

1 February 2015

## Hate and grievous words stir up strife. (Pt 3 Stir up)

### Introduction.

This is our third study on the topic “stir up” in the Scriptures.

### Previous points covered in Pt 2.

1. Satan stirs up believers to sin against the Lord, and
2. Unbelievers stir up devout women & men in authority against believers, and
3. The Lord stirs up an adversary against His disobedient children.

### Three points are established for this study (Part 3) from the Scriptures.

1. Hate stirs up strife, and
2. Grievous words stir up anger, and
3. An angry man stirs up strife.

### Our three points in more detail.

1. Hate stirs up strife.

#### Supporting Verse.

Prov.10:12 “Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.”

#### Context and meaning of our verse.

\* The book of Proverbs written by Solomon is part of the oracles to the Jews (Rom.3: 1) and is also part of the Christian Scriptures. Much of the book is a comparison between “good” and “evil” as we have with our verse, where hatred is compared to love. Then other verses make a point and say the same thing differently, as we see in Prov.7: 2 which says “keep my commandments, and live, lay up my commandments with thee.”

\* The preceding chapters 8 & 9 cover wisdom (verse 1 of each chapter), and chapter 10 begins with a comparison of a wise son and foolish son. Prov.10: 11 speaks about the mouth “of the righteous man is a well of life”, and then our verse “hatred stirreth up strife”. Hence, the hatred that stirs up strife is done so by the lips, or an evil tongue (Jam.3: 8).

#### Other scriptural support.

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

#### Scriptural examples.

\* An example of hate stirring up strife is found in Gen.27: 41 where Esau, who hated his brother Jacob, set his heart to slay his brother when the mourning of his father was passed.

#### Application of our verse today.

\* We have established that the verse from Proverbs is part of the Hebrew Scriptures, and they are applicable to believers today. Hatred stirs up strife.

#### Illustration.

\* Hatred of the Jewish people stirred Hitler, who in turn had the charisma to stir up the German people to commit crimes against humanity with the slaughter of five million Jews.

#### Learning from our Illustration

\* The world sees hate as a bad thing, and in our illustration you would agree, hate that leads to such abominable crimes, is evil. But, rather than associate **all** hate with evil, consider other Scriptures that say God “hatest all workers of iniquity” (Ps.5: 5), and David hated...evil doers (Ps. 26: 5). Hence, there is a place for hate, but when a person hates God and the things of God then their hatred is evil. But whether a man has evil or righteous hatred, the emotion of hate stirs up strife.

Challenge & or encouragement.

\* The hatred of the Jews that existed during Hitler's reign of terror has not changed today where we have those who seek to kill the Jew and steal the land that God gave them. Be mindful to pray for Jerusalem, and love our enemies, which means those who hate the Jewish people.

\* Be mindful also of hate, and prove to yourself from the Scriptures whether it be righteous or ungodly hatred. Let us encourage young men to hate evil and so feel stirred up to go and proclaim the gospel of Christ to the lost, and remember that hate stirs up strife.

## 2. Grievous words stir up anger.

Supporting Verse.

Prov.15: 1 "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."

Context and meaning of our verse.

\* Our verse in Prov.15 is five chapters on from our first point. So the context is the same as our first point. Our verse says something then reinforces that point by contrasting an opposite.

\* Our verse is speaking of the tongue as are verses 2, 4, 7, & 23. It contrasts softly spoken words that extend grace to the hearers (Eph.4: 29) with words that are spoken harshly.

Other scriptural support.

Jam.1: 26, 3: 5, 6 & 8.

Scriptural examples.

\* When Rehoboam forsook the counsel of the older men (1Kg.12: 13) and spoke to all Israel harshly, he sent Adoram unto them and the people stoned him (verse 18).

Application of our verse today.

\* Our verse from Proverbs has as much relevance and application to Israel as it does to the Christian believer today. A man's tongue in all ages is a fire of iniquity that no man can tame (Jam. 3: 8). Had Rehoboam spoken softly, with words of charity and love, the people would not have been stirred up with anger to stone the man he sent to them. And today, when a believer speaks softly, with words that minister grace to the hearers, and **not** with grievous words, it is more likely that his words will be heard.

Illustration.

\* I am sure we have all had first-hand experience of our words stirring up anger rather than pacifying our opposers with a soft answer. Street work is fraught with challenges from those who oppose the gospel, who hate God, and so start an argument, in the hope that the person witnessing would shame his God and get side-tracked away from the gospel. There have been numerous examples through the years of preachers calling their opposer a name like "loser".

\* There was one such example at the end of last year where an Independent Baptist preacher called a Sodomite a series of names and was recorded on national TV.

Learning from our Illustration.

\* When people use grievous words, name-calling, where they attack the person and do not deal with the issues (argumentative ad hominem), then they stir up anger, which escalates the tension. Why? Because the words spoken are grievous, they bring pain, and sorrow, and wound the hearer. Interestingly, the Hebrew word for grievous is also translated pain, sorrow and wound.

\* In our illustration of the preacher using grievous words the opposer appeared not to be stirred up, but so often they are, and the situation escalates, and the Lord's name is shamed, and any testimony or preaching that follows is less likely to be received.

Challenge & or encouragement.

\* Be mindful of our tongue, especially when we are with the lost, because grievous words can wound, cause pain, and sorrow, whereas soft words can be used by the Holy Spirit of God to heal.

\* Let us "strive not about words to no profit" (2Tim.2: 14), answer softly, and ask questions of those we seek to communicate with. In doing so we maximise our potential to sow seeds of the gospel of Christ.

\* Let us pray for each other that we would not use grievous words that stir up anger.

### 3. An angry man stirs up strife.

Supporting verse.

Prov.29: 22 "An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression."

Context and meaning of our verse.

- \* Our verse is a continuation of warnings and instructions that begin in Proverbs chapter 20.
- \* Chapter 29 continues comparisons of good and evil with verses 9, 11, 19 & 20 which are prior to our verse 22 all referring to words or speech, yet our verse does not. However, it would seem reasonable that a man could be angry without words, but his anger may not stir up strife unless he uses words to convey his emotion.
- \* Our verse makes a point and then states the same with a little more forcefulness, which reinforces our point that an angry man stirs up strife.

Other scriptural support.

- \* Prov.17: 18 & 29: 8.

Scriptural examples.

- \* The king of Babylon was said to be "angry and very furious" when his wise men could not tell him his dream nor its interpretation (Dan.2: 12).

Application of our verse today.

- \* In our first point we established that hate stirs up strife, in our second point we found that grievous words stir up and anger, and in this point an angry man stirs up strife. This verse has as much application to Israel as it does to a believer today. A man who gets wound up in anger stirs up strife, whether it is in a pub, or at home in the family, or in the body of Christ.

Illustration.

- \* When a man is angry with his wife and family, he often ends up making things worse, stirring things up perhaps to cover up his anger. I have seen an angry man enter a room in his house and punch a hole in the wall, which inflamed others in the home. Hence one man's anger stirred up strife in the home.
- \* When a preacher gets angry with an unsaved man for not turning from his sin, the response is the same, the preacher has stirred up strife, not because of the gospel, but because of his anger.

Learning from our Illustration.

- \* There is **no** good reason for a man to come home and punch a hole in the wall of his house, such anger is always sin.
- \* There is **no** good reason for a man, who gets into an argument with his wife, to strike her, and cause strife in the family. Imagine how hard it would be for such an unsaved man to channel his anger into compassion for the poor. Well, that is exactly what the Lord Jesus did when he "looked round about on them with anger", he was grieved in His heart and so had compassion on them, and healed the man with his withered hand (Mk.3: 2-6).

Challenge & or encouragement

- \* Perfect righteous anger like the Lord showed did not stir up strife. But anger without a cause like both examples in our illustration, does stir up strife. How many of us cannot sin when we get angry? And if we ever did, then how many of us would be able to channel that anger into compassion for the spiritually blind? Now that is a challenge for us all.
- \* Let us all pray for each other and ourselves that we would only get angry when we are able to channel those feelings into compassion. To do so, would show the heathen the difference between a lost man whose anger stirs up strife, and that of a righteous man whose anger can be channeled into compassion for the spiritually blind.

Summary of our three points.

1. Hate stirs up strife, and
2. Grievous words stir up anger, and
3. An angry man stirs up strife.