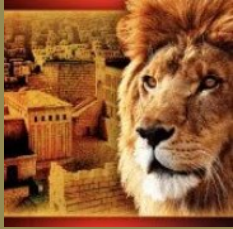


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To the Torah & the Testimony
If anyone does not speak according to these words
It is because they have no light in them.
Yesh'yahu (Isaiah) 8:20; Revelation 12:17; 14:12



Torah Thought of the Month

Studies of Eden Series

No. 5, Apr. 2017

“Two Choices”

B'reshet (Genesis) 2:16,17

In the beginning Adam and Havah (Eve) had everything. The real estate of the entire earth belonged to them, and in the Garden they had everything they needed for food and comfort in life, as well as light, casual, pleasant labor for their work.

But with this Paradise came a responsibility to rely on the Eternal One for their only source of instruction, and to place their trust entirely in Him, and in no other, not even in one's own self or intellect, for the sustainment of their life and good. Then to demonstrate to Adam and Havah (Eve), and to all following generations, the immense importance of this, the Eternal One placed a tree in the midst of the Garden, the tree of knowledge of good and evil; **B'reshet (Genesis) 3:3**, which contained within it the full consequences of what takes place when one does not completely place their full trust in Him and His instruction.

The Eternal One provided a vast array of pleasurable choices, fully good and nourishing for us, and that complimented our ability to walk with the Eternal One in the Garden and to speak and have fellowship with Him face to face. It was an environment and way of life completely and utterly bereft of any and all disease, death, and decay. An environment where everything flourished and was full of life – eternal life.

There was no need for doctors or lawyers, or prisons or law enforcement. No need for medications, or surgeries, no need for funerals or life insurance, accident insurance, or taxes. There were no toxic chemicals, or nuclear waste, genetically modified organisms or pesticides. No war, no lies, no rapes, stealing, venereal disease or back stabbing. And all that was required to maintain that perfect environment was for Adam and Havah (Eve) to completely trust the Eternal One by not eating from the forbidden tree; by not eating from the idol in the midst of the Garden.

In that day, broad was the way the led to eternal life, and narrow was the way that led to death.

Then one day came the deceiver who persuaded Adam and Havah (Eve) that partaking from that tree would not really cause them to die, but would only make them like gods, knowing good and evil. Then having been successfully persuaded that the Eternal One had not been totally honest with them - that He was somehow being unfair, unreasonable, or over protective, they gave into their temptation.

The world that we see today is the result of that single act of disobedience. In the world today, every hateful act, every murder, every rape, every act of violence and betrayal; every act of sexual impurity, oppression, injustice, dishonesty, covetousness and thievery, every sin, every sickness, every death that ever takes place, every flower whose blossom withers, every painful experience, act of suffering, and tear of sorrow - all resulted from that one single act of distrust and disobedience to the Eternal One's instruction to simply refrain from eating the forbidden fruit.

Interestingly enough, and despite this, I oftentimes see people fall into the trap of saying something to the effect of

“well my sin isn’t that bad, at least of never killed anybody, or molested or raped anybody...” etc... failing to consider that it wasn’t murder or some other horrific sin that caused all this death, disease, and destruction to come into the earth, but rather the seemingly harmless act of simply consuming a piece of forbidden fruit that did.

And now with this one single act of seemingly harmless disobedience, the narrow way that led to destruction became the broad way that leads to destruction, and the broad way that led to life became the narrow more difficult way of life. And the whole earth since that split moment in time has been thrust into a deadly downward spiral of continuous death and decay until finally the day comes where Yeshua states that “unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved”; **Mattit’yahu (Matthew) 24:22**.

That is, until the day comes where (if it were not for Yeshua’s return and intervention) all life on earth, as a result of that original, seemingly harmless sin, would become ultimately extinct.

So now where heaven and earth, and where the spiritual realm and physical realm were once one, now suddenly we have dual worlds. Now we have the spiritual realm and the physical realm, the Eternal One’s domain in heaven, and the Evil One’s domain in Sheol (Hell), with everything in between in battle with one another.

There is now darkness battling with light, physical battling with spiritual, and the proud battling against the humble. We have rain contrasted with sunshine, storm contrasted with calm, violence contrasted with peace, and anarchy pitted against law and order.

In fact, there appears to be a dual nature to just about anything you can think of in our world, reflecting that to everything there are two sides or components. There is up and down, forwards and backwards, male and female, front and back, day and night, hot and cold, summer and winter, etc... to everything there is an opposite force, component, or principle that is diametrically opposite or opposed.

For example, consider our decisions in life. In every decision we make in life, there are two choices. Either a right choice versus a wrong choice, or wise choice versus a less wise choice, or even a good choice versus a better choice, or when it comes to elections, often a choice of the lesser of two evils. No matter where we are in life, or who we are, or what our position or education level or degree of spirituality; we must make decisions for better or for worse, numerous times, over and over again, on a daily basis.

We can make a series of choices in our lives that lead to great success in whatever we endeavor to set our minds to, or we can make a series of poor choices in our lives that lead us to drug addiction, or prison, or life in the streets. We can even make great choices in a particular area of our life like in economics or in education, but make horrible choices concerning spiritual matters and eternity, and vice versa.

And it all began in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Havah (Eve) were given two choices. Choice number one, to trust the Eternal One, and only the Eternal One and His instruction. Or choice two, trust the Eternal One less than completely, or even not at all, and trust our own judgment and/or the judgment and instruction of others as well to the same degree or even more. That is, choose the Eternal One alone who is good, or choose a mixture of good and evil. That is, choose to trust the One who is perfect in His wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, or hand ourselves over to the conflicting results of experientially acquired knowledge.

Now since the time of that initial decision by Adam and Havah (Eve), the propensity in our decision making to mix both good and evil into the buffet of our mental appetites has been burned into our dna in a way that can be overcome only by turning completely back to the Eternal One with our WHOLE heart. And we can only turn back to Him with our whole heart by choosing to trust ONLY in Him and His instruction, in Him and His commandments.

This presents for us an interesting pattern in Scripture. In heaven, you had Lucifer next to the throne of the Eternal One who wanted to be exalted above the congregation – that is, who wanted to be on the throne in place of the Eternal One; **Yesh’yahu (Isaiah) 14:13,14**. Lucifer, like Adam and Havah (Eve), had everything, and like Adam and Havah (Eve) who were forbidden only to partake of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, even so, Lucifer was only forbidden the throne of the Eternal One.

But by giving into this temptation, Lucifer fell into a spiral of death taking down 1/3 of the angels along the way who had also failed to be content with their stature and possessions as well. Then in the garden, this temptation for a single forbidden thing was successfully transferred to Adam and Havah (Eve) as well who took Lucifer’s bait, even as the 1/3 of angels in heaven who fell had.

And isn’t it interesting that every ancient culture that continues to exist today in the world has an annual celebration involving a tree and the worship of a god other than Yehovah our Elohim (God)? And isn’t it interesting also that the

human brain with its spinal cord and dual way of thinking, looks like a tree with “two” hemispheres?

So thus the plan of salvation for mankind given through Israel. Beginning with the promise to Havah (Eve) that someday a descendant would come forth from her who would crush the authority of the serpent; **B’resheet (Genesis) 3:15**, that is, who would rid the earth of the serpent’s dual influence and the resulting death, disease, and destruction from that influence; **Yesh’yahu (Isaiah) 49:8-11, Romans 8: 21,22; I Corinthians 15:24-28, 51-55**.

The plan of which was then revealed to Israel. As it is written in **D’varim (Deuteronomy) 30:11-14**, where the Eternal One states to Israel that His commandments are not too difficult for them, or too far from them, but even in their heart so that they may do them – even as His commandments were in Adam’s heart in the Garden so that he could also easily do them.

And again in **verse 30:15** where He says, “See today, I have set before you life and good, and death and evil”, like Adam had the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil placed before him in the Garden so that he could also choose life over death, and good over evil; **B’resheet (Genesis) 2:9, 3:3**.

And again in **verse 30:16** where He says that if Israel obeys Him that they would be blessed in the land which they were going in to possess, even as Adam would remain blessed in the Garden that the Eternal One had given him, if he would likewise be faithful.

But that if Israel turned away their heart so that they do not hear Him anymore, but instead, are drawn away by other gods to serve them, even as Adam in the Garden turned his heart away from the Eternal One to do the bidding of other gods (that is, to do the bidding of the serpent - the god of this world; **I Corinthians 4:4**, and of his wife who he had now allowed to usurp his own and the Eternal One’s authority) - that Israel would most certainly perish from the land, even as Adam and Havah (Eve) perished and were ultimately banished from the Garden; **verses 30:16,17; B’resheet (Genesis) 3:23,24**.

Isn’t interesting that to this very day, even professing believers themselves will choose every year at Christmas time to have an idol in the midst of their living room that they can bow down to and receive gifts from rather than obey the Eternal One they claim to worship and who clearly and very specifically forbids this practice in **Yerem’yahu (Jeremiah) 10:1-5**? And will even eat ham in celebration of this event contrary to the prophet Isaiah’s warning concerning the pagan versions of this event from which Christmas was originally derived?; **Yesh’yahu (Isaiah) 66:17**.

And what about other idols in our lives, like televisions, Facebook, or cell phones that we also exalt today as a Christian nation in favor of the Eternal One’s commandments and instruction? Or our own will’s even that we exalt above His will concerning how we dress, eat, and entertain ourselves? Or even concerning what parts of the bible we will follow and which parts we will not, as if His instruction of life to us was some kind of buffet that we can just pick and choose what we like or are in the mood for, while simply passing by the rest, or by refusing to even place it onto our plate for later consideration or consumption?

When we say we obey Yehovah our Elohim (God), do we really? Do we really serve Him with our whole hearts and trust in His instruction completely? Or do we cast off, and even stand against, anything in His word that we do not understand, or that goes contrary to our desired lifestyle and appetites?

What do we do? And how faithful are we really when it comes to trusting fully in the Eternal One and His instruction/commands? As the Eternal One said to Adam in the Garden, and as He said to Israel in **D’varim (Deuteronomy) 30**, I say now to you:

I call heaven and earth to witnesses against you today, declaring that He has set before you both life and death, and blessing and cursing, and to adjure you to therefore choose, this day, life, so that you and your descendants may live. And adjure you, to love Yehovah your Elohim (God), so that you may obey His voice and cling to Him; for He is your life and your length of days. For if you do these things, He will cause you to dwell in the land which He swore to give our forefathers Avraham (Abraham), Yit’zak (Isaac), and Yaaqov (Jacob) as an eternal possession for them and their descendants; **B’resheet (Genesis) 17:7,8**.

Do this, and be blessed.

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