

## **Myra Estelle class - Anger & Humility**

**From: TorahMedia.com podcast on *The Science of Anger*: Rabbi Jonathan Rietti:**

Anger is a choice we make.

Anger hurts another person and it hurts us too.

Anger doesn't solve problems—it increases tension.

Anger is a camouflage for intimacy.

**From: *Iggeret HaRamban*: Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman (Nachmanides) (1195-1270):**

Accustom yourself to speak gently to all people at all times. This will protect you from anger—a most serious character flaw which causes one to sin.

Once you have distanced yourself from anger, the quality of humility will enter your heart. This sterling quality is the finest of all admirable traits, as Scripture writes: On the heels of humility comes the fear/awe of God. Through humility, the fear/awe of God will intensify in your heart, for you will always be aware of from where you have come and to where you are destined to go.

**From: *The Path of the Just*: Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto (1707-1746):**

The essence of Humility is in a person's not attaching importance to himself for any reason whatsoever. This trait is the very opposite of pride and its results are the very opposite of the results of pride. Analysis will reveal that Humility is dependent upon thought and deed. Before a man conducts himself in the way of the Humble, he must first be Humble in thought. One who attempts to be Humble in deeds without first having cultivated an attitude of Humility belongs to that class of wicked deceitful, "humble" men, which we mentioned previously, that class of hypocrites, than which there is nothing more evil in the world.

We shall now explain these divisions.

Humility in thought consists in a person's reflecting upon and recognizing as a truth the fact that he does not deserve praise and honor (let alone elevation above his fellow men), both because of his natural limitations and because of his accumulated defects.

As far as natural limitations are concerned, it is obvious that it is impossible for any man, regardless of the level of perfection he has reached, to be without many faults, whether because of his own nature, because of his family and relatives, because of certain experiences he has had, or because of his deeds. All of these are defects in a person, which allow no room at all for the feeling of self-importance; for though he may possess many virtues, these faults suffice to overshadow them.

The factor that is responsible more than any other for a person's coming to feel self-important and proud is wisdom. This is so because wisdom is a superior quality of the person himself, a function of his most honored faculty, intelligence. But there is no sage who will not err and will not need to learn from the words of

## **Myra Estelle class - Anger & Humility**

his friends and, very often, even from those of his disciples. How, then, can he pride himself in his wisdom? In truth, one who is possessed of an honest intelligence, even if he has managed to become a toweringly great sage, will see, when he looks into the matter, that there is no room at all for pride and self-importance.

**From: *The Moral Principles: Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935):***

...6. One cannot merit the achievement of humility except through cleaving to God. It is appropriate for one who is qualified for true cleaving to God to wear the *tephillin* (Deuteronomy 6:8, 11:18) often. Then he will truly be filled with humility.

7. When humility effects depression it is defective; when it is genuine it inspires joy, courage and inner dignity.

8. At times it is not necessary to be afraid of greatness, which inspires a person to do great things. All humility is based on such holy greatness.

9. From the time one begins to suffer with feelings of haughtiness, one gathers strength to overcome the evil traits rooted in feelings of self-depreciation, and to infuse a spark of life to the refined intelligence. One then combines the traits of humility and self-depreciation, and their good qualities, with the benefits extracted from the unclean trait of pride.

10. One is called on to invest much effort in clinging to humility. When a thought of pride or a feeling of self-exaltation arises in the person, it is for him to apply the good aspect of these sensibilities to reinforce the will to holiness, while the negative aspect let him discard with loathing. Then he will add to his feeling of humility, and he will always be in joy and in gladness of heart, in a continued feast. From everything he will receive the refined element, wrung from the depths where our moral dispositions are rooted, similar to the pressing of grapes so as to make the wine that rejoices the human heart.

11. Humility and true lowliness enhance one's health and strength, while the spurious forms of these virtues enfeeble and depress. A person must therefore choose for himself the qualities of humility and lowliness in their enlightened form that he may grow stronger and sturdier. "Those who trust in the Lord will renew their strength" (Isaiah 40:31).