

TZNIUT - MODESTY BULLETIN # 6

**"THE WOMAN WHO FEARS HASHEM, SHE
SHALL BE PRAISED" (MISHLE 31:30)**

WORLD JEWISH TZNIUT AND KEDDUSHA COMMITTEE

WOMEN MUST CONCEAL THEIR GOING TO THE RITUAL BATH

"And therefore have the women got used to hide the night of their ritual immersion, not to go in front of people so that no man should know about her going, and whoever doesn't act in this fashion, we say about her: "Cursed the one who sleeps with a beast" (The RAMA Yore Deah, siman 198, saif 48)

WOMEN SHOULD NOT TALK TO OTHER WOMEN ABOUT THEIR PRIVATE LIFE

"And no woman should relate things between her and her husband, and due to our many sins, already many people stumble in this matter (Reshit Chochma, Peerek Derech Eretz)

YOU SHOULD NOT INCITE OTHERS TO SIN

In the commandment, "Do not covet your neighbor's wife" (Exodus 20:14), the phrase Lo tachmod, "Do not covet," is written without a vav and can be read as Lo techamed, "do not be coveted." It is a warning that a person should not make himself look good so as to be attractive to his neighbor's wife and arouse in her love and affection for him. In other words, you should not make yourself desirable to your neighbor's wife. Furthermore, Lo tachmod can also be read as Lo tachamed, "Do not cause one to covet." Therefore, you should not praise a beautiful woman to a friend lest he pursue her-in which case it will be counted as your sin. In other words, do not make someone's wife desirable to others. You should not derive pleasure from the beauty of an unmarried woman, much less a married woman. You will then enjoy the splendor of the Shechinah (Divine Presence). (Sefer Chassidim 99)

ALL THAT IS COVERED IS CONSIDERED AS INCITEMENT WHEN IT IS REVEALED

To uncover the hair of a [married] woman is considered sexual incitements and so is all that is said in the Song of Songs, such as "Your belly is like a heap of wheat" (Song 7:3), "your thighs are like marble pillars" (5:15), "Your breasts are like two fawns" (4:5). All that is customarily covered is regarded as sexual incitement when revealed.

(Sefer Chassidim 110)

TWO THINGS ON A MAN'S MIND: WOMEN AND MONEY

There are two things that are on a man's mind day and night: women and money (Bava Batra). For these, he gives up his life. There are other emotions that cause a person to waste time that could be devoted to Torah study, such as envy, hatred, arrogance, lust, the enjoyment of his children, the yearning for children and women, socializing with friends, amusement, and empty chatter. (Berachot 24a). (Sefer Chassidim 123)

WOMEN AND MEN MUST BE SEPARATE TO AVOID SINNING

Don't mingle boys and girls because this may lead to sin. And so it says, "Then shall maidens dance gaily"-separately- young men and old together" (Jeremiah 31:12). And at the end of the Book of Psalms we read, "Praise G-d, young men and also maidens," (Psalms 148:12). The psalmist does not say that young men and women will be together, because such mingling would be immodest. Only later, when he speaks of old and young men, does he say, "old men together with youths." (Psalms 148:12) (Sefer Chassidim 168)

YOU MUST ACTIVELY TRY TO AVOID LICENTIOUSNESS AND PROSTITUTION

A man should not invite women into his house because he may have lustful thoughts about them. We can learn a lesson about chastity from a virtuous non-Jewish mayor of a town. Whenever the large fair was held in his town, throngs of people from the entire region converged on the market square. Attracted by the large crowds, many prostitutes who were managed by one matron would come to town. Before the opening of the fair, the mayor would pay off the prostitutes out of his private funds. He sent his deputy to tell the matron, "The mayor will pay your girls any amount you ask. He will pay them more than they would earn if they worked their trade." The mayor then put them up in a luxurious lodging house where they stayed in comfort and were guarded for the duration of the fair. When the fair was over, the mayor sent them home. This he did whenever the prostitutes came to the fair. If a gentile mayor took such precautions, how much more so should we Jews safeguard our communities against immoral practices. Indeed, the Sages interpret the verse "There must not be any prostitutes among Israelite girls" (Deuteronomy 23:18) as an injunction to the Jewish courts to take the necessary preventive measures and erect a barrier against prostitution. (Sefer Chassidim 179)

DON'T VISIT A NEIGHBOR WITH A BEAUTIFUL WIFE

"Visit your neighbor sparingly" (Proverbs 25:17). If your neighbor has a beautiful wife, it is advisable that he should come to visit you [by himself], and you call on him only infrequently. If a woman who usually speaks in subdued tones suddenly raises her voice when she passes a certain man's house, you can be sure that she has sensuality on her mind. The same is true for a man who suddenly raises his voice when passing a certain woman's house. (Sefer Chassidim 614)

BS'D

THE THREE GREATEST MEN IN THREE DIFFERENT ASPECTS, AND ALL OF THEM STUMBLER WITH WOMEN

Samson was the strongest, David the most devout, and Solomon the wisest man that ever lived. The reason Scripture records that these three great men went wrong through women is to teach us that women have an overpowering hold over men, and that sexual desire overwhelms even the greatest of men. From the story of Solomon, we learn that the Torah had very good reason to prohibit intermarriage and to write, "Do not intermarry with the gentiles" (Deuteronomy 7:3). For Solomon, the wisest of all kings, was driven to ruin by them (2 Kings 11) and surely ordinary people will meet disaster when they intermarry. We are told that Samson, the strongest of men, was destroyed through a gentile woman, because he made himself accessible to these women. And the story of David and Bathsheba comes to teach us that the most pious of men, although he was totally dedicated to G-d, nevertheless, when he beheld a woman he faltered. Bear in mind, this happened in David's old age; how much more so must a young man be careful to stay away from women. (Avodah Zarah 20b)

THE ACTIONS OF ONE INDIVIDUAL CAN HAVE A GREAT EFFECT ON THE ENTIRE JEWISH PEOPLE

The story of Ruth is recorded because she was extremely modest, and she performed a great act of kindness to Naomi by letting her stay at home while she went out into the fields to gather ears of grain. Her reward was that kings and prophets issued from her. Sanhedrin 21b: "When Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, Gabriel descended and stuck a reed into the sea, which gathered a sandbank around it, on which was built the great city of Rome." Which is to say, that by this moral weakness Solomon laid the foundations of a hostile world, symbolized in the Talmud as Rome, which defeated Israel. (Sefer Chassidim 619)

"THEREFORE MUST A MAN BE CAREFUL NOT TO ASSOCIATE WITH THE FOOLS AND THE LIGHT HEADED AND THOSE WHO SIT IN THE CORNERS [CAFES], SO THAT HE NOT FALL ON EMPTINESS AND WAYS OF LEVITY AND PROMISCUITY AND HE SHOULD REMOVE FROM ALL GROUPS THAT EXERT NEGATIVE INFLUENCE, EVERYONE ACCORDING TO HIS LEVEL"

(Meiri, Bet ha Bechira, Nedarim 20)