Rectifying Anger

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by the revered Kabbalist, HaRav Eliahu Leon Levi

You should know, my dear child, you have arrived into this world in order to rectify character traits that you blemished in your previous reincarnation. And you are obliged to do this work now, as quickly as possible, before our righteous redeemer comes – may it be soon. Only in this manner will you reach the promised shore and be united with your Creator in the bonds of love, and thus merit to be called a friend and loved one to Hashem.

It is known the attribute of anger is at the head of the ladder of character traits demanding correction. A Jew is the pinnacle and foundation of creation, and anger is a most evil sickness that causes him to lose all of the noble things within him.

Rectifying anger is very difficult, requiring many days and nights of strenuous and painstaking work, but all to the good. In the majority of cases, this trait deceives you and has you believing that, “Thank G-d, I have finally mastered my temper, and thank G-d, I am not overly stringent with people and don’t get angry anymore. On the contrary, I control my emotions and almost resemble an angel, just like Hillel the Elder, may his name be for a blessing.”

Nevertheless, if you be tested, then at a moment’s notice, over some very small thing, you become angry and pollute your soul with your fury. All of your hard work and suffering comes to naught, and everything you accomplished is lost.

In my opinion, your fall was caused by two factors. One is your pride, and the second is a lack of simple faith, for everything that comes about is sent from the Creator of the World, both happiness and sorrow, wisdom and ignorance, contentment and wealth, everything is from the Blessed One Holy Be He. So why get angry? Why get uptight? Why lose your temper? Why be jealous? Why take revenge? Everything comes about because of G-d’s providence. No one can tell him what to do or how to act, for everything comes from Him, may He and His Name be blessed, and He is pleasant and good to all.

Therefore, you should know, my child, you are far too precious to act so foolishly, for you resemble the upper worlds. Your holy being is attached to the spiritual worlds of Atzilut, Beriah, Yetzirah, Asiyah, and composed of nefesh, ruach, neshama, chiya, yichida. In your body is a holy soul that has been quarried from beneath the Throne of Glory, and you are perpetually connected to the highest spiritual worlds, to our Father in Heaven. Divine illumination and influence descends to you from those exalted regions, along with a whisp of Ruach HaKodesh, as it says, “And behold, the L-rd stood over him,” to constantly grant you life, goodness, and material blessing.

All of this goodness comes to you so that you may keep the Torah and commandments with an expanded consciousness, with health, contentment, wealth, fruitful marital relations, saintly children, a long life filled with the reverence of G-d. With so much goodness, what were you lacking that caused you to get angry?

Therefore, my precious child, be very careful not to get angry, for anger pollutes the soul. In its wake, a person not only

loses the connection he had with the person with whom he is angry, but he most certainly causes a severe spiritual disconnection in damaging the channels of Divine influence, thus bringing darkness over his nefesh, ruach, neshama, chiya, and yechida, and over all of the elevated spiritual worlds that he carries within his body. And from this comes mental problems and serious illnesses like heart attacks, asthma, ulcers, and other evil things, may G-d have mercy.

Thus, my dear child, please understand the degrading level that a person can be brought to by the evil trait of anger. If you do not stop yourself from getting angry by being patient toward the person who is upsetting you, or by reacting in some positive manner, or by thinking some good thought about him, and about saving yourself, then in a moment of anger, you turn yourself into the lowest of the lowly creatures in this world. You cause the Holy One Blessed Be He to flee from you, and your holy soul abandons your body, and a soul from the realm of impurity enters in its place, polluting your being. You become vile, like a carcass, for your soul is cast away from you, as if it had died, and everything, everything is lost.

Even if you are great in Torah learning and good deeds, and even if you are a genuine baal t’shuva [one who repents] who constantly works on rectifying himself by doing all sorts of tikunim, all of your efforts are lost, for your soul is replaced by another, and you must do everything you did anew. And all of the mitzvot that you did in your life, it is as if they never existed at all.

See, my child, the place where your great anger has brought you. In the world, there is nothing so precious as you, the pinnacle of this holy creation, yet you have fallen to such a frightening and grievous state. Just the possibility of this should have brought you to tremble in anguish and shock.

Therefore, my child, joy of my heart, take the time to ponder just how you came to this situation, to what fathomless depths you have fallen, and to what lowly place you have brought your soul and your body when you became angry without thinking. In the future, take heed! Constantly fix it in your mind to remove this evil obstacle from your life. Constantly, be on guard not to succumb to this ugly trait that separates you from celestial blessing, from happiness and wealth, and from all of the good that our Father in Heaven always seeks to grant. By guarding yourself from this evil, you will merit all of the blessings that are written in the Torah, and you will be awarded with long life with your family, lasting health, happiness, and great satisfaction in everything that you do. Amen.

(Rabbi Leon recommends saying this tikun every day after the morning prayers.)