

This is certainly not so. In fact, it teaches us the great moral attribute which is manifested by God every day. Are our actions not enough to provoke God's wrath? Associating and equating others (objects and being) with God is quite common. The Divine ire that this provokes can be experienced to some degree by a married person who experiences spousal infidelity.

In those countries where communism is not the dominant force, atheism is increasingly popular. It is being said that either God never existed or He is now dead. Can there be anything more disrespectful than this to provoke Divine wrath? Indeed are all the sins, evil actions and deeds of depravity that are committed in front of His eyes not enough to make Him angry? However, God suppresses His anger and forgives man every moment of the day as the Quran states: "And He pardons much" (42:30).

In fact, He continues to manifest His infinite benevolence towards mankind. His grace encompasses those who associate with Him, the atheists, the evil doers and the morally corrupt. There is a well known anecdote about Prophet Abraham (p). It is related that every evening he would seek out a wayfarer, feed him, and give him shelter for the night in his home. One day, he noticed that a person he had brought in failed to invoke the name of God while beginning to consume the meal offered to him. On being questioned by Abraham, his reply was that he did not believe in God. This answer made Abraham (p) angry & he asked the stranger to leave. Thereupon, Abraham received Divine revelation stating: "O Abraham this man has always denied My existence, has been disrespectful to Me, and has even tried to convince others to follow his footsteps, but I never stopped his sustenance."

On receiving this admonition, Abraham hurried to find the wayfarer, asked his forgiveness and brought him back to his house. This is a practical example of creating the moral attributes of God within oneself. This is also taking the colouring of God in accordance with the Quranic teaching, for no one suppresses His anger more than God, or is more Forgiving and Benevolent than Him.

The life of the Prophet (p) was an example of the manifestation of such high moral characteristics. There are innumerable incidents to illustrate his noble character. During the Battle of Uhud, the Prophet (p) fell to the ground after receiving numerous injuries from the volleys of stones, spears & swords directed at him. One companion asked him to pray to God for the chastisement of those responsible. Instead, the Prophet (p) supplicated with the following plea on their behalf: "O God forgive my people for they know not what they

are doing." This incident shows that not only did the Prophet (p) suppress his anger, he forgave his enemy, and in addition, bestowed a favour upon them by pleading for their forgiveness before God.

On the occasion of the fall of Makkah, he had the opportunity to seek vengeance for twenty years of atrocities he & his followers had been subjected to by the Makkan disbelievers. They had killed & maimed many of his companions. They had made every attempt within their power to take his own life. It was also the opportunity to punish the savage who had murdered the pregnant daughter of the Prophet with the thrust of a spear while she was riding a camel. How magnificent an example of suppression of anger, forgiveness & benevolence was set by the Prophet on this occasion when he said: "**No reproof be against you this day, may God forgive all of you.**" With these words he exonerated all of them.

This is the high moral standard set by God and His Prophet. By meeting this standard we can rid ourselves of all our mutual conflicts, anguish, displeasure and anger. We can thus achieve the paradise of heart which not only blesses this life with true serenity and contentment, but also shows the way to the Paradise of the Hereafter.

The medicine of a disease is to remove the root cause of that disease. Jesus (p) was asked: 'What thing is difficult?' He said: 'God's wrath.' John the Baptist then asked: 'What thing takes near the wrath of God?' He said: '**Anger**'. John: 'What thing grows & increases anger?' Jesus said: 'Pride, prestige, hope for honour & haughtiness'.

The causes which make anger grow are self-conceit, self-praise, jests and ridicule, argument, treachery, too much greed for too much wealth and name and fame. If these evils are united in a person, their conduct becomes bad and they cannot escape anger. So these things should be removed by their opposites. Self-praise is to be removed by modesty. Pride is to be removed by one's own origin and birth, greed is to be removed by remaining satisfied with necessary things, and miserliness by charity.

How are we to act on our anger, so as to produce that which is righteous rather than giving Satan an opportunity? The one who has offended us, or who has acted in a way that dishonors God is to be confronted with their sin. In the case of someone who accepts correction, our anger should be converted to forgiveness. In any case, our anger should not be allowed to linger on, turning to bitterness.

Anyone can become angry. That is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose & in the right way...that is not easy. - Aristotle. **Anger is only one letter short of danger.**

Anger isn't simply a weakness. It's a path leading to a lifetime of frustration, dissatisfaction & misery. May the warnings lead to a lifetime of happiness...The Straight Path!!!

**Begins with folly;
ends with repentance**

ANGER

Anger is a confluence of all the irregular passions; there are in it envy & sorrow, fear & scorn, pride & prejudice, rashness & inconsideration, rejoicing in evil & a desire to inflict it, self-love & impatience. Angry thoughts lead to foolish, insane acts. Anger wastes vitality, clouds the reason, and blinds its victim to all that is wisest & best to do in irritating circumstances. Life's joys & sweetest friendships are sacrificed by one who falls under the dominion of the demon of rage.

During anger the mental realm is in a chaotic state, poise is lost, and not infrequently a serious catastrophe befalls one so dominated. The strongest person when angry manifests their weakness of character. Anger frequently causes physical weakness.

Some lose sleep because angry thoughts surge through their brains, and they are unable to control & incapable of expelling them. A fit of anger—well-named a "fit"—is sometimes followed by a violent headache or a severe illness. Its penalties are countless. Yet with these & other hard experiences, how slowly the lesson of self-control is learned.

A man said to the Prophet (p), "Advise me." He said, "**Do not become angry.**" The man repeated his request several times, and each time the Prophet (p) told him, "**Do not become angry.**"

The man said: "I thought about what the Prophet (p) said, and I realized that **anger combines all kinds of evil.**"

“Those who restrain their anger & pardon people. God loves the doers of good to others.”

All human emotions & desires carry the element of **fire** within them, but in comparison with anger they are easier to restrain. Anger is, unquestionably, the most moralistic of emotions. That is, angry people almost always experience their anger as fully justified—that they’re clearly “in the right” about whatever has upset them, as though God Himself must surely be aligned with them.

The Prophet (p) has done us a great favour by informing us that **anger is part of the flames of hellfire**. Just thinking about these Prophetic words can help regulate it & keep it from escalating further. Additionally, assessing the particular intensity of our negative emotional arousal can assist us in determining how best to lower it. Unless, that is, we’re unable to resist the self-validating sense of righteousness, or the immediately empowering adrenaline rush, that typically accompanies this most fiery of emotions.

We have all observed that anger can burst like the flames of a fire and under its influence a person can totally lose control, turn abusive or violent and even commit murder. Even if it is not openly manifested, the desire to seek revenge burns inside. All forms of conflict, breakup of relationships (divorce), wars between nations are provoked by the feeling of anger.

Anger in the mother poisons a nursing child. Rarely, the celebrated horse-tamer, said that an angry word would sometimes raise the pulse of a horse ten beats in a minute. If this is true of a beast, what can we say of its power upon human beings, especially upon a child? Strong mental emotion often causes vomiting. Extreme anger or fright may produce jaundice. A violent paroxysm of rage has caused apoplexy and death. Indeed a single night of mental agony has wrecked a life. Grief, long-standing jealousy, constant & corroding anxiety sometimes tend to develop insanity. Sick thoughts and discordant moods are the natural atmosphere of disease, and crime is engendered and thrives in the miasma of the mind.

The Prophet (p) said: **“If a person gets angry and says, ‘I seek refuge with God,’ their anger will go away.”** Psychiatrists may advise against the suppression of anger, but such advice is absurd. All the adverse

situations arise as a consequence of such behaviour. Anger instead of calming down smolders on, resulting in internal and external difficulties, in the form of grief within and the hellfire of suffering without. Just as a real fire if not immediately doused, tends to spread and results in great loss, the fire of anger progresses to immense destruction, if not promptly controlled. This fact has been described in Al-Humazah (104) of the Quran, where this fire is described as first appearing in the hearts, and then spreading into the external environment and engulfing mankind like huge pillars of fire. If anger which arises inside, is not controlled immediately, it can erupt outside and result in anguish lasting decades.

“If any of you becomes angry and he is standing, let him sit down, so his anger will go away; if it does not go away, let him lie down” says the Prophet (p). If a person is dominated for a moment by, say a passion of anger, there is set up in the physical organism what we might justly term a bodily thunderstorm, which has the effect of souring, or rather of corroding, the normal, healthy, and life-giving secretions of the body, so that instead of performing their natural functions **they become poisonous & destructive**. And if this goes on to any great extent, by virtue of their cumulative influences, they give rise to a particular form of disease, which in turn becomes chronic. So the emotion opposite to this, that of kindness, love, benevolence, good-will, tends to stimulate a healthy, purifying, and life-giving flow of all the bodily secretions. All the channels of the body seem free and open; the life forces go bounding through them. And these very forces, set into a bounding activity, will in time counteract the poisonous and disease-giving effects of their opposites.

If your anger is already markedly aroused and your temper is beginning to approach the boiling point, none of the above is likely to work. Not, that is, until you can physically calm yourself down. For only when you’ve begun to cool off can your higher, neocortical functioning get back online. So here you might need to (1) take a time-out from the person whom you’ve become incensed with, (2) engage in some form of relaxation—such as deep breathing, guided meditation, visualization, meditation, self-hypnosis, yoga; or (3) try to exercise your tension away—and release the adrenaline build-up engendered by your anger—by doing as many push-ups, chin-ups, or sit-ups as you can; running, jogging, or bicycling; or putting all your overwrought energy into some strenuous aerobic regimen.

Of course, the main objective with all these methods is not to let your anger get the better of you. And regaining self-control necessitates your being as pro-active as possible. For unless you commit yourself to “working with” your anger, it will

eventually “take you over.” And—almost guaranteed—the results will not be pretty.

There are two kinds of anger. There is the “anger of man” which “does not achieve the righteousness of God” & anger which is an expression of God’s righteousness. Moses (p) got angry with his people for worshipping the golden calf. Jesus’ anger was expressed at the cleansing of the temple & also at the Pharisees for their hardness of heart.

Characteristics of Righteous Indignation: Anger is not always wrong. Anger that is righteous has certain earmarks, by which it can be distinguished from unholy wrath. (1) Godly anger is God-like anger, it is an expression of the anger which it has toward the actions of men. Godly people are angry when God is angry. It is anger which is consistent with the holy and righteous character of God.

(2) Godly anger is legal anger. It is wrath based upon men’s violation of God’s law, and it is anger which is lawfully expressed. Godly anger is not vigilante justice, it is legal justice. Those who hate abortion but express their anger in the burning of abortion clinics (and thereby endangering other lives) are not expressing their anger legally. (3) Godly anger is not explosive, but is only slowly provoked. **God’s anger does not have a hair trigger.**

How very true is the Prophet’s saying that the real manifestation of strength is not to wrestle someone down, but the truly strong are those who can suppress their anger. This is a match of strength between a man & his animal soul (nafs al-ammara).

Forgiveness & doing of good complement suppression of anger: On another occasion, the Prophet (p) stated that whosoever suppresses their anger and forgives, God fills their being with faith and security. We are enjoined not only to restrain our anger, but also to forgive the object of our ire.

How great is the wisdom in these words! If one only curbs their anger, they still seethe & burn on the inside. However, if this is also coupled with the act of forgiving, the fire inside one’s soul is extinguished and is replaced with a sensation of coolness. If one goes a step further, and does good to the one who provoked their resentment, then the feeling of peace & tranquillity that is thus generated in the heart becomes in reality the Garden of Paradise on earth.

Suppression of anger is a Divine Attribute: Is this teaching of the Quran beyond our capacity to act?

I ask You O God to make me speak the truth in times of contentment

Supplication of THE PROPHET (p)

& of anger

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