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God's Good Anger

(I didn't realize I was posting this on 9-11. What an appropriate contrast of unrighteous anger and righteous anger.)

Nahum 1:2-7

2 God's **Wrath** on His **Enemies**

God is **jealous**, and the Lord **avenges**;

The Lord **avenges** and is **furious**.

The Lord will take **vengeance** on His **adversaries**,

And He reserves **wrath** for His **enemies**;

3 The Lord is slow to **anger** and great in **power**,

And **will not at all acquit the wicked**.

The Lord has His way

In the **whirlwind** and in the **storm**,

And the clouds are the dust of His feet.

4 He **rebukes** the sea and makes it dry,

And **dries up** all the rivers.

Bashan and Carmel **wither**,

And the flower of Lebanon **wilts**.

5 The mountains **quake** before Him,

The hills **melt**,

And the earth **heaves** at His presence,

Yes, the world and all who dwell in it.

6 Who can stand before His **indignation**?

And who can endure the **fierceness of His anger**?

His **fury is poured out like fire**,

And the **rocks are thrown** down by Him.

7 The Lord is good,

A stronghold in the day of trouble;

And He knows those who trust in Him.

Have you ever really looked at the strong responses of God in this passage? Wrath, jealousy, vengeance, fury, wrath, anger, great power, whirlwinds, storms, rebuke, seas and rivers drying up, flowers wilting, mountains quaking, hills melting, the earth heaving, indignation, fierce anger, pouring out fury like fire, throwing rocks and then...

there is this evaluation –

the Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble.

Are you comfortable with that?

What about this response of Jesus?

Mark 3:1-6

*And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. 2 So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. 3 And He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Step forward." 4 Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they kept silent. 5 **And when He had looked around at them with anger**, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other. 6 Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.*

Or this one?

John 2:13-17

*Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. 15 **When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables.** 16 And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" 17 Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "**Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.**"*

What about this one?

Hebrews 3:10-11, 16-17

10 Therefore ***I was angry*** with that generation,

And said, 'They always go astray in their heart,

And they have not known My ways.'

11 So ***I swore*** in My wrath,

'They shall not enter My rest.'"

17 Now with whom was ***He angry forty years***? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness?

Are we more comfortable with the gentle Savior than the angry One? I've been quoting Ephesians 4:26-31 for

years. "Be angry, and do not sin" but perhaps I like many others would really translate that verse: "Do not be angry." But that is not really what it says, is it? Now I know what the following verses say about putting away anger but what are they really saying in the whole context of this passage and others?

Is it easier to say, "Don't ever be angry!" or to say "Be angry, but don't sin in your anger."

Do we feel that righteous anger is impossible for humans to express? Is that what Jesus modeled?

Living out of the religious box is uncomfortable. Life is not black and white. We have to make moment by moment decisions to live righteously. Life without lists. Life by the Spirit. Life that embraces righteous anger and also denies unrighteous anger.

Don't you just love how God absolutely refuses to be boxed?

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