These proverbs deal with the subject of anger and anger management. “Anger” is “a strong and intense and excessive feeling or passion of displeasure aroused by emotional or physical injury or mistreatment, or the perception of such.” The Bible speaks of an inward aspect of “anger” and an outward emotional aspect of “anger” AND BOTH THE INWARD AND OUTWARD ASPECTS OF ANGER MUST BE MANAGED! It is important to recognize that not all “anger” is sinful, and that “anger” does have a functional value. The emotion of “anger” may not be sinful, but the angry expressions in thought and act may be. In Ephesians 4:26 Paul wrote “Be ye angry and sin not” In other words, “in your anger, do not sin.” Examples of being “angry” and sinning not are exemplified in Jacob [Genesis 31:36], Moses [Exodus 11:8; 32:19; Leviticus 10:16; Numbers 16:15], David [II Samuel 12:1-5], and Paul [Galatians 2:11-14]. THOUGH ALL ANGER IS NOT SINFUL, AND THOUGH SOME ANGER IS JUSTIFIABLE, ALL ANGER NEEDS TO BE MANAGED AND CONTROLLED! IT MUST BE BROUGHT INTO SUBJECTION!

“Anger” turns to sin when it is selfishly motivated [James 1:19-20], when the motive is distorted [I Corinthians 10:51], when it is allowed to linger [Ephesians 4:26-27], when it is allowed to boil over without restraint [Proverbs 29:11], and when one refuses to be pacified [Ephesians 4:26-27]. Sinful “anger” is related to foolishness [Ecclesiastes 7:9], and with grieving the Holy Spirit [Ephesians 4:30-31]. Sinful “anger” is extremely dangerous, for it contains the seed of murder, and makes one liable to the judgment of God [Matthew 5:22].

“Anger” is a God-given emotion, everybody experiences it, and everybody expresses it BUT IT MUST BE MANAGED AND CONTROLLED! It is a healthy human emotion when managed and expressed effectively! But unmanaged, uncontrolled, and improperly expressed “anger” is destructive and dangerous, resulting in hostility, resentment, and bitterness! Everyone has the emotion of “anger” and something must be done with it, it must be dealt with!

“A fool’s wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth it” [12:16].

The “fool” having no command or discipline of himself, on the very first rising of “anger” displays his “anger” He immediately gives way to his “anger” without any meaningful and serious thought, or reflection upon the reasons for his “anger” He fails to honestly examine the cause of his “anger” and he fails to consider whether he does well to be angry, and he fails to contemplate if it is proper for him to express his “anger” On the other hand, the “prudent man” (wise, sensible, cautious), covereth it” He is patient enough to carefully consider the matter at hand, sparing himself and others disgrace.
“He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated” [14:17].

The first part of this proverb speaks of the quick-tempered individual, which is the same as a “hasty” spirit [Proverbs 14:29; 21:5; 29:20], and such a person does foolish things, because of his failure to give serious and careful thought and consideration to his response. The second part of the proverb speaks of the individual who may hide his “anger” but he contrives schemes to take revenge.

“He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly” [14:29].

“He that is slow to wrath” is the same as the “prudent man” [12:16]. He is an individual who is “long suffering” and has government over himself, and is not impulsive and reckless in the expression of “anger”. Such an individual has “great understanding” comprehension and insight into himself and human nature and the dangers of “anger”. But on the other hand, the individual who is “hasty” (quick-tempered) advances foolishness and stupidity.

“A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife” [15:18].

“A wrathful man” is one who is full of rage and fury, this is his disposition and spirit, and he feeds and fans the flame of conflict, discord, disagreement, and hostility. But on the other hand, “be that is slow to anger” (a man of peaceable disposition) appeaseth (reconciles) strife.” Patience, self-control, and wise consideration prevents much conflict, and has the ability to settle and resolve conflict where it exists.

“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city” [16:32].

“He that is slow to anger” and “he that ruleth (controls, governs, manages) his spirit” are one and the same. Slowness to “anger” is the result of self-restraint and management of the inner man. The ruling of the inner man takes greater strength and is a greater accomplishment than the one who is able to take an entire city. The one who has no government and restraint, and management over the inner man is in great danger [Proverbs 25:28].

“The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression” [19:11].

“Discretion” is “the ability to know what should be done or said in a particular situation” and such enables one to delay, to detain his “anger”. To defer “anger” is the same as the one who is “slow to anger”. It is self-control and discernment that enables one to do so. The second part of the proverb declares that the individual who possesses “discretion” takes pleasure in, and is willing and ready to forbear and to forgive [Colossians 3:13].
“A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment; for if thou deliver him, yet thou must do it again” [19:19].

The one who possesses an angry, infuriated, incensed disposition and spirit brings much trouble, distress, agitation, problems, and unpleasantness into their lives, and though they may be delivered from one set of trouble and unpleasantness, it is only temporary, for they will bring more into their lives, because of their angry disposition and spirit.

“Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious (unrestrained and uncontrollable anger) man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul” [22:24-25].

This proverb is a warning to all concerning the “angry man” and the “furious man” The phrases “angry man” and “furious man” has reference to the disposition and spirit of anger and fury. The warning is do not enter into a relationship or an association with such an individual. The danger of doing so is stated—“lest thou learn his ways (and be as wrathful, and furious, and hostile, and resentful, and bitter, and vindictive as he is), and get a snare (trap) to thy soul” THE DISPOSITION AND SPIRIT OF ANGER IS AN ENTRAPMENT!

“A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool’s wrath is heavier than them both” [27:3].

The “wrath” of a “fool” (one who do not properly handle, manage, and express anger) is a weight, a heaviness, a burden, and an encumbrance both to the possessor and recipient of such “wrath”

“An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression” [29:22].

Where there is unmanaged, mismanaged, and uncontrolled, “anger” there is sure to be other sins as well, such as pride [Proverbs 21:24], jealousy [Proverbs 6:34], clamor and evil-speaking [Ephesians 4:31], strife, contention [Proverbs 21:19; 29:22; 30:33], bitterness, hostility, and resentment!

“Anger” is real, and something must be done with it. It can be denied, and denial does not cause it to go away, nor is denial proper management of the emotion of “anger” It can be concealed which if not confessed and dealt with will lead to bitterness, hostility, and resentment. Denied and concealed “anger” usually results in the redirection of “anger” which is a failure to face the real issues. It can be expressed in a sinful and unhealthy way, and it can be expressed in a spiritual and healthy way [Proverbs 25:9-12]. Sometimes, “anger” simply needs to be confessed to God and let go of. “Anger” whether properly expressed or not must be dealt with before it brings an individual under its control. These proverbs urge us to control “anger” and not to allow “anger” to gain control over us!