

# ANGER

## Psalm 12 (a paraphrase)

**Quick, God, I need your help! There seem to be no good people around anymore. Everyone is just lying all the time, planning mean tricks in their hearts.**

**Make them quiet, God! Zip their mean lips shut, stop their lying tongues from moving! They think they rule the world with their false words.**

**The poor and needy groan in prayer, and God responds: "Enough is enough! I will protect!"**

**There's nothing false in God's words: they are pure and true like silver and gold.**

**You, God, will keep the needy safe and will protect us forever from evil; those who are strutting about, getting away with lying and cheating.**

## Over to you!

Underline anything that shows the writer of this psalm being angry.

What was she / he angry about?

What do you think God feels about this prayer?

Would you ever pray anything like this?



## Over to you!

What does Anger usually feel like in your body?



My job is to protect you and your boundaries. For example, if someone takes something that is yours, I'll remind you to say "No!" or if someone says something mean to you, I'll remind you to say "Stop!"

I will not go away until you notice me! It even helps to just say: "This makes me feel really angry!" Saying that you're angry is not bad. If you don't notice me, I might try even harder to get your attention, and people or things might get hurt...

You will notice me in your body in tense muscles, clenched jaw, your heart beating faster and your breathing speeding up.



# Jesus is Angry (retelling of Mark 10:13-16)

One day, Jesus was sitting down, teaching his followers. As always there were crowds milling around; curious people, people who needed help, people who wanted to catch Jesus out. Lots of families were there too, with kids running around, playing hide-and-seek behind their parents tunics and shawls. The parents wanted the best for their kids, so decided to bring them up to Jesus.

*“Please, Jesus, place your hands on my children and bless them!”* they asked. They had seen Jesus bring healing and life to those he had touched, and who wouldn’t want that for their kids? But Jesus’ closest friends told them off!

*“Do you think Jesus has time for your kids?”* sneered Peter.

*“He has much more important things to do!”* exclaimed John.

*“Don’t interrupt the teacher!”* said James, and told them to go to the back of the crowd.

But Jesus saw what was happening, and he got angry! *“What are you doing stopping the kids from coming to me?”* Jesus asked his friends indignantly, *“Don’t stop them! It’s for people like them that I’ve come!”* He gave his friends a final frustrated look, *“In fact, and this is the truth, if you don’t come to me like a child, you won’t be able to come at all!”*

While his friends scratched their beards, and felt a bit bad for being told off and wondered what he meant, Jesus gathered up the kids in his arms. He blessed them, spoke joy into their lives, and perhaps joined in with a game of peak-a-boo too.



## Over to you!

Highlight the words that show how Jesus felt.

Why was Jesus angry?

Was there anything bad about his Anger?



**Jesus’ Anger is never selfish. His Anger is an expression of his love.**

# Love expression

Sometimes our Anger is an expression of our love, just like Jesus' Anger is. For example, if you love a friend, you get angry when someone is mean to them. Or if you love the earth God made, you get angry when people pollute or litter. The more we love what God loves, the more our Anger will be like Jesus' Anger.



Think of one thing where your love might cause you to feel Anger, and draw that in the heart.

ANGER

&

CURIOSITY

When Anger and Curiosity decide to teamwork, we can change the world for the better.

I'm angry that some people in our town don't have homes. I will work with Curiosity to work out what we can do about it!

Chatting to God is a good time to express your Anger. Anger gets seen and God can handle it!

## Taking care of Anger

Since Anger always wants your full attention, we need to practise saying

**“Hi!”**

and perhaps also

**“Goodbye!”**

to Anger.

Do a role-playing exercise together:

- ★ Take turns to remember something that makes you angry; for example, someone using your toy without asking first, or someone making a mess where you've just tidied up.
- ★ Practice using words to say what made you angry, for example *“I feel angry when you take my toys without asking”* or *“I feel angry about the chocolate stains in the sofa.”*
- ★ Everyone in the conversation should now give Anger the attention it wants. Say something like *“I can see that this makes you angry”* or *“I notice the Anger”*. Don't ever laugh at Anger, it will make it bigger: just notice it.
- ★ It might be that once everyone has said *“Hi!”* to Anger, you start feeling less angry. This is an invitation to talk about boundaries: do we have the same boundaries as a family? Examples of boundaries might be: *“these are the toys I don't want other people to touch without asking”* or *“the living room is out of bounds for eating, food has to stay on the dining table”* or *“knock before entering someone's bedroom”* or whatever else causes conflict and Anger in your family. Can we agree where the boundaries go?
- ★ It might be that someone needs to ask for forgiveness for overstepping someone else's boundaries.
- ★ After that, Anger probably has had all the attention it needed, and you can say *“Goodbye!”* together.

Grown-up tips

Remember that other emotions like fear and sadness might hide behind anger! Ask each other questions to find out which emotion is at the root of the display of anger, and make sure to notice whatever is hiding underneath.

# Fighting back!

If we feel angry because a lion is invading our village it might be helpful to feel a rush of adrenaline and a need to fight back. This response is less helpful if you feel Anger about, for example, someone calling you names at school.

Fighting back hurts people, but it's good to find ways to get rid of all the energy in your body when you feel Anger. Sports and exercise are particularly helpful for this.

Circle what you think might be your best way to move your body when you feel angry.



# Anger in others

If someone is angry with you, how do you feel?

Circle your experience:

I feel Shame and apologise even if I haven't done anything wrong

I feel Sad and start to cry

I feel Fear and run away

I feel Anger and want to fight back

I feel .....  
(fill in your own words)

Talk in your family about how you each experience other people's Anger. Talk about which responses feel OK, and how each of you ideally would like an angry situation to play out. How can we avoid hurting each other or damaging property? What are words that help us become friends again? Draw or doodle the thoughts about your chat here:

# Praying with Anger

1 God, I feel angry about...

2 God, this is what I want you to do about it...

3 God, is there anything you want me to do about this?  
(be curious about the Anger)