

Politics & Mysticism in the Weekly Torah Portion

Parshat (Portion) Toldot

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This week...

* *Recognizing the Singular Source for both Good and Evil*

* *Metatron and Samael, brothers?*

* *Rationalism, Intuition, apart and together.*

Shalom & welcome all.

This week's Torah portion is called Toldot (Genesis 25:19-28:9).

This lesson I originally wrote five years ago in 2007. In light of current events, I felt it prudent to present it again to my readers.

Yaakov and Esav were twins. Although Torah states that Esav was hairy and that Yaakov was smooth, no other physical differences between them is mentioned. While not all twins look alike, these two most likely looked very much alike. Torah is teaching us something very profound here. Both the archetype of evil (Esav) and the archetype of good (Yaakov) come from the same place, and at the same time, (twins in the womb of their mother). Their appearance is, in many ways, similar, and in many ways, different. Yet, beneath appearances, they are at opposite ends of the universe, or are they?

Good and evil have never been fully understood by most believers in religion. We are usually taught that good and evil are absolute opposites engaged in an eternal struggle for dominance. Yet, this concept is not what the Torah teaches. God clearly states through the prophet Isaiah (45:7) that, *"I form light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I am HaShem, that does all these things."* God is the creator of evil and darkness just as He is the maker of light and peace.

In this respect, let us remember it was God who directed Rivkah to be impregnated with the twin souls of Esav and Yaakov. God called down both souls from Heaven and placed them together to be born as twins. God did this, not Yitzhak and not Rivkah. We might very well ask why would God send the soul of the archetypal evil Esav to be born as a brother to the archetypal righteous Yaakov? What is God telling us by this bonding? As different as Esav and Yaakov grew to become, in the end they were still brothers, bound by common parents and common blood. What is this telling us about the relationship of good and evil?

This apparently bizarre relationship between good and evil did not begin here with Esav and Yaakov, nor did it end here. In Kabbalistic writings, we read something even more profound. *"Do not be surprised that you find written in the Holy Zohar regarding the Tree of Knowledge that the Good therein is Metatron, and the Evil therein is Samael"*.

Just as Esav and Yaakov are brothers below, so does Metatron, presented throughout Scripture as the Angel of the Lord, have a unique relationship with the Divinely ordained "evil" angel, Samael, known in Scripture, and later Jewish literature, as the Satan (the accuser, but not the "devil"). This follows the ancient mystical Torah adage, "as it is below so it is above." Yet, just what this is telling us is a profound revelation about the nature of the universe and how God operates with us.

Good and evil are both tools and agents of God. Good and evil both serve Heaven, to accomplish the Divine purpose. Torah, however, commands us to choose good, and to avoid evil. This is for our own benefit. Just because God creates a thing, allows its existence, and even in a way nurtures its existence, does not necessarily mean that such a thing is a benefit for us. God created all types of poisonous plants and allows them to flourish, yet nowhere does He suggest that we ingest their poison. Why then does God allow them to exist? This is a question that only Heaven can answer, an answer unknown to us.

Although God has created evil and bad things, and allows them to exist, He has warned us to stay away from them. Nevertheless, like Yaakov and Esav, sometimes the evil and bad things are not so clearly discernible. We often have a hard time recognizing and distinguishing evil from the good. We often mistake the visage of Esav for the visage of Yaakov. When this happens, and we embrace Esav instead of Yaakov, thinking all along that we are embracing Yaakov, we are in for one very rude awakening. We often forget to pay attention to Esav's metaphorical hairiness, which is a metaphor for rigidity and resistance to expansive, positive spontaneity.

Father Yitzhak, physically blind as he was, taught future generations how to recognize the difference between archetypal Esav and the archetypal Yaakov, all the while that the physical eyes (symbolic of human intellect) are blind to see. When Yaakov came to his father Yitzhak in Esav's garments, Yitzhak sensed something was amiss. Hearing Yaakov's voice, he suspiciously used his sense of touch to verify what he suspected. Yet, he concluded and said, *"The hands are the hands of Esav while the voice is the voice of Yaakov."* From this, our Sages understood the prophetic tone in Yitzhak's words. The "way of hands" is the way of Esav and the "way of voice" is the way of Yaakov. Although Yaakov can turn to the ways of Esav's hands, nonetheless, his true power is in his own voice.

"Hands" and "voice" are metaphors for two approaches to live. "Hands" indicate an approach which is completely and exclusively limited to the five physical senses. This approach refuses to acknowledge any higher force that may exist, directing reality, as if, from behind the scenes. The "voice" indicates a higher level of conscious, which sees the unseen and intuits what exists, using subtle extra-sensory perceptions, the likes of which the "hands" deny and reject.

As the Torah of the Kabbalah teaches, the Adamic race succumbed to physicality by becoming entangled in what is called the Tree of Knowledge, Good and Evil. By the metaphorical eating of this forbidden fruit, humanity lost its intuitive psychic edge, and instead had to rely completely upon its rational intellectual faculties to guide the way through life in this world.

As we have learned through the course of human history, the intellectual faculty alone is not enough to guide us safely through all of life's intricacies. Knowledge by itself can be both good and evil. Intellect alone can extract knowledge that can bring one either close to the Angel of the Lord, or to his counterpart, the Satan. Remember, all evil actions are justified in the eyes of their beholders by, what to them, is clear and rational thought.

Intellectual analysis of life and struggle is a two-edged sword that can lead one to good conclusions, or evil ones, or both. This is simply the dual nature of intellect when it is detached from intuitive psychic awareness that is received from, and connected to, a higher source of knowing.

Humanity was originally designed to think intuitively and intellectually simultaneously. With such a mental capacity we would be able to traverse worlds both seen and unseen, keeping both in proper balance and alignment. When, however, we lost contact with our intuitive edge, we also lost our ability to properly perceive the depths of the realities that face us. We enter life and pass through it in a relative state of blindness. We are always bumping into this or that thing,

crashing into something and breaking something else, all because we do not have the psychic eyes, or the sensitivity, to avoid danger.

The metaphorical hands of Esav, represent human endeavors that follow what we call the natural course, as perceived only with the physical senses. They are never enough to guide us in the paths of righteousness. Therefore, Esav represents all those who approach life through the level of detached intellect, without the balance of the metaphorical voice of Yaakov that rises, ascends above and unites the worlds, conscious with unconscious.

Rational intellectualism, without any psychic, intuitive interaction is a dry form of expression that leaves a bitter taste in one's mouth. This is why the Torah referred to it as the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge and prohibited our ingesting, our involvement with it.

Yet, curious human beings that we are, had to find out the truth. This time, the truth cost us dearly and we are still paying the price. Every day we eat of the forbidden fruit of stale, detached intellectualism and fall under the dominion of Samael, who, mind you, is just doing his job, as appointed for him by God.

Every day we use the hands of Esav instead of the voice of Yaakov. Every day we succumb to the curse that God has placed on Esav's psychological descendants. Every day we fail to recognize that Esav's descendants are not his bloodline, but rather those who walk in his footsteps; for the most part this means many of us.

The voice is the voice of Yaakov; this is what defines the righteous. Therefore, righteousness is not defined exclusively by one's actions; for even evil people can perform proper or righteous actions. Righteousness is actually a state of mind that leads to a transformed state of being.

In order to be righteous one has to not eat of the forbidden fruit of detached rationalism devoid of psychic intuitive awareness. Needless to say, this flies in the face of most religious leaders and practitioners today. What a bizarre twist of fate how many Jewish (and other) leaders today, religious and secular alike, are actually walking the path of Esav instead of speaking the voice of Yaakov.

Especially in the religious camps, rationalism has been wrongly elevated to the level of holiness, at the expense of what is called mysticism. Such so-called Rabbis, in spite of whatever Torah they think they are studying, are actually studying Torah in the way of Samael and not in the way of the Angel of God. The detached rationalists are essentially dragging down the Torah into the metaphorical "hands of Esav," instead of elevating by the metaphorical "voice of Yaakov."

The results of this are self-evident. We see nothing but trouble arising out of their camps. There is abundant intellectual accomplishments, but it is all void of spiritual depth and devotional attachment to Heaven. Morals are twisted and behaviors are beyond the definition of bizarre, and all of it is justified, viewed and proclaimed as holy.

This is the byproduct of eating the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. These blind leaders have lost the ability to distinguish between good and evil. They have mistaken Esav for Yaakov, and act as Esav does, instead of speak as Yaakov speaks.

More so, my words here will only fall upon their deaf ears, just like the words of admonishment spoken by centuries of Sages and prophets, who were also ignored and scorned.

Distinguishing between Esav and Yaakov has always been difficult. Since their birth, they have been twins and ever since then many have confused the two. Yet, never have there been such dire consequences for such an apparently minor mistake. It is imperative for us to learn to speak with the voice of Yaakov, and to cease interpreting "the voice of Yaakov" to mean rational academic Torah study that is devoid of clairvoyance and extra-sensory perceptions.

Yaakov's voice ascends to Heaven in meditation and prophetic communion, just like he learned in the tents of his grandfather Avraham. Yaakov alone, and those who follow his example today, are the ones who can direct where and how the Heavenly ladder descends to Earth.

Those religious leaders who would distance themselves, and others, from the embrace of the psychic and intuitive aspects of Torah are in the words of the Zohar destroying the world (ref. T.K. 47). Elsewhere, the Zohar refers to them as Amalek, the sworn enemy of G-d (ref. Zoh. 1, 25b). Such religious leaders are Esav disguised as Yaakov. The old saying states that "fruit does not fall far from the tree." We see from what Tree these disconnected rationalists eat.

Learn to distinguish between good and evil, between Yaakov and Esav, between the voice that builds, and the hand that break. These Esavs in Yaakov's clothing are destroying the world. It is up to us who use the voice to fight this, and to restore Esav to his subservient place. Intellect must always be subservient to intuition, for this is the natural order of the sefirot, Hokhma (wisdom) and Binah (understanding). Yet, the two must work together in harmony, in balance, and following the ordained Divine order of things.

We find an interesting Midrash with regards to Esav. It is taught that when Yaakov was carried up out of Egypt to be buried in Makhpelah Cave, that Esav met the children of Israel and attempted to block the interment. In the ensuing battle between the sons of Esav and the sons of Israel, Esav himself was killed. The Midrash says that after Yaakov was laid to rest alongside his father and grandfather, Esav's decapitated head was laid to rest on the lap of his father Yitzhak. Indeed, today, in Makhpelah, in Hebron Israel, there is a separate room for Esav's head. While this is a nice story, its significance is profound.

Apparently, not all of Esav is bad. His head was good and merited to be buried in the cave that leads to Gan Eden. The head, of course, represents the very best of Esav. What the Midrash is telling us is that, if and when Esav rises to the level of Yaakov, then Esav too uses the "voice of Yaakov" and not the "hands of Esav." This then is the secret of rectification.

In the end, God has His Divine purpose for allowing all that happens to happen. One lesson for us to learn is that if we partake of the Tree of Life (Torat HaSod), we will never again become susceptible to the infection and poison emanating from the Tree of Knowledge and the influence of Samael/Esav/Erev Rav/Amalek, which has risen to the heights of power in the world today, and are using their influence to destroy it.

Act like Yaakov with your voice and the hands of Esav will be properly put in their place.

And this concludes my weekly Torah portion lesson in politics and mysticism.

Any comments? Please send them to me at kosher Torah1@yahoo.com