

"Your anger can never make things right in God's sight" (Js 1:20)

If we review how we have lived all through this year, we will find out that it was "anger," more than any other sin, which has hurt us and others most. The word a-n-g-e-r is just one letter short of the word D-A-N-G-E-R!

We may say that after all everyone gets angry. According to a Tamil proverb, "Where there's anger there will be character!" This is not always true. Anger is one of the manifestations of the unregenerate man which prevents our inheritance of God's Kingdom (Gal 5:19-21). Anger stands against everything God desires (Js 1:20). It grieves His Spirit (Eph 4:30-31). It's cursed because it's the root cause of murder (Gen 49:6,7).

Pride, prestige and jealousy are some of the causes of anger. Naaman got angry when Prophet Elisha asked him to bathe in Jordon. It was because of pride (2 Ki 5:11,12). Jonah got angry because of prestige (Jon 4:1-4). When God blesses our brothers and sisters we get angry due to jealousy. Cain's anger with Abel, Saul's with David, and that of the ten disciples with the other two are classic examples (Gen 4:5,6; 1 Sam 18:8,9; Mt 20:20-24). The elder son was angry because he could not appreciate the forgiving love of God the Father (Lk 15:27,28). God views anger seriously. Moses was denied entry into Canaan because of anger (Num 20:10-12). King Uzziah was struck with leprosy because of his fury over the priests (2 Chr 26:17-20).

We sometimes justify our anger quoting the fight between Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-39). Was David right, then, that he sinned? These are all written as warning and for our learning. If we must forgive others as God has forgiven us, we should overcome anger (Eph 4:31-32). King Solomon wrote, "People with good sense restrain their anger; they earn esteem by overlooking wrongs" (Prov 19:11).

Even if we get angry, we should not keep it for long. It is in the heart of fools that anger "rests!" (Eccl 7:9; Prov 14:17). Anger should subside before sunset. The maximum permissible time is morning six to evening six only—not even 24 hours! If it stays beyond, it's sin (Eph 4:26). Even God's anger is but for a moment! (Psa 30:5; Isa 57:16). What we try to do "with" anger can be better done "without" anger. Anger is useless.

Let's reconcile with all those we have hurt because of our anger, before this year ends! (Mt 5:21-24).