The Power of Modesty

At one point during his chase to kill Dovid Hamelech, Shaul Hamelech entered a cave to take care of his needs, unaware that this was where Dovid and his men were hiding. To ensure that no one see him, Shaul Hamelech went deep inside the cave, and hid himself even more by covering himself with his cloak. Dovid Hamelech, who was allowed to kill Shaul to save himself, was urged by his men to do so, but despite the opportunity, he felt unable to kill him and only cut off part of Shaul’s cloak. He later told Shaul that because of his tznius, he had been protected from being killed. The Maharsha explains that because he concealed himself, he was likewise rewarded, by being hidden and protected.

The Medrash says that there is nothing Hashem loves more dearly than tznius. The Rebbe notes that when Bilam wanted to curse the Yidden, he noticed that the entrances of their tents were not facing one another for reasons of tznius, and therefore bentcheted them instead.

The Medrash says that there is nothing Hashem loves more dearly then tznius.

In the year 5554, a decree was enacted in Russia, forbidding women to wear head coverings. Twenty years later, a draft was placed, requiring all men to join the army (unlike previous years, when only a specific sum of soldiers had to be provided from each city). The Rebbe Maharsha recalled that those women who had kept their head covering despite the decree, their sons were able to evade the draft, and who knows what troubles befell the women who had not withstood the trial.

The Rebbe said at a farbrengein that the implication of their lack in tznius should be explained to the young girls. When uncovering a part of themselves to impress, it is as if they are carrying a poster announcing that they have nothing else to show for themselves: no intelligence or emotions, and even that their face is disgusting… Now, why would someone want to proclaim this publicly?!! The truth is however, that each one has innate qualities, and once they understand this, the test of dressing tzniusdik will become easier.

The Rebbe Maharash was not present at the wedding of his son the Rebbe Rashab, which took place in the city of the kallah, Avrutich. After the wedding, the Rebbe Rashab and his kalla Rebbetzin Shamina traveled to Lubavitch. Thechosson asked his kalla to request from her father-in-law the brachos she deserves, for had he been at the wedding, he would have bentched them under the chuppa. Agreeing, Rebbetzin Shamina went to the Rebbe Maharash and asked for a bracha, to which the Rebbe replied, “I agree to give you my bracha on condition that you cut off the feather from your hat.” She came to Lubavitch wearing a hat which had a prominent feather on it, as was the style then. She cut it off, and the Rebbe bentched her.

The Friedliker Rebbe related that the city of Frankfurt, although it had previously been filled with freethinkers, now had very few Yidden, whose Yiras Shomayim made a name for them over all of Germany. All this came about in the zechus of three women who were firm in their resolve to wear a sheitel, observe halachos of the home and provide their children with a proper chinuch. This had an effect on the men and other women as well, that with the passage of time, the community of Frankfurt changed for the better.

In a sicha to women, the Rebbe explained that the main aspect of tznius is “Modesty”, the quiet and tzniusdik behavior at home, and from this follows the proper behavior outside.

The Impact on the Children

In the Gemara it is written about Kimchis, a women who merited having seven sons become Kohanim Gedolim. When the chachomim asked her why she merited this great zechus, she replied, “Because I was careful that even the beams of my home should never see my hair.”

The Rebbe highlights how this impacted the community of Eretz Yisroel on Yom Kippur for many future generations, because the position of Kohan Gadol is hereditary and stays within the family.

On his way to Eretz Yisroel, the Baal Shem Tov passed through Istanbul, Turkey and saw young men who had previously been filled with superstitions.
The Rebbe writes in a letter: Soon after my father-in-law the Frieddiker Rebbe arrived in America in the year 5676, he revealed that his chilchus in this land was to transform it into a place of Torah and Yiras Shomayim. There were those who then asked him, “Yet this is, after all, America, not like the ‘old home’?” The Rebbe replied, “America is no different; with regard to Torah and Mitzvot, America is no exception!” Yiddish women must know that the very same word, לחך, ולически, and the very same principle of ‘וכבודה בת מלך פנימה, the entire glory of the king’s daughter is within’ that applied in the ‘old home,’ applies in America as well.

The Rebbe uses strong terms to describe the importance of completely covering the hair at all times, and promises tremendous brachos to the woman who does so and her family as well. Based on this, the Rebbe gave many brachos including: health, parnoso, having children, nachas from children and grandchildren, and a shiduch (when accepting to fulfill this mitzvah after marriage). The Rebbe contrasts the temporary discomfort involved in covering the hair to the everlasting brachos she will receive for generations to come, deeming it “irresponsible” to act otherwise.

In the earlier years of the Rebbe’s nesi’us, the Rebbe held a strong campaign for women to cover their hair with a sheitel, which would properly cover the hair. Once, the Rebbe said regarding this that he would “succeed with מ↩ פיסריית Lesb, or email: info@LmaanYishmeu.com

The Responsiblity of Tznuius

Rebbi Yochanan said: We have learned true fear of sin from a young lady who was heard davening, "יברכם על וಪליפל May it be your will that no man stumble because of me.”

When the mother of Reb Elimelech and Reb Zusia was a young girl, she worked in her father’s inn, and being that most of the visitors were men, she made sure to speak in a heavy voice, to prevent herself from finding favor in their eyes.

Every week, she would travel to town to distribute money to the poor, always using the same wagon driver. Years later, he could still not identify her, for she actively made sure not to attract attention.

The Chasam Sofer’s daughter Gittel was exceptionally good looking and therefore kept herself away from the public. She once went to the market to take care of something important, and noticed a man looking at her, sobbing strongly. When her father saw her, he asked what was wrong, and she explained that she is davening to Hashem that He take away her beauty, to enable her to live in the way of Yidden. Hearing this, he replied, “Because you are willing to give up your beauty for her, you will merit having a son who will light up the world.” Sometime later, Gittel fell ill and her beauty lessened considerably as a result. She later gave birth to a holy child, who became known as the Chasan Sofer.

A girl, who was then not frum, once went by the Rebbe for dollars dressed in her usual untzniusdik way. When she received a dollar, the Rebbe told her that if she would be dressed properly on her next visit, he would give her two dollars. The girl asked her parents to buy her new clothing, which completely covered her hair in the front. The Rebbe said that covering the hair with a sheitel is like having half one’s health. These words deeply concerned me, and the Rebbe smiled broadly and said, “If one wears a sheitel, one is promised gezunt, parnossah and nachas from the children and grandchildren.” Then with a broad smile, the Rebbe asked me what else I would like, and I said that this is enough. He then called in my husband and told him to buy me the nicest sheitel so that others would also want to wear one.