

REDLINED • Week 2: Anger

Daily Briefing • Day 5 of 5 • How God Handled His Anger Toward You

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

James 1:19–20

This is the last briefing of the week, and it is the one everything else has been leaning on. You can watch or listen to Sunday's sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, before I ask You for anything today, show me how You have handled me with grace, mercy, and patience. Show me what I have actually done and what You have actually done about what I have done. I have spent this week looking at my anger. Let me finish it looking at Yours, and at what You did with it. Then give me the grace to hand the same treatment to the person I have been refusing it to. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

Sunday ended with the fifth response to anger, and it is the one the other four run on. Look hard at what God has done with your sin, then let that set the terms for what you do with the person who wronged you. That is the whole move. Here is why it matters on an ordinary Tuesday. You can expect friction, relate to people as a fellow failure, hand judgment back to God, and call your sinful anger sin, and you can still end up cold and careful, having just gotten better at managing yourself. Technique will take you that far and no further. What actually changes you is looking straight at how God has treated you and then finding it nearly impossible to treat a coworker, neighbor, or family member any other way.

Today's Old Testament passage has a backstory. Moses is the man God used to bring His chosen people, Israel, out of slavery in Egypt. He goes up a mountain to receive God's law, and while he is up there the people he just rescued melt down their jewelry, build a golden calf, and throw a party for it. It is a remarkably fast and insulting betrayal. Moses comes down, the whole nation nearly ends right there, and then Moses asks God to show him His glory. What happens next is not what anybody expects. Instead of showing Moses something, God tells Moses who He is, out loud, in His own words.

Two things are worth knowing before you read it. First, this is not a prophet's opinion about God, and it is not a worship song written by an admirer. This is God describing Himself, and it is one of the fullest descriptions God gives of His own character anywhere in Scripture. Second, Israel never got over it. Those two verses get quoted back across the rest of the Bible, in the Psalms, in the prophets, and by people arguing with God in prayer. When a biblical writer wants to say what God is like, this is one of the passages he reaches for.

READ & MEDITATE

Exodus 34:6–7a

The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty."

Read it twice. The second time, go slowly enough to catch every separate thing God says about Himself, including the parts that are hard to hear.

REFLECT

Reminder: honest introspection and Scripture-informed self-assessment are far more beneficial than self-delusion and wishful thinking.

Start with what the text actually says before you go anywhere near what it means for you.

What does this passage say about God? List every word and phrase He uses to describe Himself.

If you wrote down merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, and forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, you have the first half of it. The second half is where most people stop reading, so it may be worth reading again.

Verse 7 turns in the middle of a sentence.

Write down what the second half of verse 7 says God will not do. Then write down how you think that fits with the first half of the same sentence.

If you could not make those two halves fit, that is the right answer for now. God says in the same breath that (1) He forgives sin and that (2) He will by no means clear the guilty. Both are true, and there is exactly one place in history where they meet. At the Cross the guilt was not waived; it was paid. Paul says God did this out in the open “to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Romans 3:26). Here is why that matters today. Most of us keep a careful list of what other people have done to us and a much shorter list of what we have done to God. If you have never dealt honestly with the second list, you have no reason to let anybody off the first one, and nothing to do it with. If you dealt with it years ago and you are still raging, you have quit looking at it.

Fill in the blank from Exodus 34:6:

The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, _____, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. (Exodus 34:6)

**These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.*

How long has God been slow to anger with you specifically? Put an actual number on it in years, then write what He has been slow about.

One more passage, and this one is uncomfortable. Jonah was an Israelite prophet God sent to warn a violent enemy city called Nineveh that judgment was coming. Jonah did not want to go. Instead, he ran the opposite direction, got brought back, delivered the warning, and the entire city repented. God spared them. Jonah chapter 4 records Jonah’s temper tantrum:

Jonah 4:1–2

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry. ² And he prayed to the LORD and said, “O LORD, is not this what I said when I was yet in my country? That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster.”

What exactly is Jonah angry about?

Jonah is furious that God is slow to anger. He is not upset that God punished somebody. He is upset that God withheld punishment. Hold your own week up against that, because a good deal of what we file under righteous indignation turns out to be an objection to God’s mercy landing on somebody we had already sentenced.

Paul gives the instruction with a reason attached, and the reason is the whole point of today.

Read Ephesians 4:32. “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” Who is the specific person you have been refusing to forgive? A name will do more for you here than a category.

WRITE YOUR “I WILL” STATEMENT

Make it specific: a real action, a real day, and the real person you just named. This is the obedience for the week, not a summary of it.

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. Thank God for being slow with you, then ask Him for the grace to be slow with the person you named.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite James 1:19–20 from memory: