

MaNews

Shabbat Parshat Chaye Sara:13

Laws & Customs

What does dressing modestly mean?

There are three categories of guidelines regarding modesty: *Dat Moshe*, *Dat Yehudit*, and *Minhag Hamakom*.

Dat Moshe means "the law of Moses," and it refers to guidelines directly from the Torah. The only aspect of modesty that fits in this category is that a married woman must cover her hair (Numbers 5:18).

Dat Yehudit, "the law of the Jewish woman," refers to the accepted standard of modest dress in the Jewish community. With *Dat Yehudit* being based on the decisions of the woman, these laws vary depending on the location. However, the Talmud mentions some that do not change: a woman that gets into a personal conversation with any man she meets, or speaking to her husband about intimate matters loud enough so that others can hear.

Minhag Hamakom, "the custom of the local place" refers to the standard that the Jewish women dress where one lives. *Minhag Hamakom* only works to raise the standards, not lower them. Therefore, if one is in a place where the standards are low they need to work to raise them. When Rivka Imeinu saw Itzchak for the first time she fell from the camel and immediately covered herself. She fell from the camel because she was sitting on it like a man does, and covered herself as was the *Dat Yehudit* at that time.



כ"א - כ"ב מרחשוון
October 29-30 2010
Candle Lighting
18:21
Shabbat Ends
19:14

**In Honor of the
 Arkus Family**

A Resident and Stranger in One World

When Abraham was purchasing Maarat Hamachpelah to bury Sarah, he claimed that he is a resident and stranger in the land. This statement has symbolic teaching on our claim and perception of this world.

The Jew is a "resident" in the world, for the Torah instructs him not to escape the physical reality but to inhabit it and elevate it. Virtually all the Mitzvot of the Torah are physical actions involving physical objects, in keeping with the Jew's mission to make a "dwelling for G-d in the material world" by sanctifying the everyday materials of everyday life.

At the same time, the Jew feels himself a "stranger" in the material world. His true home is a higher, loftier place, the world of spirit, the world of holiness and G-dliness from which his soul has been exiled and to which it yearns to return. Indeed, it is only because the Jew feels himself a stranger in the world that he can avoid being wholly consumed and overwhelmed by it, and maintain the spiritual vision and integrity required to elevate it and sanctify it as an abode for the divine presence.

G-d Provides

The Rymanover Rebbe did not have money and struggled to survive. He was actually so poor that he often could not feed his children.

There is a story about how he came home one day and found his little son crying, for the poor boy had not eaten in a long time. "I can't bear being hungry anymore!" sobbed the child. With a hurt heart his father told him: "If your hunger was really as great as you say, G-d would surely provide something..." The boy could not stop crying and he left the room in tears.

After a moment his father called him back and said to him: "Please forgive me, my sweet child! I had no idea that your hunger was so overwhelming. I just took one of my books off the table and look what I found next to it--a coin. You see, G-d always helps when it is needed most. Now go and buy some bread and make a blessing..."

We often think we that can't hold out any longer, be it hunger, grief or some other test, but G-d knows what we truly need and at the right moment--which He alone knows--He gives. So trust Him and Him alone.

Quotable Quote

"Oceans do not distance us they connect us."

Rabbi Iosef

Questions & Comments should be sent to MaNews@ymail.com