

## Good and Bad

*By Ariel Bar Tzadok*

Peace brings life; war brings death. One is good, the other bad. Is this not true?

Wealth brings strength; poverty brings weakness. One is good, the other bad. Is this not true?

Authority brings respect. Servitude brings humility. One is good, the other bad. Is this not true?

I can say of all these that they are true and that they are not true.

Of all these things, I can think of times when any one of them can be good  
and other times when any one of them can be bad.

It all depends on the circumstances and life provides us with a limitless number of circumstances.

Think not in absolutes. Think not of "either, or."  
Rather think of "this and that," instead of "this or that."

Always seek proper balance.

Seek out how much of this or how little of that is what is right for the moment and the circumstances.  
Ask, is this the right balance? Is this the correct recipe for making that which I wish to be?

By nature, all absolutes are extremes. Nothing in the natural world is absolute.  
Everything in life is but a combination of parts, some good, and some bad.

There is wisdom in knowing the true nature of a thing,  
to recognize within a thing what inherently is good and what intrinsically is bad.

Everything in life can be used by us to serve us or be used against us to destroy us.  
We must be able to look at a thing and recognize within it what part is good and what part is bad.

Fire is good; it can keep us warm when it is cold. Fire is bad; it can burn us and cause us great loss.  
So, which is it? Is fire good or bad? It all depends upon how it is used.  
As it is with fire, so is it with everything else.

Know well this simple wisdom and you will be able to recognize and distinguish  
between the good and bad within everything that crosses your path.

One will then be able to embrace the good, even within the bad.  
At the same time, one will recognize the bad and cast it off,  
even when it comes our way attached to something good.

Wisdom discerns. Wisdom distinguishes. Wisdom sees with the eye of simplicity  
and is not blinded by a lack of common sense or by deceptive argument and rationalizations.

Place these words upon your heart. Carry them in your hand and wear them between your eyes.  
When wisdom enlightens your eyes, and rules your heart, it will also guide your actions.

This is the recipe for surety and safety.  
Learn well the Ways of Heaven and you will come to see the Hand of G-d.