

Good and Evil, Twins, Opposites, or Both?

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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. G-d 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."* G-d 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 G-d who directed Rivkah to be impregnated with the twin souls of Esav and Yaakov. HaShem called down both souls from Heaven and placed them together to be born as twins. HaShem did this, not Yitzhak and not Rivkah. We might very well ask why would HaShem send the soul of the archetypal Rasha Esav to be born as a brother to the archetypal Tzadik Yaakov? What is HaShem telling us by this mating? 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 is the Angel of HaShem uniquely related with the evil angel known commonly as the Satan. This follows the ancient 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 HaShem operates with us.

Good and evil are both agents of HaShem and 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 HaShem 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. HaShem created all types of poisonous plants and allows them to flourish, yet nowhere does He suggest that we ingest their poison. Why then does HaShem allow them to exist, this is a question that only Heaven can answer, an answer unknown to us.

Although HaShem has created evil and bad things and allows them to exist and has warned us to stay away from them, nonetheless, like Yaakov and Esav, sometimes the evil and bad things are not so clearly discerned. We often have a hard time recognizing the 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 harshness and severity.

Yitzhak Avinu, physically blind as he was, taught for posterity how to recognize the difference between Esav and Yaakov all the while that the eyes are blind to see. When Yaakov came to him in Esav’s garments, Yitzhak 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.

As Torah 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 our rational intellectual faculties to guide our 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 HaShem or to his counterpart, the Satan.

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 mental eyes or the sensitivity to avoid danger.

The metaphorical hands of Esav, representing human endeavors that follow what we call the natural course, 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. Every day we use the hands of Esav instead of the voice of Yaakov. Every day we succumb to the curse that HaShem has placed on Esav's 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 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 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, where rationalism has been elevated to 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 the way of Samael and not the way of the Angel of HaShem.

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 hypocritical leaders have lost the ability to distinguish between good and evil. They have mistaken Esav for Yaakov and do 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 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 this to mean mere rational academic Torah study devoid of heart and mysticism.

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 Rabbis who would distance themselves and others from the embrace of the mystical and emotional aspects of Torah are in the words of the holy 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 Rabbis 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 ascends and the hand that destroys. These Esavs in Yaakov's clothing are destroying the Torah world. It is up to us who use the Voice to fight this and to restore Esav to his subservient place.

In the end, HaShem has His Divine purpose for allowing all this 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 who have risen to the heights of power in the religious camps and are using their influence to destroy it. Act like Yaakov with your voice and the hands of Esav will be broken.