

# There's Men, and Then There's Men.

By Rabbi Yehudah ben Shomeyr

I grew up in a part of the country where the men went hunting, fishing, working on cars, and their lives consisted of work, sports and TV. If this didn't describe you, if this wasn't what you were about, then you weren't a real man.

Guys who liked books, music, the arts, cooking, being a stay at home Dad, and the like were seen as, less than, pansies, wimps, wusses, girly men, even queers and fags. If you said, "I am a lover, not a fighter." You were considered a wimp.

The scene is slowly changing but predominantly in this culture men are tough, silent, they show little affection and they don't cry. Guys who cry and are very expressive with their feelings are considered feminine and weak.

However, this is not a Scriptural view of manhood. There are two types of men seen in the Scripture. Both are men, both are legitimate expressions of manhood and both are needed and have a place in this world and are needed to make the world go round.

Compare:

- **Cain and Able** – Cain was the rough and tumble one, and Able the meek mistaken for weak kind of guy.
- **Ishmael and Isaac** – Ishmael loved to hunt with the bow like Esau, Isaac was found among the fields praying.
- **Esau and Jacob** – Esau was the hairy brutish hunter and Jacob like to stay home and cook.
- **Joseph and His Brothers** – Joseph was a Daddies boy; the other brothers were the cowboy, Conan the Barbarian type.

One is like the Marlboro man, the other like Gandhi.

Notice they were all men, brothers and Jews (Ishmael was circumcised with Abraham and many documents consider him a Jew). Notice too they were like night and day. Notice in the texts that God predominately chooses the one today's world considered weak and feminine to lead the people and carry on the Covenant. Also notice they could be scrappers when called upon. Like when Jacob wrestled the Angel of the LORD and won!

I also think of King David who seemed to be equally both. He was a lover, a poet and a warrior king. Moshe was humble and meek, but he got ticked off and Israel had to receive the brunt of his temper. I know Judah Maccabee and his clan, being Levitical Priest were mild mannered until they had to become Guerilla Militia men to save Israel.

Before Eve came along, God made Adam and for there to be God, Adam, and eventually Eve, this means God had to have masculine and feminine qualities to create Adam, and to have Eve come from him, must have at first been created with feminine qualities.

The Jewish mysticism, elaborates on God having both masculine and feminine qualities. For instance some words for God and His attributes are in the masculine in Hebrew, and some words, like the Ruach Ha Kodesh (Holy Spirit) are in the feminine gender in the Hebrew language. So having said that, I believe there is a feminine side to men as well as a masculine side to women, obviously one dominates the other in a specific gender, but either traits come out when needed.

Because Western cultures perception of what a man is, I feel it has made Able's, Isaac's, Jacob's and Josephs of the world feel less than, or not quite a man, and some, it may have even pushed some toward homosexuality.

I am an Able, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph and I grew up and was teased and persecuted by the Cain's, Ishmael's, and Esau's of the world and made to feel like a sissy and a wuss.

When I discovered this dual view of what a man is in Scripture I know and am proud that God made me the way I am for a purpose and it had to do greatly with my calling in life as a Rabbi who must be in touch with emotions and things most "mocho guys" would consider feminine.