

BIG IDEA

When we read specific stories in the Old Testament, it's hard not to wonder...Is God angry or loving?

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 25:22, 2 Samuel 6:1-8, James 1:19-20, Numbers 4:11-15

ICEBREAKER

What action by other drivers can bring out your worst road rage?

OPENING THOUGHT

We may mistakenly have the impression that God is ready to “smite” us at any moment for any number of infractions. How have you reacted to passages and stories about God’s wrath in the Old Testament?

BIBLE DISCUSSION

1. Read Exodus 25:22 & 2 Samuel 6:1-8. What do you notice? What do you think or feel about this story?
2. Read Numbers 4:11-15. The Israelites were carrying the Ark in a way that was against God’s commands. Why is this significant to the story?
3. Why do you think that David was angry? Who do you think he was most upset with – Uzzah, God, or himself? Why?
4. Anger and love are not mutually exclusive concepts. When is anger a justified emotion for us? What about for God?

LIFE APPLICATION

5. Have you had a season in your life where you have wondered about the question of whether God was angry or loving? Share with the group.
6. In the same way that we may wonder about the anger of God, we can also experience God’s love. When, where, or how do you feel God’s love the most? What examples of God’s love do you see our everyday experience?
7. Read James 1:19-20. In what ways can you grow in being quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry?

CHALLENGE

Anger and love are not mutually exclusive. God is angry at injustice and anything that disrupts the peace God intends for his creation. The stories in Scripture about Yahweh’s anger are understandingly troubling, but if we look beyond the surface of those stories, we find a God who is full of love and slow to anger. We also see that God has revealed himself most fully in Jesus, who also got angry at injustice, and gave his life for everyone to be brought into a relationship with God. As a community, let’s commit ourselves to become quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.