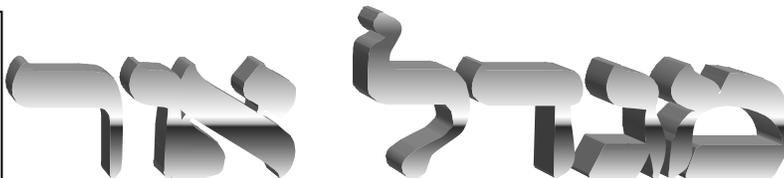


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Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

5:55 - הדלקת נרות
6:13 - שקיעה
9:19 - זק"ש מ"א
9:55 - זק"ש גר"א
10:50 - סוף זמן תפילה
6:13 - שקיעה
6:55 - צאת הכוכבים
7:25 - צאת 72

מולד מרחשון - Sunday 11:31:08 PM

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

One of R' Avigdor Miller z"l's "Ten Steps to Greatness" (parts 1 & 2) is to reflect on the great gift of garments.

Our parsha tells us that HaShem made "clothing for [Adam and Chava's] skin, and dressed them." Says R' Miller, the point of clothing them was not to "cover their nakedness." No, it was for a much greater purpose.

Of all the creatures on Earth, only man wears clothing. Why?

Because Man is the pinnacle of Creation, with closeness to G-d. Clothing reminds us how great and important we are. We are not just animals; (despite what PETA would have you believe) we are created in the Divine image of HaKadosh Baruch Hu.

When we get dressed, we remind ourselves: "I am not a horse, I am not a monkey, I am a human being. This is my dignity; this clothing reminds me who I am and what I am capable of achieving."

This step to greatness consists of taking a minute, when saying the bracha of Malbish Arumim, to ponder what it signifies that only Mankind wears clothing. We cannot walk around half-naked, even if it's hot outside. We must retain our elevated stature and wear garments.

R' Saadya Gaon says that HaShem gave us natural fibers to be used for clothing. R' Miller points out that fibers like cotton, linen, and wool, exist in this world and are used solely by humankind, most often for clothing! This shows us how special we are and how important clothing is to HaShem Yisbarach for reminding us of this.

Thought of the week:

Though you're on top of the world, remember that the earth rotates every twenty four hours.

"נעשה אדם בצלמנו... אעשה לו עזר כנגדו" (בראשית א:כ"ו, ב"ח)

"Let us make Man in our image... I will make him a helper against him."

The origin of the "Royal we" lies in this posuk. HaShem recognizes that the angels, in whose likeness is Man, would be jealous of this new creation. Therefore, in His humility, as Rashi tells us, HaShem consulted with the angels before creating Man.

Though He would not be deterred, it teaches us the nature of humility, that the greater one should ask the lesser one for permission as it were. This does not in any way diminish his stature, but rather highlights his greatness.

It is interesting to note, however, that while HaShem consulted the angels before creating Adam, he did not do so before creating Chava, but rather stated, "I will make him a helper." Why would HaShem consult them before, but not now?

Simply answered, we can say that the lesson had already been taught. Or, like the Ohr HaChaim states, Man was originally created as a single being of both male and female attributes. To "create" Chava, HaShem merely separated the two beings, so it's as if they had been consulted already.

However, the pesukim may also be teaching us a further understanding in this act of humility. Just as there is a difference in phraseology of "let us make" or "I will make," there is another difference. Before HaShem made Man, the Torah tells us that He created the animals, and "HaShem saw that it was good." At that point, he consulted with the angels about enhancing the world further by creating Man, the crowning achievement of His work.

Regarding Chava, however, HaShem says, "It is not good for man to be alone." Thereupon He declares that He will make a helpmeet in the form of Chava. It would seem that though it is nice and proper to consult with lesser beings, and to avoid jealousy, that only applies when everything is fine. In a case where something is wrong, though, one need not stand on ceremony and allow a problem to continue.

As Chazal tell us on the word Beraishis, that the world was created for the Torah which is called "raishis" and for Klal Yisrael which is called "raishis," we must remember that the Torah has primacy and must be maintained. The Torah is the "clothing" of HaShem, as it were, and Man's actions dress Him in His royal raiments.

If we decide to drop or desist from an appropriate practice because others may look at us strangely, we are not acting in a G-dly fashion and we are depriving Him of His royal due. If we change our dress, behavior or speech to be "cool," or "popular," we are making a grievous error.

As we see from HaShem's behavior here, the opinion of others is important, but not at the expense of the Torah and HaShem's opinion. At such times, even a humble person must stand up for what is right. As Chazal say, it is better to be considered a fool in the eyes of men forever, than to be viewed as a sinner in G-d's eyes for a single moment.

The Ponevitzer Rav, R' Yosef Kahaneman z"l, was known as an amazing fundraiser, a world-class Talmid Chacham, and a man of keen insight. Once, he approached a wealthy individual for a donation to build a school.

"I am not interested in your values," said the man, "but I have national pride. I will donate a sizable sum if you guarantee me that none of the students will wear a kippa." People were stunned when Rav Kahaneman agreed to the man's outrageous terms.

Shortly thereafter, with the funds from this benefactor, the Rav opened a school for girls.