

## Righteousness Is Sown in Peace

### Scripture

“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.” (James 1:19-20 NKJV)

“Who [is] wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct [that] his works [are done] in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but [is] earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking [exist], confusion and every evil thing [are] there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” (James 3:13-18 NKJV)

### Commentary

The Scriptures tell us, “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.” (Ephesians 4:26-27 NKJV) It’s clear that allowing anger to guide our actions is sinful. Furthermore, if we allow that anger to simmer overnight, even though we did not act upon it, it gives the devil a fulcrum to pry upon our hearts. Eventually, if we give him that kind of leverage, he will lead us into sin.

For example the Psalmist declared, “. . . Truly God [is] good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. For I [was] envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For [there are] no pangs in their death, But their strength [is] firm. They [are] not in trouble [as other] men, Nor are they plagued like [other] men. Therefore pride serves as their necklace; Violence covers them [like] a garment. Their eyes bulge with abundance; They have more than heart could wish.” (Psalms 73:1-7 NKJV)

Obviously Asaph was angry that evil men were prospering. He likely would have done something about it if he could. Maybe that is what he meant when he said “my feet almost stumbled.” Thankfully, he did not stumble, but understood, by God’s grace, that God would eventually deal with all injustices.

Notice Asaph’s comments in the later portion of this psalm, “When I thought [how] to understand this, It [was] too painful for me— Until I went into the sanctuary of God; [Then] I understood their end. Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. Oh, how they are [brought] to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when [one] awakes, [So], Lord, when You awake, You shall despise their image.” (Psalms 73:16-20 NKJV)

Clearly the way to master our anger is to master our heart by going “into the sanctuary of God.” Not a physical place, but a state of being controlled by the Holy Spirit.

When we are controlled by the Holy Spirit, then we sow righteousness; for the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. What is the fruit of the Spirit? “. . . The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those [who are] Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.” (Galatians 5:22-26 NKJV)