

CAPITOL STUDIES

FEBRUARY 17, 2021 • WEEK 6



SEVEN DEADLY SINS AND CIVIL SERVANTS

Contents

God's Anger Is Good	2
Towards Moses	2
Towards Solomon	3
Towards Nineveh	3
Jesus' Anger Is Good	3
In the Old Testament	4
In the Gospels	5
In Revelation	5
Looking Ahead	6
About Capitol Studies	8



Verse of the Week

1 Kings 11:9

Now the Lord was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice.

Being Good and Angry (Part I)



THE MYSTERY OF OUR TIME is the inability of decent people to get angry. At present, anger and daring have become the monopoly of a band of mindless juvenile terrorists. – Eric Hoffer, American author.¹

The time in which we live is filled with both joys and troubles. The best way to understand history is not that “things have never been worse,” nor is it that “things have never been better.” History is best seen as a roller coaster ride of the moral and technological progressions and regressions of human cultures. When things are good, morally and technologically, enjoy the thrill of the ride. But when things are bad, buckle your seat belt. Or as Peter advised the early church suffering political persecution within Rome’s rapidly rotting culture, “Prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit....”² Anger can empower us for godly action in bad situations.

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(This study is adapted from an earlier series by Rev. Gauthier, 1960–2020.)



INTRODUCTION

Earlier in our series, we established that all sin has its roots somewhere in God's good creation. Before sin, there was only good on earth. Evil sprang to life from the rich soils of Eden's paradise. Sin is simply a desire for "too much" of something in God's created order. Sin is a perversion of God's creation. This is also true of our third deadly sin—Anger (the **A** in our acronym GLAS PEG). Observant Bible students will see that anger is a very good thing in what can sometimes be a very bad world. In fact, anger has its roots in the person of God Himself. As Bible teacher Chip Ingram says, "We need to learn how to be good and angry!" Let us think more about anger being good and godly.

1. ANGER IS GOOD AS IT IS FOUND IN GOD

Anger finds its roots in the person of God Himself. In His Trinitarian fullness, throughout all time, whenever God is angry, it is always good. God's anger is good anger. It is impossible for God to sin. Robert Thurman (Columbia University) is correct in his astute remark in *The Seven Deadly Sins: Anger* that:

"IN THE JEWISH BIBLE, THE ANGRIEST PERSON AROUND SEEMS TO BE GOD HIMSELF."³

While I believe that Dr. Thurman is correct, I must clarify—God's anger is *always* a *good* thing. In a fallen world, God carries anger in His bosom in perfect balance with His other attributes (such as mercy, grace, patience, and love). He exercises His anger perfectly: at the right times, in the right measures, to the right persons, for the right purposes, and in the right ways. We should not bristle or be vexed by His anger. If we study it, we can learn to be good and angry. If I have riled you up with these initial claims, *calm down* and read your Bible to see this:

A. See God's Good Anger Towards a Cowering Spiritual Leader: Moses

God had clearly revealed His name, nature, and will to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3. Who is the great "I AM"? "HE IS" a relational God, a caring deliverer, now ready to act as Savior for the suffering. The time for deliverance had come. Moses was low on courage and high on excuses—leaning heavily on his challenges in public speaking. Bible scholars believe Moses stuttered. This mumbling Moses was miffed at God's new assignment of political activism in Egypt. He squirmed, trying to argue his way out of the call to Pharaoh's palace. God was infuriated.

Exodus 4:11, 12, & 14

The LORD said to [Moses], "Who has made man's mouth? ...Is it not I, the LORD? ¹²Now then go, and I, even I, will be with your mouth, and teach you what you are to say." ... ¹⁴Then the anger of the LORD burned against Moses, and He said, "Is there not your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he speaks fluently..."⁴



B. See God's Good Anger Toward a Syncretistic Political Leader: Solomon

Pastorally, here I must continue to warn you of the syncretistic “Chrislam” heresy sneaking into Nebraska politics. A willingness to collaborate with false world religions is a sign of weak faith, a decision to choose political alliances over the Lord Himself.⁵

1 Kings 11:6-9

Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not follow the LORD fully, as David his father had done. ⁷Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab... and Molech the detestable idol of Ammon. ⁸Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. ⁹Now the LORD was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice.

C. See God's Good Anger Towards an Unbelieving, Pagan, Political Leader: The King of Nineveh

All political leaders are accountable to the God who made them and who will soon judge them personally. This is true whether these leaders profess faith in Him or have access to the Scriptures. Jonah (after a whale of a ride due to God's chastising anger) finally had the courage to preach God's word and the “bad news” of destruction to Nineveh's Assyrian king. Jonah was responsible to preach but not responsible for the response of his listener. The king felt the furious wrath of God at the immense evil and barbaric cruelty of the Ninevites. The good news: the king and his officials led the entire city in repentance in the Bible's greatest story of revival (every single soul was saved). This pagan king, with no Scriptural witness, knew God's anger was good and fully justified, and he responded rightly to it.

Jonah 3:6-7 & 9-10

When the word reached the king of Nineveh, he arose from his throne, laid aside his robe from him, covered himself with sackcloth and sat on the ashes. ⁷He issued a proclamation [for fasting, repentance, and turning from all violence. The king reasoned,] ... ⁹“Who knows, God may turn and relent and withdraw His burning anger so that we will not perish.” ¹⁰When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it.

GOD USES HIS SPIRIT TO MAKE HIS WORD (EVEN OF JUDGMENT) EFFECTIVE WHEN COMMUNICATED BY WILLINGLY COURAGEOUS SERVANTS WHO LOVE SCRIPTURE AND THE LORD MORE THAN THEY FEAR PUBLIC RIDICULE.

D. See God's Good Anger in His Son: The Lord Jesus

Many people wrongly believe that God changed from a grumpier, harsher Old Testament God to a kinder, gentler New Testament God. But God has never changed. Both Testaments testify to the same triune





God in perfect harmony with Himself and manifest in His three divine Persons. The second Person of the Godhead is the Lord Jesus. He is “the same yesterday, today and forever.”⁶ Past, present, future—Jesus is unchangingly “God of very God.”⁷

(1) See Jesus’ Good Anger in the Old Testament as “The Angel of the Lord”

The pre-incarnate Christ appears throughout the Old Testament in what we call theophanies. Whenever He does so, He is identifiable as (not “an” but) “**the**” angel of the LORD. Let your eyes now see the glory of the angel of the Lord—seething as He raises His terrible swift sword. He channels the energy in His righteous anger to bring vengeance against Balaam, a no-good prophet for hire. Anger empowers Christ to stop this man dead in his tracks.

Numbers 22:22ff

But God was angry [at Balaam], and the angel of the LORD took his stand in the way as an adversary against him. Now [Balaam] was riding on his donkey and his two servants were with him. ²³When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand, the donkey turned off from the way...

²⁴The angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path.... ²⁶The angel of the LORD went further.... ³¹Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand...

³²The angel of the LORD said to him, “...Behold, I have come out as an adversary, because your way was contrary to Me.... ³³But... if [the donkey] had not turned aside from Me, I would surely have killed you just now.”

“GOOD ANGER IS AGGRESSIVE MENTAL MOVEMENT TO DESTROY A BAD OBSTRUCTION TO WHAT IS GOOD. GOOD HATE IS THE DISLIKE OF WHAT IS TRULY BAD AND UNPLEASANT—A PERFECTLY HEALTHY ATTITUDE.”⁸

Another theophany of Christ in the ever-profitable Old Testament shows us Jesus’ anger-empowered, divine swordsmanship stopping evil armies marching against God’s people in Jerusalem. Centuries later, in this same Jerusalem, an angry mob and compromising political leaders will wrongly deliver up the incarnate Christ to suffer capital punishment on a cruel cross. In 2 Kings 19, because of His divine purposes for redemptive history, we see **the angel of the LORD** zealously desiring to save the capital city of Jerusalem from ruin at the hands of the pagan Assyrian armies. Some mockingly ask the question today, “Who would Jesus execute?” This passage gives part of a *Biblical* answer to the question:

2 Kings 19:31 & 34-35

“For out of Jerusalem will go forth a remnant, and out of Mount Zion survivors. The zeal of the LORD will perform this... ³⁴For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake....” ³⁵Then it happened that night that the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp

of the Assyrians; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, all of them were dead.

(2) See Jesus' Good Anger in the Gospels

Moving from the Old to New Testament, we see a consistent testimony of the good nature of God's anger. In the Gospels, we read of the "good news" of the birth, life, and (especially) the death of Christ.

THE GOSPELS ARE THANATOLOGIES—STUDIES OF CHRIST'S DEATH. HE PAID A DEBT HE DID NOT OWE, AND WE OWED A DEBT WE COULD NOT PAY.

The ultimate good news of the Gospels is found precisely in Christ's death for the sins of the world.⁹ The bad news is that God is righteously angry at sin. The dazzling diamond of Christ's death is set out on the Biblical black background of sin. God's wrath is right, and His anger must be satisfied. Thank God that His love provided forgiving grace for all who will receive that gift. Jesus lived a perfect life and lovingly died for sin. However, the living Jesus was also livid about sin. Sin is rebellion against God—high-handed, eternal treason. Sin kills human life. Sin is deadly.

A well-known story, recognized even by children, records Christ's righteous, blood-boiling indignation in the Temple. With piercing eyes and angry zeal, He shoves and flips the vending tables of the money-changers in the Jerusalem Temple court. They had greedily exploited the poor travelers making pilgrimage to the holy city. Those cheaters wanted "too much" money in the exchange of foreign currencies used to buy sacrificial doves. Christ intervened with righteous rage—with nostrils flaring and square-mouthed shouts, Christ verbally, angrily, and physically rebuked them for these deadly sins. We might say they were fortunate that He used a whip against them and not His terrible swift sword.

Mark 11:15-17

Then they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple and began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who were selling doves; ¹⁶and He would not permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple. ¹⁷And He began to teach and say to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a robbers' den."

(3) See Jesus' Good Anger as the Lion of Judah—A War-Waging King in Revelation

Anger is good. Jesus shows His true anger against sin in the Old Testament and the Gospels (all four recording His choleric cleansing of the Temple). Opening our apocalyptic future, the Book of Revelation lets us see a perfectly angry Christ, coming again in His second advent to wage war on sin and unrepentant sinners. Look carefully with the writer of The Battle Hymn of the Republic,¹⁰ for her "eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. He is trampling out the vintage where the





grapes of wrath are stored. He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword. His truth is marching on!”

Revelation 19:11-15

And I saw heaven opened... behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.... ¹³He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies which are in heaven... were following Him.... ¹⁵From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations... and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

2. LOOKING AHEAD

Anger is good. Anger originates in God Himself. God’s anger is good at stopping evil dead in its tracks. Anger, in God, powers Him forward in a zealous correction of injustice. It has done this since time began, and it will until time ends. Since it is often taught that anger is always sinful, I felt it necessary to spend this full study laboring to see the great goodness of anger and its real roots in God Himself.

A. Anger Is Good in Godly Men and Women

The beauties of anger are not to be lost on God. Anger is a God-*given* emotion, *given* to human beings whom He made in His image. Just as God puts anger to good use, we will see that to be good and angry is to be fully human. We were not designed to be bloodless robots. Nor are we to be congratulated if we live angerless lives—as if we have no pulse, no passion for what is right in a fallen world. Next week we shall see that anger is a necessary component in the healthy emotional and spiritual life of every Christian and even more so in the lives of leaders. There are dangers associated with the good gift of anger just as there are with the other good things in God’s creation (wealth, sex, etc.). Next week we will see that sinful anger is a desire for “too much” of something. Can you guess what it is?

B. Anger Is Good for Destroying Evil

In addition, next week we will see the reason God commands men and women to “Be angry, and sin not” (Ephesians 4:26). Anger kicks like a rented mule and is good for flattening wickedness, chopping up evil, correcting injustices, and truly helping people.

“Good and angry” for Christ’s sake,

Rev. Perry M. Gauthier

FOOTNOTES

1. <https://www.nytimes.com/1979/01/28/archives/the-true-questioner-hoffer.html>.
2. 1 Peter 1:13 – “Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”
3. Robert Thurman, *The Seven Deadly Sins: Anger*, The New York Public Library: Oxford University Press, 2005, pg. 32.
4. All Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible 1995 Update* unless otherwise noted.
5. Several years ago, I taught a study called “A Chaplain’s Worst Nightmare,” where I addressed the infuriating heresy that says, “Christians and Muslims worship the same God.” The anger of the Lord still burns when political leaders knowingly cooperate syncretistically with false religions.
6. Hebrews 13:8 – “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”
7. The Nicene Creed: “We believe in one God... And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds (æons), Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father...”
8. Thurman, *The Seven Deadly Sins: Anger*, pg. 31.
9. Regarding the heresies of “Chrislam,” while the *Quran* mentions Jesus (in Arabic: *Isa*) 110 times, it clearly teaches that Jesus was *not* divine (see footnote 7 above), did *not* die on a cross, and was *not* resurrected. It denies these most essential Bible doctrines, saying *Isa* was indeed a prophet but inferior to the Prophet Mohammed. It blasphemously denies that there is a Holy Spirit. It also self-abrogates non-Jihadist passages.
10. The full text of Julia Ward Howe’s *Battle Hymn of the Republic* from 1862 is as follows:

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lighting of His terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.

(Chorus)
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps,
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damp;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:
“As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal”;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on.

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat:
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! Be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me.
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.



