



A Modern Day Version of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

If possible, even the elect will be deceived

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May, 2020



Nearly the whole world is shut down as I write, with another month of “shelter at home” recently renewed by the governor of Wisconsin. Although the illness is real, and some are dying, most can see that the numbers do not match the dire predictions made at first, nor do they seem to justify these extreme measures. The ideas of what this is REALLY about are growing. It is not always easy to discern what is truth, half truth, or untruth. Confusion and chaos seem to reign.

*And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every **tree** that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the **tree** of life also in the midst of the garden, and the **tree** of knowledge of good and evil. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every **tree** of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the **tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it:** for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Gen 2:9, 16-17*

About ten years ago, I was led to focus on these two trees of the garden for nearly a year. I understood that the evil one, our adversary, who wants to become “like God” and worshiped as God, used this very tree of the knowledge of good and evil to instill doubt in the mind of Eve about the goodness and purpose of God. The word commonly translated as “serpent” brings to mind the image of snake and one wonders how Eve could have believed it! When looking at the Hebrew language underneath it, the word “*nachash*” Strong’s H5175 became apparent. **It was NOT an ordinary “snake.”** It has connections with concepts such as shining, prognostication, magic spells, and crafty, as well as being related to the order of the hosts of heaven and divine throne guardians.¹ Since Adam and Eve walked and talked in the Garden with our Elohim, and He has a host of heaven who serve Him; one wonders if it was not uncommon to see them then. We know that some of these host of heaven, commonly called angels, fell in rebellion with the Adversary, while some remained faithful to YHWH. Considering this appearance as

¹ The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible; Heiser, Michael S.; Chapter 11: Like the Most High?; pages 83-91.

a factor in Eve's being beguiled may help us understand how this could have happened. The serpent/nachash APPEARED to be no different than anything else Eve knew. She allowed it/him to draw her attention to the one thing that YHWH had said was "out of bounds." He caused her to focus on the fruit of the tree, which appeared good, while discounting YHWH's warning, also leading her to disregard that this "good fruit" came from a tree that also brought forth evil and both had the same root. In effect, she was "trapped in the box" of thinking what the *nachash* wanted her to focus on, losing sight of the REALITY of the two choices between what is rooted in evil or in life!

I have written of this before and noted that what was made clear to me was that the "good" of the second tree is NOT the same as what we consider "good" nor is it equivalent to "life." The wisdom of our Elohim is not equivalent to the kind of wisdom we gain just living life, but rather is specifically related to knowing Him and His ways to walk in them.

*For the LORD gives wisdom;
From His mouth come knowledge and understanding;
He stores up sound wisdom for the upright;
He is a shield to those who walk uprightly;
He guards the paths of justice,
And preserves the way of His saints.*

Proverbs 2:6-8 NKJV

What is the "good" then, of that second tree? The important concept there is that it has the same root as what is called "evil." It has an appearance of having a positive impact, for "good" but is deceptive. I puzzled for a long time on this as to what could only appear to be good by our definition yet not be good in YHWH's understanding. One example that I eventually understood was that of philanthropy. Doing good deeds for others at one's own expense. I began to see that there could be something good that was born—or came from the roots—of something other than YHWH's leading. Philanthropists may be doing good things for the benefit of public recognition, reputation or even for financial benefit, given the taxable deductions standard we have.

We are clearly told that whatever is not "Of" or "rooted in" YHWH will come to nothing in the end...

*each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it,
because it will be revealed by fire;
and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.
1 Corinthians 3:13 NKJV*

In fact, the two trees represent **three** choices.

- 1) What is good and pleasing to YHWH; life giving.
- 2) What gives an appearance of being good and pleasing to man/YHWH, but is evil at the root
- 3) what is evil, wicked, contrary to YHWH's ways, destructive to life.

As a result, we get trapped into a debate on the conflict within 2 or between 2 and 3, instead of understanding that it is really the difference between 1 and 3 that matters!

*When I was a **child**, I spake as a **child**, I understood as a **child**, I thought as a **child**:
but when I became a man, I put away **childish** things.*

1 Cor. 13:11

I grew up knowing that there was right and wrong, good and evil and that we were told by our God to choose what is good. As an adult, I understood that we are to choose life. There is much to discuss on this topic, but I cannot address all of that in this context.

*I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death,
blessing and cursing; therefore **choose life**, that both you and your descendants may live;
that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice,
and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days;
Deuteronomy 30:19-20 NKJV*

What I did NOT understand until much later was that this third category even existed and that it confuses us on choosing between the two. I recognized that I needed to mature in understanding in order to be able to see discrepancies and duplicity: the appearance of good while NOT being good. This is commonly called **discernment**. **Many things are clearly black/wrong or white/right but the crucial determining factors in how we walk and choose to live our lives is in this third aspect, and the ability to study and understand that the root of some things that appear good is really the same as evil.**

As a parent, I taught my children to be aware of right and wrong, the two clear choices. I also tried to help them understand this third category once I had begun to comprehend it.

I believe it was this same need for discernment of that third category that caused Sha'ul/Paul to feel jealous lest those he had disciplined in faith, would fail to have the ability to recognize deception. He feared that the same deceptive tactics that worked in the garden would again be used to lead people AWAY from the real Messiah.

Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.

For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

*But I fear, lest by any means, **as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted** from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

2 Cor. 11: 1-4, 12-15 KJV

...At that time, if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There He is,' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders that would deceive even the elect, if that were possible. See, I have told you in advance....

Matthew 24:23-25 Berean study Bible

The word "transformed" is also translated as "disguised" and "masquerades." This is the dilemma with that "third" choice that we too often haven't recognized exists. **It is evil disguised as good.**

Like Messiah Himself, He warned his people that even those who appear to be doing marvelous signs and wonders are not always of YHWH; and certainly that there are forces in the world that from the beginning have set themselves up as false christs. It is not ONLY the evil one who is disguised but also those who serve him.

Here it is important to note that the usual translation is "anti-christ" meaning that which sets itself against the real Christ/Messiah. Unfortunately, the use of the prefix "anti" has led many to believe that this person will be opposed to everything the real Messiah does so they may think it will be easy to discern. (No, he will not come wearing the red suit, with horns and a pitchfork.) A more accurate translation of this prefix is "in place of."

THIS is why Sha'ul/Paul was concerned! It will APPEAR to be good and doing wondrous works so as to deceive even the elect if possible. Scripture tells us that many "anti'christs" have gone out into the world just as there has been tribulation in the world since Messiah's death and resurrection. Ultimately, there will come THE anti-christ and THE GREAT Tribulation. In the midst of confusion and chaos in the world, one will appear that will seem to be offering restoration and redemption of all that has gone before that is bad. What is being hidden is the role the apparent savior had in creating the trouble in the first place!

If one is only operating on the child like awareness of the difference of the two categories, between good and evil, it will be easy to be deceived. If one has matured and begun to comprehend the need to assess the roots to discern that third category, of only APPEARING to be good, there is less chance of being deceived.

*For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping,
that they are enemies of the cross of Christ,
whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame,
who set their minds on earthly things.*

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

Philippians 3: 18-21

From the beginning, mankind has had to contend with knowing the difference between right and wrong, good and evil. Though we do well to teach our young children this concept, it isn't enough to take us all the way through our lives. There is more subtlety at work.

There at the beginning, the choices were modeled in two trees: the Tree of Life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. **Two trees: but three categories.**

The True Good and Life from YHWH; and two things from the same root: knowledge of what is presented as good and what is presented as evil. Being presented as good is a disguise or an illusion.

This leads me to a modern day version of this tree of the knowledge of good and evil. My undergraduate training was in the area of sociology (with a music minor.) I really have found little of lasting value in much of that training but for a few concepts. One is that an institution will eventually lose its original purpose and goal, giving more focus to the survival of the organization rather than the original passion that birthed it. Another I consider to be a modern day form of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which is known as the **Hegelian Dialectic**. It refers to a process; a way of doing things, no matter what the content or subject matter might be.

A dialectic is:

-a way of discovering what is true by considering opposite theories

-using questions and answers as a method of examining something or of finding a solution to a problem:

-Conflict and disagreement are a necessary part of a **dialectic approach**.

The dialectics of form and content cannot be disrupted; it is the necessary precondition of how content is presented and what it comprises.

From [Cambridge English Corpus](#)

Such a system could not know peace in its history and had to be visited by revolutions and conquests, such was the law of dialectics.

From [Cambridge English Corpus](#)

These examples are from the Cambridge English Corpus and from sources on the web. Any opinions in the examples do not represent the opinion of the Cambridge Dictionary editors or of Cambridge University Press or its licensors. ²

The way our “national conversations” about problems and solutions takes place is often through media; the mainstream news media and increasing numbers of independent reporting use of the media. The governmental bodies give what information they choose to the public. There is a very small number of owners of the mainstream media and thus, the capability to focus on what they choose is important and to discard what they do not believe is important.

People on the street then act and react according to the information they receive, usually believing that they have enough information to take their position. The perspective presented by the mainstream news people has been demonstrated to be very uniform, and thus there is a “preferred narrative” that comes forth in how events are viewed. One example: Some people have compiled video montages of news reporters from many different channels, on the same day, each using almost exactly the same phrases. If you are not familiar with Project Mockingbird, please look it up. It was and is a plan to direct the narrative in our media. Many people do not realize the degree of control in influencing the narrative that is held in so few hands. The illusion of there being different viewpoints is somehow preserved because there are different people make these reports.

I have heard people ask why the news is so seldom about something good! I suggest that this is the underlying factor that influences how things are presented, polarizing opposing viewpoints. The idea then of discovering truth only through the presentation of opposing concepts comes through as the dialectic we experience today in America and really, around the world. Many have commented on the increasing polarizing effect, leading to more perceived problems and conflict between the different groups.

Specifically, then what is the **Hegelian Dialectic**?

It is based in the work of Max Hegel and his goals of managing and directing the beliefs and actions of groups of people in the preferred direction of those in leadership. Hegel’s concepts of manipulating people were adapted by the Marxist movement led by Karl Marx.

The best brief description I have found:

The [Hegelian dialectic](#) is the framework for guiding our thoughts and actions into conflicts that lead us to a predetermined solution. If we do not understand how the Hegelian dialectic shapes our perceptions of the world, then we do not know how we are helping to implement the [vision](#). **When we remain locked into dialectical**

²Definition of **dialectic** from the [Cambridge Business English Dictionary](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/dialectic) © Cambridge University Press) <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/dialectic> May, 2020

thinking, we cannot see out of the box.³

For a little more detail consider this excerpt or go to the original footnoted source to read a more full description. The term that is used is not communism, but communitarian. It is now commonly in use throughout many levels of organizations, from local groups to international ones.

The communitarian purpose for the Hegelian dialectic

Hegel's theory is basically that mankind is merely a series of constant philosophical conflicts. Hegel was an [idealist](#) who believed that the highest state of mankind can only be attained through constant ideological conflict and resolution. The rules of the dialectic means mankind can only reach its highest spiritual consciousness through endless self-perpetuating struggle between ideals, and the eventual synthesizing of all opposites. Hegel's dialectic taught all conflict takes man to the next spiritual level. But in the final analysis, this ideology simply justifies conflict and endless war. It is also the reasoning behind using military power to export an illogical version of freedom and false [democratic ideals](#).⁴

Hegel believed mankind to exist in a continual series of conflicts, and that the resolution of these conflicts would ultimately lead to man's "highest state." (There was no need for belief in God because mankind can get to the spiritually high state alone.) Essentially, conflicts involve more than one viewpoint as each viewpoint is argued through between the opponents, they come to some form of consensus. Under Hegelian and Marxist leadership these conflicts are shaped in how situations are presented, offering supposedly opposing views which must be reconciled. They choose how to present the opposites, intentionally choosing a path that will lead the successive consensus in a direction they have chosen. They are quite patient and willing to move in small incremental steps toward their ultimate goal, not easily discouraged by temporary set backs.

What is often not recognized is the hand at work behind the scenes, shaping the perspective of the viewpoints...**the same hand behind both sides.**

³ **What is the Hegelian Dialectic?**; By Niki Raapana and Nordica Friedrich, October 2005; found online at <http://www.crossroad.to/articles2/05/dialectic.htm>, April, 2020.

⁴ Ibid.

As they have gained influence in the process and how best to promote their desired end, they have become very good at finding ways to use current events to pit one person/group/opinion against another. In fact, some in power have gone to the extent that they CREATE the current events that they then seek to polarize people around. We have come to call them “false flag” events, where a situation is staged to appear to have been something bad done by one party, which galvanizes the other party into action. False Flag events have had a hand in every major war.

Since most people haven’t understood, and if told of it, usually reject it, they do not understand that there is a common hand behind the opposing views they see. They may honestly work hard to pick the view that matches their worldview the best and then support that. Even though they have no idea of the oppositional plan underlying this, attempting to lead the population in a desired direction, just by their participation, in taking one of the offered positions, they are helping the agenda to move forward!

The most readily seen example is perhaps the issue of abortion. It was long considered outside the realm of consideration, taking a life in Biblical sense. Those who want abortion to be readily available have a political agenda. If you have never checked out Planned Parenthood and founder Margaret Sanger’s eugenics beliefs you may be shocked. (Years later, the original situation that led to Roe V. Wade was exposed as having been falsified.)

The conflicting opinions were established in a progressive manner, so as not to go extremely far beyond the accepted norm at first. Since the subject was not really palatable for most people in America, more of Christian belief than recently, the concern about medical safety was initially used to gain a foothold. So the dilemma was framed as being between the health of a woman seeking an abortion and the absence of legal enforceable standards to protect her. It was largely based in emotional rhetoric.

Morally conscientious people do NOT want to see people harmed, so eventually the conflict was resolved by making abortion available under certain circumstances, usually the safety of the mother. Then a long series of pushing the limits on that followed, eventually going to the point of permitting late term abortions. This would have been UNTHINKABLE to have even started there as the conversation would have been ended immediately. Now, since late term abortions were approved, you may be aware that the current “conflict” has moved to the mother being able to choose AFTER BIRTH if she wants the child to live or not; though of course, it is still referred to as a fetus, until the decision on keeping it alive is made or not. There have always been some people who have withstood this, but the general “sway” of public opinion has been to be more and more permissive about something that would not have even been permitted into polite conversation earlier. **This was not an accident or inevitable.** In recent months, there has finally been some pushback and some effort to roll back what has been permitted, but that doesn’t discount the process that was used to arrive at this point.

Application to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

Just as Eve was beguiled by the serpent/*nachash* into keeping her eyes on the fruit of the forbidden tree, and drawing her into doubt of the character and intent of God, so do those who use the Hegelian Dialectic model in organizational decision making, in political and governmental situations and so forth, use it today to draw people in the “box” of thinking that these are the alternatives that must be resolved. Without realizing it, we are drawn into taking positions about what we see and hear is going

on in the world, thus participating in the oppositional sides. If we have only gotten to the point that we are able to appreciate the concepts of good and evil, right and wrong, then we are not equipped to recognize that third position, of APPEARING to be good, but in fact coming from the same root as evil.

We may easily be herded into one “side” or the other. I have noticed that the stark contrast between the two presented alternatives just keeps growing more intense. For example, to one set of people, let’s say political conservatives, it is obviously right and good to support the constitution and move back toward its full application. To those who are seeking global government, this is obviously bad to move in this direction because it hampers the consolidation of power in the hands of global leaders. Without going into too much political commentary here, may I say that I have noticed in past election cycles that one candidate from one party may appear extremely capable and the other extremely incapable. (It has switched from being one party or the other.) Since we generally function on only a two party system, with independents at such a disadvantage they can rarely successfully complete outside that two position framework, the obvious incompetence of one candidate may “force” or “herd” people of good will toward voting for the one they view as more competent, even if they are not in total political or moral agreement. (In effect, a vote FOR one candidate is really their vote AGAINST the other.) I suggest that this happens intentionally, and is remarkably successful at directing people to make the preferred decision they are led to make, all outside their conscious awareness.

In recent years, it has been apparent to me that we are dealing with personifications of the good and bad spectrum, more so even than political party stance. Many years ago, in the 90s, I had said that I was viewing the two parties as one being the “slow boat” to the global/new world order and the other being the “faster boat” to the same end. So I have seen that third category become more and more relevant. That is part of what has been going on as President Trump has continued his nationalistic, or populist position against those that seek globalization. It has taken some time for people to begin to realize this is the conflict position that has been driving much of what has happened within our government.

But is it all what it appears to be?

Is what we are seeing that appears to be good from the root of the Lifegiving Tree of Life and YHWH’s ways or is it coming from the “good side” of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Is what we are seeing rooted in acknowledgement that we need our Elohim because mankind alone cannot achieve “goodness?” Or is what we are seeing an eloquent effort to make the case that yes, mankind CAN ascend and achieve spiritual heights without God, or at least only giving him lip service?

Yeshua observed the third position when He said:

*You hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied correctly about you: ‘These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. They worship Me in vain; they teach as doctrine the precepts of men.’ ...
Matthew 15:8*

Therefore the Lord said: “These people draw near to Me with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me. Their worship of Me is but rules taught by men.

Isaiah 29:13

When we view what is going on in the political and governmental realm today do we see the battle as between good and evil, positions 1 and 3, or can we check it out more fully and see that the third position of APPEARANCE of good may be distracting us to that “box” of dialectic process which entraps us? In other words, are we exercising our discernment or are we trapped in the box of the two positions that really represent the same root?

This can only happen through the revelation of the Holy Spirit and the desire of people to be informed and knowledgeable of not only current events but history as well, so that their discernment can be sharpened and applied. It is the knowledge of His Word and ways that Hosea the prophet addressed here, however in that our modern day issues DO often revolve around whether we are seeking YHWH’s ways or human ways, or the appearance of godly ways, and then whether we are aware or not, rejecting His ways, I find it relevant.

*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge,
I will also reject you as My priests. Since you have forgotten the law of your God,
I will also forget your children. The more they multiplied, the more they sinned against Me;
they exchanged their Glory for a thing of disgrace....*

Hosea 4:6-7

Please contact us for further info on specific applications.

May we all continue to watch and pray as Messiah directed.

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Additional Resource

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xm-Pt9Gv1-I> Epoch Times article in video format, explaining how Hegelian Dialectic is being used in the current coronavirus situation: above/hidden and below/people in the streets to create illusion of chaos, leading to despair of common people, to then offer solutions.

