

WOMEN'S ISSUES

BOOK ONE

The Female and Her Characteristics

Prepared by Ner Le'Elef

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SECTION ONE

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN

ESSENCE OF FEMALE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO WOMEN'S ISSUES

CHAPTER A: OVERVIEW OF CHARACTERISTICS

CHAPTER A: OVERVIEW OF CHARACTERISTICS

There are many characteristics that are described as specifically female (see the list below). It is important to know which traits these are and to see how they all integrate to create a holistic concept of the female force¹. These characteristics are explained in **Chapters B** through **D**. Some of these concepts will be explained below briefly to show their context with other Midos and will then be explained in greater detail elsewhere (especially with regard to the Midah of צניעות).

List of Female-Sided Characteristics:

Judaism gives us a comprehensive picture of the female mystique, a picture that, in the last 20 years, has been confirmed by all the scientific studies in this area². We are told of a wide range of feminine qualities, all of which have to be understood together to provide us with a complete picture of what a woman is³.

As a starting point, let us look at the first two generations of *Avos* and *Imahos*. Sarah and Avraham had a machlokes concerning whether Yishmael should be a part of the Jewish nation or whether he should be sent out of the Jewish nation to form a new nation. This dispute seems to be repeated in the next generation concerning Eisav. Yitzchak seemed to feel that Eisav should be a part of ישראל, while Rivka felt that he should be excluded. In both cases it was the woman who won out. This tells us that it is a female power to set the boundaries of something, to define the environment, to provide the basic framework in which we operate. Without this power, the male force would simply dissipate⁴. This applies to the

¹We refer to the female force or the female side rather than the woman or the female because the female force expresses itself also in men and also in 'non-human' or meta-human situations, like the female side of HaSh-m Himself.

²Until 1982, it was politically incorrect to distinguish between a man and a woman. However, after the publication of Harvard Professor Carol Galligan's study in that year, the cat was let out of the bag and all the studies from then on showed just how different male and female were. Incredibly, Chazal had clearly talked about these differences over 2000 years ago.

³See for example אשת חיל where a woman is described as being dynamic, creative and proactive in a wide range of endeavors. Failure to look at all a woman's qualities together can lead to serious misunderstandings. For example, the Maharal sometimes describes women as being superior to men, sometimes being equal and sometimes being inferior. Clearly, the Maharal is referring to different aspects of a woman. One would have to know all that the Maharal has to say about women in order to emerge with a coherent picture of his understanding on this issue. Similarly, the much talked about female qualities of בינה יתירה, נשים דעתן קלות, צניעות, etc. all have to be understood in their dynamic relationship with each other, and not in isolation. We have attempted, in a few lines, to give some approach to this in the body of the text.

⁴The Male, Right Side is the beginning of G-d's creative force. The Female, Left Side takes that force and translates it into a form whereby the recipient could receive it.

(המקבלים) ... (המציאות התחתונים) (המשפיע (רמח"ל ספר הכללים כה)

As long as G-d's creative force remains on the Male Side, it is too spiritual, too ethereal and non-tangible to have any lasting existence in the world as we know it. Left in this state, it would not have ongoing existence, and ultimately would simply be reabsorbed back into הוא הקדוש ברוך הוא. The Male Side is incomprehensible until it is taken in by the Female Side which expands, nurtures and elucidates it:

כי בעודם בזכר הם בדקות גדול ומוסר אותם אל הנקבה כדי להביא ההויה אל בישול מציאותה וגילוייה בפועל (שומר אמונים הקדמון ויכוח ראשון אות כז)

Another way of looking at this is to see the female force as a final expression of something in this world, that which provides the framework within which something can be nurtured to express itself. This is the מידה of מלכות³. It is also the ה in the name of ק-ה⁴.

Because the נקבה receives from the זכר they are in a relationship of משפיע to מושפע⁵. However, it is clear from what we stated above that נקבה is not just a passive recipient.

Without the Female Force, the Male Force would just dissipate and be wasted. The Female Force provides the environment, the context and the framework, which allows the Male Force to grow and develop. This is no different to the physical relationship between husband and wife. The male seed cannot reach fruition on its own. It needs to be absorbed by the woman, combined with her egg cell, and then nurtured in her womb. She provides the total environment for the developing embryo; its warmth, its food, its oxygen – the very walls in which it survives.

¹Other ways of saying this is that the female completes, informs, elucidates, nurtures, and develops. She is therefore the מתקנת, making connections and rectifications. (First the male is מביא, then she is מתקנת). Two other dimensions of this is to say that she is the חומר, the כלי and the מקבל, while the male is the צורה and the משפיע; she is the גוף while the male = נשמה. (Note, the word נשמה itself is a female word, as are all the other words of the different levels of the soul: נפש, רוח, נשמה, חיה, יחידה. This is because the relationship of male to female is relative to the thing being discussed. The soul is female in the sense that it receives its השפעה from the *Ribono shel Olam*. However, it is male with respect to the body, which it in turn is משפיע.

²Once the basic parameters of the child has been determined and a framework has been established, the male determines which *Shevet* the person belongs to, and if from *Shevet Levi*, whether he will be a *Cohen* or not.

³There are ten *Sefiros*. The last of these ten is מלכות. Therefore, when spirituality is initiated from HaSh-m and it comes down and down through many layers (השתלשלות), it finally comes down into this world through this *midah* of *malchus*.

⁴This name of HaSh-m is the name in the Pasuk, כי בק-ה ד' צור עולמים – For with this name (K-ah), HaShem sustains (is the rock of) the (two) worlds. Another Posuk says אלה תולדות השמים והארץ ביום – and, since the ה of הבראם is written large, Chazal learn בה בראם i.e. He created this world of שמים and ארץ using the ה. Therefore perforce He created the world with the other letter of That Name, i.e. with a י. In his דרך החיים, אבות on דרך החיים, the Maharal explains why this world was created with a ה. The ה is comprised of two letters, a ד and a י. The י is the spirituality that exists in this world, the “world-to-comeness” in this world. The י represents spirituality because firstly it is really just a point with no physical dimensions. But it is not one, it is ten. Ten is a unit of one, which comes after reality fragments into its multiple parts of two, three, etc. It then recombines them into a unit of one, i.e. ten. The ד of the ה represents the fragmentation of our world into multiple realities – each person, each object has its own dimensions in space and time, its own separate identity. The ד represents this ‘atomized’ reality because it comprises two ו s (vavs). Each vav is a line going in two directions, representing four directions in total. These represent the four directions in which reality can scatter away from the unity. (Four always represents this – 4 rivers come out of the one river of *Gan Eden*, there are four exiles, four animals with only one sign of purity, etc.) But the י of the ה is in the epicenter of the four ends of the ד. It can operate on the ד in such a way that it pulls all these four points of the ד into a single point, the oneness of the unit of ten.

This is the female force of the ה. The ability to address a world, which seems fragmented and separate into a composite whole, the ability to unite many seemingly disparate things into a higher wholeness. The male is the י, the ability to engage in pure Torah study, in pure spirituality in a physical world. The female is the ה, the ability to actually get involved in the physical and the mundane and to create spirituality therefrom.

⁵In the language of the חומר to צורה, מהר”ל

The woman is the לב, while the male is the מח. תשוקה, the passion to be committed to something, is therefore a female concept⁴. This helps women have greater faithfulness than men, something that has been historically clearly evident⁵. This contributes to a greater, natural sense of מנוחה & שאן, of inner contentment and peace⁶.

This is not to say that women are passive. On the contrary, women actively engage reality to find its essence, define it, nurture it, set boundaries and develop situations⁷.

This Midah also helps a woman have superior empathy, becoming more personally identified with the other person with greater connecting, conversational abilities⁸. In general,

¹The process whereby spirituality at very high levels can work its way down many steps to finally express itself in this world, *Olam HaMaaseh*.

²עד גמר מציאותם

³כי האשה נקראת חומה כדאמרין בפרק הבא על יבמתו (יבמות סב ע"ב) ויליף מדכתיב נקבה תסובב גבר, כי האשה על ידה השלמת האדם ... וכל אשר שלם דבר זה הוא חזק שלו שהוא מגין עליו (מהר"ל חידושי אגדות נדה מה ע"ב ד"ה מלמד שקלעה).

Therefore, both the creation of the world and the giving of the Torah were through the left or female side. Both ultimately required that some, much higher spiritual reality be brought down into the reality of this world.

Prophecy also occurs through the left side. Prophecy is the receiving of higher wisdom down into this world. This is in contrast to תושבע"פ which is on the male side. (The difference between נבואה and תורה is that נבואה works from the top down whereas limud haTorah works from the bottom up. Although ultimately Torah also requires a dimension of being מושפע, the basic process is as we have described.)

For the same reason the name שכינה is feminine. The שכינה is the expression of השם's holiness in this world, the final manifestation of קדושה.

⁴As with all these מדות, we are not implying that men lack these qualities altogether or that they cannot develop them to a high degree. Rather, women are, in general, naturally stronger in these areas.

⁵Men, on the other hand, have a greater natural sense of אמת.

⁶Maharal, דרוש על התורה, claims that women are naturally endowed with more of these two attributes.

⁷Sometimes this takes great עוז – courage and daring for which women are praised in the *Eishes Chayil*. It also takes intelligence בחכמה, פיה פתחה, a special type of women's intelligence, חכמת נשים, בנתה ביתה

⁸קידושין מט: י קבים שיחה ירדו לעולם ט נטלו נשים

When a woman relates that she has a problem, for example, she is expressing the need to share that experience. Men, however, very often hear women as asking for advice as opposed to looking for empathy and are surprised that the advice is not welcome when it seemed to be solicited. Women respond to other people's pain with empathy – a way of connecting and letting them know that they know what they are going through. Many men misinterpret a woman's empathy with an attempt to detract from the uniqueness of the experience.

(*You Just Don't Understand*, Deborah Tannen, chap 2)

The female כח includes the ability to recognize and reveal hidden קדושה. This draws from the מידה of צניעות, which is the ability to focus on the essence rather than the superficiality of any person or situation⁴. This means that she is more easily in touch with spirituality when surrounded by mundane, physical realities. She sees through superficiality, focusing on the essence. Her מידה of צניעות allows her to be more inner defined and her מידה of female wisdom allows her to understand how to apply this in practical ways: חכמת נשים בנתה ביתה⁵.

We will discuss many of these attributes in the forthcoming chapters.

¹Gray: A man's sense of self is defined through his ability to achieve results while a woman's sense of self is defined through her feelings and the quality of her relationships. In general women have better interpersonal skills. It has been discovered, for example, that women smile and laugh more, gaze more directly at others, and sit or stand closer to people than men do. (Psychologist Judith Hall of North-Eastern University in Boston). Women interrupt less, are more likely to be complimentary, and laugh at other people's jokes more (Linda Carli, Professor of Psychology at Wellesley College). Women also read non-verbal cues – facial expressions, body movements, and changes in tone of voice – more accurately than men do (Hall). This ties in also with women's greater verbal fluency, her greater insight into people, and her greater capacity to feel their pain (רחמנות, see above).

Girls begin talking before boys, have larger vocabularies at an earlier age, and produce more varied and sophisticated sentences. (Readers' Digest from Susan Seligson in Redbook Aug. '93)

²Instead she is by nature a consensus builder.

³Therefore, hierarchical structures are more suited to men than to women.

⁴In her own being it is the ability to also project her spiritual essence rather than her more superficial, physical aspects.

⁵A type of applied wisdom which builds houses – i.e. frameworks that nurture potential to their full expression. Also פיה פתחה בחכמה. She not only has *Chochma*, but she applies it – her mouth opens with chochma.

CHAPTER B: נוקבא

i-The Female Concept

- a- השם Himself manifests a Male and Female Side
- b- The male, hidden י and the female, revealed ה
- c- כלי וחומה
- d- רצון and תשוקה
- e- נבואה – female; חכמה – male
- f- כנסת ישראל in relation to השם - wife to husband

ii-Male and Female – a Historical Perspective

CHAPTER B: נוקבא

i-The Female Concept

a- השם Himself manifests a Male and Female Side

The male and female concept begins at a very high spiritual level. In fact, there is a:

סטרא דדוכרא וסטרא דנוקבא דקב"ה
*A male and a female side of הקדוש ברוך הוא*¹

The Male, Right Side is the beginning of G-d's creative force.

The Female, Left Side takes that force and translates it into a form whereby the recipient could receive it.

... (המקבלים) ההשפעות שהקב"ה משפיע (רמח"ל ספר הכללים כה) היא כח מציאות התחתונים

*She is the power behind reality in the lower realities (i.e. the world we live in)
... which receives that which הקדוש ברוך הוא bestows.*

As long as G-d's creative force remains on the Male Side, it is too spiritual, too ethereal and non-tangible, to have any lasting existence in the world as we know it. Left in this state it would not have ongoing existence, and ultimately would simply be reabsorbed back into הוא. The Male Side is incomprehensible until it is taken in by the Female Side which expands, nurtures and elucidates it:

כי בעודם בזכר הם בדקות גדול ומוסר אותם אל הנקבה כדי להביא ההויה אל בישול מציאותה וגילוייה
בפועל (שומר אמונים הקדמון ויכוח ראשון אות כז)²

¹This does not refer to G-d in His essence; rather it is referring to a manifestation of His essence. Although we are talking about a higher manifestation of this כח over here, הוא הקדוש ברוך הוא also manifests in both male and female forms (or is described or compared as such) down here. In *Jewish Women Speak on Jewish Matters*, Dr. Esther Shkop brings numerous examples of female imagery relating to G-d, some of which we mention below:

a. *El Rachum*, as Moshe calls HaSh-m, is related to the word *Rechem*, womb. (Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch).

b. *Isaiah* relates to G-d as the loving Mother of Israel: "Can a woman forget her babe' cease loving the son of her belly? Indeed these may forget, but I will never forget you." (49: 15) (See also *Isaiah* 66: 12-13)

c. *Isaiah* describes G-d as a sympathetic midwife, soothing the despairing Zion: I bring you to the breaking point and not bring forth? If I am the deliverer [midwife], will I stop [the birth] ...?" (66: 9)

d. *David HaMelech* compares the babe's reliance on the mother's breast with its reliance on G-d: "For you are the One Who drew me out of the belly, the One Who secured me on my mother's breasts. Upon You I have been cast from the womb; from my mother's belly You have been my G-d. (Psalms 22: 10-11)

²חידושי אגדות מהר"ל (פרק במה בהמה - שבת נ"ג) תנו רבנן מעשה באחד שמתה אשתו והניחה בן לינק ולא היה לו שכר מניקה ליתן ונעשה לו נס ונפתחו לו דדין כב' דדי אשה והניק את בנו א"ר יוסף בוא וראה כמה גדול אדם זה שנעשה לו נס כזה אמר ליה אביי אדרבה כמה גרוע אדם זה שנשתנו לו סדרי בראשית. במושכל. ... זה יש לך ללמוד דבר מופלג בענין היצירה [כי דדי הזכר] יש עליהם שם דד לגמרי... שכמו [שהאשה הוציאה] לאויר העולם את הולד, וכך ראוי להיות מאתה הפרנסה, וכן האיש גם כן מאתו מציאות הבן וכך היה ראוי על [האב] ההנקה, [רק] שהאשה מוציאה לגמרי הולד לאויר העולם במוחש ולכך הדדים שלה מניקים לגמרי, אבל [האיש] נותן רק הזרע

For as long as [the spark of reality] is contained within the male, it is a very fine thing [existing as potential and not able to fully express itself] until the male invests this [spark] in the female in order to bring existence into its mature expression and revelation in reality.

Without the Female Force, the Male Force would just dissipate and be wasted. The Female Force provides the environment, the context and the framework, which allows the Male Force to grow and develop. This is no different from the physical relationship between husband and wife. The male seed cannot reach fruition on its own; it needs to be absorbed by the woman, combined with her egg cell and then nurtured in her womb. She provides the total environment for the developing embryo; its warmth, its food, its oxygen – the very walls in which it survives¹.

Because the נקבה receives from the זכר, they are in a relationship of מושפע to משפיע (in the language of the מהר"ל, חומר to צורה). However, it is clear from the above that נקבה is not just a passive recipient. נקבה completes the process of השתלשלות whereby there can be a final expression of reality down here - עד גמר מציאותם. The male is pure potential (מהר"ל=מביא); the female is actualization (מהר"ל=מתקנת), providing the framework in which the initial male spark can be more than a quickly lost flash of energy².

Because the female force represents actualization, the final expression of השם's manifestation in this world is therefore female (this is known as מלכות³, which is the last of the Sefiros and is female). Hence the word for G-d's manifestation in this world is shechina, which is a feminine word. Similarly, the final recipient of השם's השפעה is כלל ישראל. כלל ישראל is in a relationship with מושפע to משפיע, of female to male. Therefore, the way in which the השפעה is received by כלל ישראל is through their power of נוקבא.

Since both male and female forces are essential, neither has any reality on its own and it is only as a unity of the two that any type of completion can take place⁴. As the מהר"ל puts it:

¹There are many other expressions of this Female Force: Take, for example the double machlokes between first Avraham and Sarah and then Yitzhak and Rivka over Yishmael and Eisav respectively. The machlokes concerned whether Yishmael and Eisav should be included in the Jewish nation or whether they should be excluded, each to make an independent nation. In both cases, the Imahos were the ones to decide – they were the ones to provide the basic definition and parameters of the Jewish people itself. Later we will see other expressions of the female force as related to Friday night, the creation of the world and the giving of the Torah.

²נתיב העבודה פ' טז ד"ה במסכת סוטה
ושם כתב עוד: כי האשה נקראת חומה כדאמרינן בפרק הבא על יבמות (יבמות סב ע"ב) ויליף מדכתיב נקבה תשובב גבר, כי האשה על ידה השלמת האדם ... וכל אשר שלם דבר זה הוא חזק שלו שהוא מגין עליו (מהר"ל חידושי אגדות נדה מה ע"ב ד"ה מלמד שקלעה).

³There are ten Sefiros. The last of these ten is מלכות. Therefore, when spirituality is initiated from HaSh-m and it comes down and down through many layers (השתלשלות), it finally comes down into this world through this midah of malchus.

⁴The philosophers Plato and Aristotle had a silly argument on this issue. If we take a cup, we can say that the cup is made up of its material, as well as the form which molds that material. We may have ten cups before us, each with its own shape, but we will recognize them all as being cups. This is

ושניהם ביחד אדם שלם כל אחד מהם חלק האדם, איש ואשה¹

*Both the male and the female are a part of Adam,
and both together form the complete man.*

... והאשה מקבלת בודאי האיש, והאיש מקבל את האשה
כמו שהוא כל חבור בעולם ושניהם מקבלים זה מזה³

And it is clear that the woman receives the male, just as the male receive the female, each receiving from each other just like every joining of two things in the world.

Therefore, comparisons of the relative worth of male vs. female miss the point. Such comparisons presume that both male and female are independent self-contained realities to be compared and weighed on the same scale of qualities. But since they really form one reality, they are both essential and inseparable, and not open to pitting one against the other⁴.

Furthermore, not only are both male and female interdependent, but they do not simply unite as two identical halves. They are radically different and unique. The מהר"ל states that it is just the fact that they are opposite which allows them to unite as one force, for that is a law of nature, that opposites should unite (just as negatively charged electrons and positively charged protons attract each other, or the two opposite sides of a magnet)⁵. And it is only the unity of both these halves, as expressed in the original creation of Adam, to which the name צלם אלוהים was given.

For a deeper look at the issues we have been discussing, see note⁶ below.

because, said Plato, there is an abstract concept called cup which is the real essence, and which then gets applied to individual examples of that essence. No, said Aristotle, the abstract idea does not have any reality; the reality lies only in the actual cups in front of us. The idea is just an abstraction from the reality. However, in reality both are true. We need the חומר, the material of any כלי; and we need the צורה, the form that will fill this material into some shape. Both form essential elements of the cup in front of us.

¹מהר"ל חידושי אגדות סוטה יז.

²Although, we have stated that the male is the משפיע, since the male cannot have a קיום without the female (as we explained above), the female gives this to the male.

³כי היא משלמת הבנין של האיש (חידושי אגדות לנדה מה: ד"ה מלמד שנתן)
כי האשה על ידה השלמת האדם ובלא זה אין האדם שלם (שם ד"ה מלמד שקלעה)

⁴See also in the Ner LeElef Book Women's Issues Book Two (Mitzvos), Section A – Issues of Equality

⁵כי הזכר והנקבה הם שני הפכים זה זכר וזאת נקבה, אם זכה מתחברים בכח אחד לגמרי, כי כל שני הפכים מתאחדים בכח אחד כשהם זוכים (מהר"ל חידושי אגדות יבמות ד"ה עזר כנגדו)

⁶Rabbi Noson Weisz on the Aish Web Site:

The sefirah of *malchut* may be described as the female side within everyone one of us.

If we look at the physical set-up, we will gain some sense of the relationship. The male is the active half. He does the active endowing of the seed. But the woman is not completely passive. She makes the decision "to accept or reject." It is an "act" of acceptance, as it were.

Thus, if all the *sefirot* may be illustrated in terms of a complete male, then *malchut* is the female counterpart, the recipient of the male's activity.

And therein lies the paradox of "male and female" together being *Adam*, "human being." Together, they are meant to be in total harmony, acting as if they were one, yet they must be totally separate, the female completely independent, able to reject or accept the man as she sees fit.

b-The male - hidden ♀, and the female - revealed ♂

As shown above, the female actualizes the potential of the male which otherwise would dissipate. The Male Force remains a hidden potential until the Female Force turns it

Therefore, *malchut* may be properly described as the "female" within everyone one of us, the part that is capable of accepting God's will and expressing it as if it were ours.

FREE WILL

This paradox of *malchut* is at the core of our free will, struggling with the imperative of obedience to Torah commandments.

In order to create a "*malchut* unity," God had to create a distinct and separate entity conceptually. This means a human being that saw itself distinct from God, with a perception of self and individual identity, and with a mindset that would allow it to be distinct from God.

The theological difficulty of *malchut* is different from the paradox of the other sefirot. The other sefirot are tools that God uses, and the question is how there can be "additions" to God, whereas *malchut* presents the challenge of "alternative" power to God.

This is reflected in the way God created Eve. God created Adam but Adam was deemed to be incomplete. Paradoxically, he needed for his own completion not in addition to his own body but rather another body. Thus was born the "other" who really in essence was "a bone from among my bones, and flesh of my flesh."

The Torah coined a description for the woman that fit this paradox. God said, "*I will make for him (i.e. Adam) an opposing helper.*"

On the one hand, this other is a "helper," and on the other hand, this other represents "opposition." Although we can describe this in practical terms -- that the ability for an outsider to contest one's judgment is many times helpful -- the issue runs deeper than that.

Adam needed a person who is distinct (i.e. "opposite") and independent, capable of opposing him, yet being his closest partner and working as one unit. (Indeed, when Adam and Eve became one unit, they realized that they were never distinct and were one body all along.)

ROOT OF EVIL

This being the nature of *malchut*, it is also the root of evil in our world.

The possibility of being "apart" from God meant that there would exist another set of values and seemingly another focal point for human endeavor. Free will mandates that there be choices.

The forces of evil are called "*sitra achra*," the "other side," in Kabbalistic literature. This "*sitra achra*" is called "other" not only because it has no intrinsic identity, but also because its identity is "otherness," an alternative. This is because the existence of evil and idolatry is primarily a result of the need to establish a *malchut*, which mandates an alternative.

ISRAEL AND G-D

This relationship of male/female is the underpinning of much of Bible's metaphor of Israel and God as a man and a woman. Most sharply, this relationship is expressed in the Song of Songs. Israel is the young girl pining for the king, yet not always receptive to him and at times tempted by others. It is, therefore, no coincidence that God is portrayed in the Song of Songs as a *melech*, "king," for this relationship is inherent in *malchut*, "kingdom."

Let us briefly summarize the points that we have made about *malchut*.

Malchut is the desire of God to express "Himself" through others. To do that, He created beings that have a sense of independence and otherness -- that is, beings with free will. In order to have real free will, the universe must contain another "pole" opposite God. Thus, we have the concepts of evil and "other gods."

The human relationship that parallels this is man and woman, who are really one, yet were separated and then found the sameness and oneness in themselves. So, too, humankind finds itself distinct from God and when it "rejoins" God, it finds that they are really one. It is at this stage that *malchut* compliments and finalizes the other *sefirot*.

into a revealed reality¹. Both are essential and it is only when the two combine that holiness becomes manifest. This is expressed by the fact that HaShem's Name קה is contained within the names תש ואש:

²סוטה יז: דרש ר' עקיבא איש ואישה שזכו שכינה ביניהם לא זכו אש אוכלת

Rebbe Akiva darshened: A man and his wife who merit, the Shechina is between them. And if they do not merit, a fire consumes them.

This is an expression of the unity and completeness of the relationship, for, states the מהר"ל, G-d's Name rests on something which is complete and whole³.

The מהר"ל explains that אש is the ability to use and sanctify this world. The hot energy of the fire (= spiritual energy) moves upward. That energy will consume this world if unrestrained, but combined with a woman's ה it becomes a controlled force of spiritual elevation. Hence we use fire during הבודלה to show that as we go back into the week we will have the ability to engage and sanctify that reality (Rabbi Beryl Gershenfeld)⁴.

In the name קה, women are the ה and men are the י:

The שכינה is referred to by the Name קה. The י is in the male and the ה is in the female. This is why feminine nouns and verbs end with a ה⁵. The letter ה represents this world and is made up of a י, a point of קדושה, and a ד, the 4 directions of fragmented, atomized reality⁶. These 4 directions are the physical world devoid of the spiritual, where each material object is separate with its own identity. On its own, the ד is דלות⁷, the total impoverishment of physical reality. But the female ה also has a י in it. Women have the ability to draw the fragmented pieces of the ד into the united point of the י (the י is in the

¹מהר"ל נתיב העבודה סוף פ"ג):
הזכר הוא נסתר והנקבה היא נגלית

²(מובא בפרקי דר' אליעזר פ' יג עם שינויים)

³מהר"ל נתיב העבודה סוף פ"ג):
כי הש"י שמו חל על דבר שלם, ולכן כאשר יתחברו יחד שמו יתברך חל עליהם.

⁴מהר"ל (סוטה שם):
אמנם אם לא זכו ביחד אז האש אוכלת, וזה כי למעלת האדם שהוא נכנס במחיצה עליונה שהוא אש, ולכן שם אש במלת איש ובמלת אישה, וכאשר הש"י מסלק שמו מביניהם, אז האש שורף האיש והאש שורף האשה כאשר הם נכנסים ועומדים במחיצת אש ... והאש הזה ר"ל כח הנבדל שיש באיש ובאשה, וכאשר זכו השם יתברך ביניהם מתחבר לכח הנבדל שלהם, וכאשר לא זכו ... כח הנבדל שלהם איננו דבק עם הש"י והוא אוכלת.

⁵There are feminine nouns that seem to have male endings. Sometimes this is in the singular, sometimes in the plural and sometimes both. Similarly, there are nouns, which are defined as male but which have female endings. In both cases it means that the essential definition of the noun does not fully express itself in that form under those circumstances. For example, the כלים of the המקדש בית ארון-ארונו/שולחן-שולחנות/מזבח-: are masculine by definition but have a feminine ending in the plural: (the exception to this is the מנורה). Perhaps this means that those כלים only achieve their proper male expression in the singular but not in the plural.

⁶The ד is made up of two וs (vavs). Each ו points in two directions, making up a total of 4 directions. These 4 directions represent maximum diversity, or lack of unity.

⁷The Dal is a very poor man. Dalus is a modification of the way we say the letter Daled.

The מהר"ל states that all the letters are made out of one continuous form except for the ה, which is made out of the ט and the י. When the spiritual י combines with the physical ט to create the letter of this world, the ה, it combines in such a way that it, the י, remains separate from the ט. This teaches us that the level of the ה, the level of the numerical value of five, is a distinct level above that of the material four. However, the fact that ultimately the י and the ט do make one new letter together means that they are not completely separate, and that therefore the new level of the ה is not completely separate from the ט². This whole discussion points out the complexity of the female, who is the ה. She is both that which can best connect with the material ט, but with an other-world spirituality, the י, which she is able to combine into a new reality (the ה), a sanctification of the material. However, sanctification in this world is never fully complete; the י always remains somewhat separate from the ט and the עולם הזה is never complete.

We have seen that women have the unique ability to translate קדושה into this world. Men, on the other hand, are symbolized by the letter י, which is all spirituality without any ability to express that in a final form in this world. The י is a composite unity of one, i.e. after working through all the possible fragmentations and multiple realities (2-9) it again reunites all of these into a higher synthesis and unity. That is ultimately the reality of עולם הבא, which is why עולם הבא was created with a י. But pure "י"ness in this world cannot express itself. The י is a hanging letter; it is also ultimately just a point, occupying no space, no tangible reality in the physical world. The י is used for the future tense, that which is all potential, without tangible expression. Male = זכר – he who remembers, i.e. has an intellectual clarity. He is זכר with a י, he who will remember; a י which is hanging in the air and yearning for actualization. The male on his own is pure potential and as such is in need of the female ה for tangible expression³. She in turn is also in need of his pure realm of thought.

Hence the word איש is only first used in the תורה after the word אשה⁴, showing that the concept איש cannot exist without the concept of אשה.

Therefore, it is essential to understand that maleness and femaleness in this world were never meant to be understood as independent entities. The very fact that G-d's Name is divided amongst both of them is an indication of their essential unity. The verses which speak of the creation of the Female⁵ give Adam's response:

ויאמר האדם זאת הפעם עצם מעצמי ובשר מבשרי
לזאת יקרא אשה כי מאיש לקחה זאת. (בראשית ב: כג)

¹ מהר"ל דרך החיים על אבות פ"ה מש' א בסוף קטע המתחיל ויראה See, רבינו בחיי on שמות לה, לה

² מהר"ל נתיב הנדיבות פ"א (דף רמב קטע המתחיל אמנם):
כל האותיות הם גוף אחד חוץ מן הה"א ... ודבר זה מורה לך כי החמישי נבדל מן הארבע שהם השטח שהיא גשמית, וידוע כי הנקודה האמצעית שהוא בתוך השטח נבדלת מן השטח אשר יש לו ד' רוחקים ... [אבל] אין החמישי נבדל לגמרי מן הד' רק הוא מחובר אל הד'.

³ מהר"ל, נתיב הנדיבות (פ"א):
העשירי הוא נבדל לגמרי ... כי הנקודה ... שאין בו רוחקים כלל מורה אל קדושה בלתי גשמית

⁴ בראשית ב: כב/כג
ויבן ד' את אלוקים את הצלע אשר לקח מן האדם לאשה ויבאה אל האדם: ויאמר האדם זאת הפעם עצם מעצמי ובשר מבשרי לזאת יקרא אשה כי מאיש לקחה זאת.

⁵ בראשית ב: כב: ויבן ד' את אלוקים את הצלע אשר לקח מן האדם לאשה ויבאה אל האדם

*This time a bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh.
For this reason she will be called Isha, for this [being] had been taken from Ish.*

On which the מהר"ל comments that the essential unity of male and female is not simply achieved by the fact that they were once one being, although this contributes to it. Rather, it is the fact that the איש and the אשה are created in such a way that their joining recreates G-d's Name יה which is the force that combines them¹. In other words, it is not just that a couple together reflects השם's Name; rather, at the outset, it was the insertion by השם of His Name into איש ואישה that allowed for the possibility of this reality². As separate beings, however, G-d's Name is split up and not expressed.

The ט of the ה is that which expresses dimensions (the four directions); tangible reality in this world. But the woman is not all ט – all this-worldly. Her letter is the ה which has a י in it as well. The י testifies to her other-worldly dimension, to the fact that she is able to re-connect this world to the World to Come. Put in the reverse order, she is able to take her חכמה and turn it into the necessary practical applications in this world (see Women's חכמה, בינה and דעת below). Her י becomes a יד, a hand which implements the idea. (Hence, י is the gematriah of ten for the ten fingers of implementation. Also, one hand is five fingers which is the ה. In addition, a single hand of five fingers has 14 joints, the gematriah of the י and the ד of יד.)

This is further reflected by the exact position of the י and the ה in the male and the female respectively:

*Rava said: And a woman's [name, Isha] is better than that of a man's [Ish].
What is the reason? The woman's name joins [the letters together]
whereas the man's name breaks up [the letters]*³.

i.e. the insertion of the י in the male name breaks up the fire – א-י-ש, whereas the insertion of the ה in the name of the woman leaves the fire intact – א-ש-ה. Women would seem, then, to have a greater ability to engage and elevate the physicality of this world. In the words of the מהר"ל, the fire of the woman is greater than that of a man, for it is she who comes to complete man, and she therefore finds herself closer to the concept of completion. This is why even the potentially negative fiery force of spirituality in her does not break out of the basic proper framework in which it needs to operate. On the other hand, the same fiery force in man is much more likely to break all bounds when it is not used in the right way⁴.

¹ מהר"ל: כי הוא יתברך מחבר זכר ונקבה על ידי שמו יתברך שנתן ה"ד באיש וה' באישה (גור אריה פרשת ויגש מו: טו ד"ה הזכרים תלה בלאה דף רלז)

² מהר"ל: גבורות ד

³ סוטה יז. - אמר רבא ודאשה עדיפא מדאיש מאי טעמא האי מצרף האי לא מצרף

⁴ מהר"ל (סוטה יז. שם): אש של אשה יותר מדאיש, כי האשה מפני שהיא להשלמת האדם, לכן האשה יותר קרובה אל ההשלמה ... ודבר זה ידוע כי כח האש של אשה אינו יוצא מן הסדר כמו שהוא אצל האיש.

The section immediately below, כלי וחומר, explains how these respective male-female roles play themselves out in a more detailed, practical way.

c- כלי וחומר

There are ten ספירות through which all השפעות רוחניות, spiritual endowments from above, must flow. They are made up of three groups of three and מלכות at the end. Each group begins with the male side and is consolidated by the female side which in turn produces a synthesis of the two. The final ספירה, מלכות, is the one through which all the others must finally flow in order to achieve their expression in this world. מלכות is female. Women are the מלכות of מדה; the כלי which can hold the צורה. Therefore the שכינה, the final manifestation of G-d's presence in this world, is a feminine word. As a כלי, the female provides the context and parameters in which the male can express himself. The woman provides the womb, the total environment, warmth, food, and air which the fetus needs to survive. She is both the שומר of negative elements from the outside and the active provider of the necessary nurturance and sustenance from the inside¹.

Chava is therefore called אם כל חי חוה, says Rashi, comes from חיה, meaning “living one”. “The concept ‘mother of all life’ expresses not only the ability to physically give birth but also to create, nourish and enhance all facets of life².”

מהר"ל: And just as the wall protects the city, so too, the female who completes the male protects him. Therefore it is written ויבן – and He built. For every building makes a protective fence and wall³.

The word for male, זכר, means to remember, i.e. to be involved with abstract intellectual thought. The word for female, נקבה, means to designate, articulate or define, as in:

ויאמר (לבן ליעקב) נקבה שכרך עלי ואתנה (בראשית ל כח)
And he [Lavan] said [to Yaakov]: “Fix the compensation I owe you and I will give it.”

In explaining the word נקבה, the תרגום uses the word פריש⁴, translating as follows:

And he said: Explain [or define] your compensation etc.

¹ כתוב במדרש (במדבר ו כד): יברכך ד' וישמרך ודרשו במדרש רבה (נשא יט ה): יברכך – בבנים, וישמרך – בבנות, שצריכות שמירה.

² עיין עקידת יצחק, בראשית, שער תשיעי אות ח: ההבדל בין התפקידים הכלולים בהשמות אשה וחוה ושקוליהם זה כנגד זה

Sara Ester Crispe in Jewish Women Speak about Jewish Matters, pg. 150. The author brings two other understandings for the name Chava. (1) It means experience. Adam, which means humanity in general is married to Chavah-experience, representing the totality of human experience, the human condition. (2) It means “expression” as in Tehillim 19:3 which reads, “Night following night expresses knowledge (יחיה דעת)”. This third meaning of Chava can be understood as “expression”, “revelation” or “manifestation”. (ibid. pg. 150)

³ וכמו שהחומה מגינה על העיר, כך האשה מצד שהיא משלמת האיש היא מגינה עליו, מפני כך כתיב ויבן (את הצלע) שכל בנין עושה גדר וחומה (מהר"ל חידושי אגדות נדה מה: ד,ה מלמד)

⁴ ואמר פריש אגרך עלי ואתן

This continues the theme of the female as being the force which defines, sets the parameters and articulates. We also gain a similar insight when looking at the words *Av* and *Eim*:

The word *אב* comes from *תאבה* (toveh) as in *תאבה* - ta-avah - the original *רצון*. On its own, this *Ratzon* will just dissipate. It requires the female force of *Eim* to complete the process.

The word *אם* (eim) comes from *אם* (im) - the conditions under which something will express itself (Rav Moshe Shapiro).

This is why the world was created and the תורה was given from Feminine Side of *השם*. Both existed in some higher, more spiritual form (the *תורה* in *שמים*) which had to be brought down into this world. This required a framework, a force that would define the parameters in which these forces would operate. That force is *נקבה*.

As such, אשת חיל is a משל for the תורה (see *ילקוט שמעוני* at the end of *משלי*).

The brother of the *מהר"ל*, Rav Chaim, points out that the letters of HaShem written out in full, *יהוה*, come to the numerical value of 45, which is also the same value as *אדם*, man. If we take only those letters which are not the actual four letters of the name, i.e. the underlined letters - *ה-א-ו-ה*, we get the hidden letters whose numerical value comes to 19, the same as *חיה*. This teaches that a woman's holiness is essentially hidden, to the point that even the prophecies of the 7 female prophets are written in a more *Tzanua* form¹.

This is why *יחוס בטר האם* (the mother determines identity). It is she who provides the physical context (the womb) in which the child exists, and it is she who provides the spiritual context (i.e. whether this child will exist within a Jewish or non-Jewish framework).

"If we consider male and female biologically, we see the fusion of two potentials into a new creation. The male contribution is infinitely small in space and time, yet contains the germ of life. It contains no effort and no pain. The female dimension is opposite. She has the ability to hold this minute speck within herself and build up a complete life. The child is formed physically within the mother over a considerable time; effort and pain are involved and finally a child is born. Both mother and father harmonized their different energies into a new and unique existence - a 3rd component, the child. It is therefore through the holiness of this intimate relationship that the ultimate feeling of accomplishment prevails and so the *שכינה* can be a part of this couple's life."

"With the spiritual realm, there is a completion of male and female energies thereby bringing completion. There is also a similar partnership in the physical reality. The man is the partner who goes out into the world and is the "Amel". The female then takes the result of the labor and materializes it. The male is the one who brings the wheat and flax from the market place and the woman is the one that transforms the wheat into bread and flax into clothing. ... She allows him to see the fruits of his labor. The labor is therefore referred to as darkness and the enjoyment as light. The female is the one who takes the darkness and turns it into

¹ספר חיים טובים של הר' חיים ברבי בצלאל (אחי המהר"ל)
ואם תכתב אותיות השם המיוחד במלואו יו"ד ה"א ו"ו ה"א, יעלה מספרו מ"ה כמנין **אד"ם**. והנותר שלו שהוא יו"ד ה-
א ו-א ה-א עולה במספר י"ט כמנין חו"ה. להגיד שגלוי שכינה על האשה אינו דרך כבוד כלפי מעלה. ואף על גב שהיו
כמה נשים נביאות בישראל, לא תמצא שום מקום וידבר ה' אל הנביאה לאמר, מטעם שפרשתי. ובלשוננו הקדוש תמצא,
כי מה שהוא נוכח לזכר הוא נסתר לנקבה, להגיד שכל כבודה של בת מלך להיות פנימה ונסתרת.

light. It is most apt that the woman lights the candles on Shabbat, symbolic of her bringing light into the home.”¹

Once one understands this, the idea of woman as an עזר being a derogatory term falls away. There are indeed helpers who are in an inferior position – a slave, for example. But a doctor who helps a patient and a lawyer who helps a client are hardly doing so from a position of inferiority. In fact, Chazal state that גדול המעשה מן העושה, and פלא יועץ ascribes this לז"ל to women who help their husbands learn. Similarly, a Yissaschar-Zevulun deal clearly involves equal sechar for each partner. In the male-female partnership the issue is even clearer. Both parties need the other for completion – period.

d- רצון and תשוקה

The female is also associated with תשוקה. The female תשוקה must be distinguished from the male רצון. רצון is more of an abstract desire or will; תשוקה is the ability to engage the reality of the world down here with the desire to elevate it. תשוקה starts from top down; תשוקה works from bottom up².

Rav Tzadok HaCohen explains that Shleimus has fifteen levels, represented by the 15 steps in the Beis HaMikdash between the Ezras Nashim and the Ezras Yisrael where the Leviim used to sing the 15 Psalms beginning with Shir HaMaalos. The first level is the female, who embodies desire. The last is the male, who reflects the fulfillment of that desire. When male and female merit to work together, G-d's Name יה is between them. Therefore, this name is numerically fifteen. The ה of the Name is the female, for through this letter this world was created, and it is in this world that the desire for holiness exists. But the fulfillment of that desire will only be in the World to Come, the world of reward, and that is the male³.

Avraham passed onto the Jewish people the inheritance of being straight and clear thinking. ... Sarah provided the dimension of passion and desire for the holy. Therefore her test was to be captured by Pharaoh and Avimelech, to be faced with cleaving to the wrong parties ... Sarah is like the heart of the Jewish people. ... As the Zohar puts it, Avraham and Sarah are like the soul and the body, the mind and the heart, the form and the material which holds the form ... This intense passion for spirituality which Sarah had was vital to be able to attain higher dimensions of spirituality, and that is why Avraham's merits are attributed to Sarah⁴.

¹Nechama Furman, Moreshet Essay.

²This is also why women excel in Yiras Shamayim, especially the type of trustfulness required in times of *nisayon*:

צדקת הצדיק קפד: הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים שהוא מדת הנוקבא והתעורות דלתתא בחשק ורצון

Read the chapter on *Nukva* below to understand that even for a man to have *Yiras Shamayim*, he must draw this from the reality called *Nukva*.

³רב צדוק הכהן, דובר צדק ס"ח (דף ט):

בשלימות עצמו יש מעלות והם חמשה עשר ... (ד) יש טו מעלות מעזרת נשים לעזרת ישראל ... שהאשה היא המעלה הראשונה שהוא תוקף התשוקה ... והאחרונה הוא האיש שהוא מילוי התשוקה ... וכשזכו איש ואישה שם ק"ה ביניהם שהוא בגימטריא ט"ו המעלות ... והה"א היא באשה ובו נברא העה"ז שבו היא התשוקה והיום לעשותם ולא המילוי לתשוקה בהשגה שהוא הקבול שכר ... והוא העה"ב שנברא ביו"ד שהוא באיש .

⁴שם משמואל, חיי שרה שנת תרפ"א דף רנט:

... אברהם ... הוריש לישראל בחינתו להיות ישרי המוח והשכל ... ושרה היתה בחינת התשוקה וחפץ לאלקות, והיתה הנסיון שלה שנלקחה לבית פרעה ואבימלך, ולא את דבקת בהו ... וכאילו שרה היא בחינת הלב שבאשראל ... והם דברי הזוה"ק שהמשיל את אברהם ושרה לנשמה וגוף דהיינו בחינת המוח והלב, והמחקרים לצורה וחומר ... ובזה יתפרשו

e- נבואה – female; חכמה – male

The Sages receive from the right [male] side whereas the prophets receive from the left [female] side.¹

חכמה is a process of intellectual soaring without bounds. נבואה, on the other hand, is a bringing down of spirituality into the specific parameters of this world. It requires a כלי, a מושפע - both feminine traits.

Female נבואה: see Rav S.R. Hirsch on why Sarah was greater in prophecy than אברהם. אברהם was a prophetess while still a child; תפלה's חנה reached the level of prophecy; אור החיים on the שירת הים sung by the women says that at the time of משיח women will outdo men in prophecy, implying that until משיח they will not.

f- כנסת ישראל in relation to השם - wife to husband

There are many verses which deal with the relationship of the Jewish people to G-d as one of a wife to a husband² or of a bride to a groom³.

Therefore, the female concept is a general model for our relationship with השם. This is because we are all recipients, מושפעים and כלים to receive from השם. Where our relationship with השם is consummated (as in the case of כלל ישראל), this becomes the husband/wife, חתן/כלה paradigm.

ii- Male and Female – a Historical Perspective

¹דרך חיים (מהר"ל על אבות) פ"א מ"א (בסוף) : זקנים... מקבלים מצד ימין ... (ו)נביאים ... מקבלים מצד שמאל (היינו מצד הנקוב)

²הושע ב: ד
ישעיה סב: ה
ירמיהו ב: ב
יחזקאל טו: ח
מלאכי ב: יא
שיר השירים

³שיר השירים ד: ח-יב; ה: א
ישעיה מט: יח; סא: י; סב: ה
ירמיהו לג: יא

השם See פסוקא דרב כהנא, פסוקא כב where it says that correspondingly there are ten places where השם is mentioned as being clothed in the clothes of a חתן (א: זג: א). (ישעיהו נט: ז, סג: א וגו', דניאל ז: ט, תהלים קד: א, צג: א). In כד הקמח, Rabbeinu Bachaya explains that now we are in a state of אידוסיני, whereas after משיח, we will be in a state of נישואין.

Male and female is an underlying principle in the whole of creation. Everything which G-d created was created in a male and a feminine form¹. The מהר"ל explains that G-d honored man and all of the lower creation by creating male and female pairs which would complete each other, each one fulfilling the deficiencies of the other. For both male and female have unique attributes which the other is lacking, and the fact that each one comes with a partner whose natural desire is to unite with it is in and of itself a reflection of its importance. Since each created species is by its nature incomplete as it is only a part of the whole creation, if it remains isolated it is doomed to be an incomplete part of a whole. But if we see that its nature is to combine with others, and more than that, if we see that it has a natural partner in the creation, we then see that it really does have the potential to move towards wholeness and completion.² This is the deeper meaning of G-d's statement:

בראשית ב: יח

ויאמר ד' אלקים לא טוב (אונקלוס-לא תקין) היות האדם לבדו אעשה לו עזר כנגדו

And G-d said: "It is not good for man to be alone. I will make for him a helpmeet against him."

Targum Unkelus translates לא טוב as לא תקין, i.e. this is an uncorrected or incomplete state. The מהר"ל explains that man, at that stage, was in an intrinsically not good reality, for the only Being that can stand alone and yet still be in a complete state of unity is G-d himself. Therefore, it had to be that man would have a partner³.

What, then, asks the מהר"ל, is the difference between man and the animals? Did they not both need partners? However, says the מהר"ל, if we will look at the creation process closely, we see that man was first created as one being and only afterwards was his partner

¹ בבא בתרא עד:

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב כל מה שהקב"ה ברא בעולמו זכר ונקבה בראם

² מהר"ל (חידושי אגדות שם דף קו קטע המתחיל אמנם):

... רצה הקב"ה לזכות את חשיבות האדם וכל התחתונים מה שחסר להם מצד אשר טובים השנים מן האחד, כי מה שחסר בזה גלה בזה כי יש בזכר מה שאין בנקבה ויש בנקבה מה שאין בזכר ... שכל אחד בפני עצמו גם כן הוא יותר חשוב כאשר נמצא זוג אליו כי כאשר נמצא האחד בלבד הוא חלק בלבד וכאשר נמצא זיווג אליו והזוג הוא דבר שלם הרי כל אחד הוא חלק הכל.

Mrs. Leah Kohn explains it as follows: The Torah tells us that G-d created Adam and then He said, "It is not good that man be alone." This seems strange. If G-d is capable of absolute perfection, why would He observe that something He made is not good? One answer set forth by Rashi, a renowned eleventh century Torah scholar, states that G-d made man in order to give him the pleasure of establishing a relationship with his Creator, through a process of spiritual growth. If man were to remain alone and independent, he might eventually accord himself divine status. In this case, he might not feel the need to reach out to G-d, which in the Jewish view would mean he was missing the purpose of life.

The Torah makes clear that G-d created woman, in part, to provide someone who would challenge man to recognize his own incompleteness, so that he would not become overly confident. For that matter, neither would woman, since man would challenge her in the same way. G-d created man and woman with a great deal in common, yet with substantial differences that make them interdependent and constantly aware of the fact that only G-d is perfect, in and of Himself (Project Genesis Website).

³ גור אריה, שם:

שהמציאות בעצמו לא טוב ... שאין ראוי האחדות אלא ליחיד הקב"ה [א"כ] בהכרח שיהיה לו זוג ...

וכל זה מפני שראוי לאדם קצת אחדות בעבור שהוא יחיד בתחתונים (גור אריה, שם).

This places man between G-d and the animals. He is not a total unity like G-d, for, as a created being, he needs a partner. Yet he has a dimension of unity to him, being created one at the outset and making him more connected to unity, more able to achieve that state of unity which he began with at the outset². We will explain in the next paragraph that man's original unity had its flip side – that although it created unity within himself, in some ways it actually held him back from uniting with the broader creation.

Originally, Adam was created *אִיִּי*, male-female in one being, i.e. complete. According to one opinion in the *גמרא*, *אדם* was an androgynous being (male/female being – *אדם* being a gender-neutral term). *אדם* had two faces, the male face looking one way and the female face looking the other way. *פנים*, faces, means turning, i.e. the face is the point at which his internal reality turns towards the outside. (The word *פנים* – *pnim* – inside, is comprised of the same letters as *פנים* – *panim*.) In the First Man, one saw his face from whichever side one looked at him. Put differently, man's faces, his inner spirituality, faced the world from every side. Man was complete; there was no back to man where lack or sin could take place. Man being complete had no need to face him/herself; there was no deficiency, no need for the male/female parts to give to each other to fill the deficiency; consequently, man faced away from himself. In this state there was no possibility of imitating G-d by giving to another. Man was simply a spiritual robot. This state was *לא טוב*: it was not good for *אדם* to be alone and maintain the state of independence in which he/she did not feel the need to relate to others. Initially, Adam thought that the solution lay in becoming a giver to the animals, that they should become the *חומר* for his *צורה*. This did not work because, as the *מהר"ל* explains, even though man is indeed the *Tzura* of all of creation and provides creation with its form and content, uniting with the animals did not provide Adam with the satisfaction and sense of completion which he needed. Man might complete the animals but they do not fully complete him. They are non-Sechel creatures, creating an unconquerable gap between Adam and Beheimah. His completion of them, therefore, only involves some of his general potential, but not the full force of his human uniqueness. For a perfect match, Man therefore needed a fellow bar-Sechel, a being that he could connect to with all of his unique potential³.

The solution to this was to take Adam himself and create two beings from one⁴. Adam needed to find himself/herself divided so that he would feel he lacked half of himself. The whole *אדם* was now being sub-divided into two parts, neither one complete on its own.

¹גור אריה שם: ויש בזה הפרש גדול בין האדם ושאר בעלי חיים שהרי שאדם נברא יחיד בלא זוג שלו ואלו שאר בהמות ושאר נבראים נברא זוג שלהם עמהם

²מכתב מאליהו

³אף על גב שהוא צורה לכל הנבראים ... אבל אין בזה הנחה והשקט כי אין האדם צורה מיוחדת בשלימות רק באשתו ... שגם היא בעלת שכל משא"כ הבהמות א"א החבור עליהם לגמרי כי הם אינם בעלי שכל וראוי שיהיה האדם נבדל [מהם].. והכל כדי שימצא לו דבר שהוא לו כמו חומר כי א"א מבלעדי חומר. (גור אריה ב כב ד"ה שבא על כל בהמה)

⁴G-d... subdivided this being into two separate human beings - Male and Female - each with their unique power and strength yet interrelated to supplement one another in the ultimate task of building up the world. Understanding this concept it is clear why men and women's social, mental and physical make-up will be different hence role-sex differentiation. Male and Female will use different means best suited to their particular sex in order to serve G-d and to sanctify life. (Furman, Moresheet)

from.

Man must move from being an אדם to being an איש (according to the גר"א, איש is a higher level than אדם). To attempt to fulfill himself and become an איש on his own is to self-destruct, to become the unrestrained force of אש (היינו כשלא זכה). Only if he takes what he lacks, אשה, can he use that אש to reach קדושה, to become an אש with a י in it.

Now there is the possibility of the two halves, both בעלי שכל facing each other, uniting. Man can only unite with his other half by giving himself over to her (and she to him). (ידוע כי. By uniting, man and woman are simply returning to their natural state, i.e. their original condition. But by actively re-creating this state themselves they are doing a lot more; they are, in fact, re-creating G-d's original act of the creation of אדם. Just as the original אדם was comprised of a זו"י, so too husband and wife form this new unit of זו"י. This is the ultimate imitation of G-d, the creation of Man.²

Therefore woman becomes man's equal, עזר כנגדו.

גור אריה (שם):

כי האשה שהיא חשובה ושקולה כמו האיש ומסייע לאיש כי האיש מביא והאשה מתקנת לו זה נקרא עזר כנגדו³

*For a woman is of the same importance and her value is considered equal to a man's.
For the man brings and the woman fixes (completes) for him. This is what is called a
helpmeet against him.*

Though other animals were an עזר, even to the point of some חבור, they were not כנגדו, i.e. not equal in their complimentary roles.

A woman is considered a help-meet to a man and not the other way around because he initiates and she completes.

Therefore, women are not assistants to men in the way we use the word today. The מהר"ל states clearly that reducing the role of women to just being the practical servers of men or even as the bearers of their children provides a very incomplete and inaccurate picture. This has to be so, for the problem to begin with clearly was not that man lacked someone to help him organize his day or get the dishes done. Man needed woman because he lacked a connection with higher unity; he was spiritually incomplete. Nothing in creation at that time could solve his problem. Woman was that being that could complete the process of man actualizing his unique capacity to strive for higher levels of one-ness. She is called עזר in the sense that she completes a process already begun. There is a lot at stake in the ability of male and female to unite in the right way, for it is not just that they complete what the other lacks,

¹מהר"ל תפארת ישראל פי"ד

² Based on מחשבות חרוך של רב צדוק

³לכך אם לא זכה היא כנגדו לגמרי אבל האב לבן אינו כנגדו לעולם ... כי הזכר והנקבה הם שני הפכים מתאחדים בכך אחד לגמרי...

Women, as we have said, have the ability to complete the process and express it in action. This requires that women be at the point of contact with the world. Now herein lies a danger, for the fact that she is the force which desires for final expression in this world means that she has most contact with this world. She is ²סוף קומת האדם, the point at which man translates his potential into the world. Above, we called this the מידה of Malchus. This is reflected in the fact that when השם created the First Woman He first placed אדם in a deep, deep, sleep, which is one sixtieth of death. The creation of woman allowed for a greater potential for good, but that same potential could now also be used for bad. The Nachash recognized this and therefore targeted Chava rather than Adam for moral seduction³. Just as she could take Man's greatest spirituality and actualize its potential, she was capable, if led astray, of taking the evil designs of the Nachash and implementing them as well. Later we will see that women excel in faithfulness, and this made them the leaders, ahead of the men, in steadfast commitment to G-d in Egypt, during the Chet HaEgel and during the Chet HeMeraglim. It is the creating and maintaining of a relationship with G-d as well as to man in which women excel. Therefore, we need to understand that it was the very reality of a man divided into two, the creation of a back of man, which allowed for the potential weakness of man (both male and female). There are types of situation to which females are more susceptible and others to which males are. We will point these out as we describe each one of the female attributes below.

¹Rebbetzin Leah Kohn: The relationship between man and woman can best be described as a team in which each member contributes something unique. The team itself would be unnecessary if each member were talented in exactly the same way as the other. Thus, the team is successful precisely because of its diversity. In terms of spiritual accomplishment, therefore, the differences between the sexes are necessary. Men and women share common goals, with each responsible for distinct aspects of a given project (Project Genesis Website).

²רב צדוק, דובר צדק 121

³מהר"ל חידושי אגדות:
לא מצד שהנקבה היא עזר לעשות צרכו מצד המלאכה בלבד או שיהיה להם תולדות אך כי האחד אינו שלם וכאשר הם שנים אז הביאה שלימה בלי חסרון ... כי יש בזכר מה שאין בנקבה ויש בנקבה משאין בזכר ... נמצא כי הזכר והנקבה בחבור שניהם הוא שלימות הבריאה (בבא בתרא עד: דף קו במהר"ל קטע המתחיל אמנם)
וכדומה ברב צדוק הכהן, דובר צדק (pg. 121) :
ולכך היתה התחברות הנחש...[עם האשה] כי יש לו התחברות ושייכות לה

CHAPTER C: FEMALE CHARACTERISTICS

- i- צניעות ובינה יתרה
- ii- מצוות עשה שהזמן גרמא
- iii- אמונה
- iv- Serenity
- v- Other Characteristics
 - a- רחמניות
 - b- צרות עין באורחים
 - c- עצלניות
 - d- Emotional
 - e- בושה
 - f- Talkative – Communal and Holistic

CHAPTER C: FEMALE CHARACTERISTICS

One of the reasons why the Jewish concept of female is often misunderstood is that female attributes are often discussed in isolation without understanding how they fit into all her other attributes. We showed above how women are completers of mankind's unusual potential for unity. All unique female midos need to be activated in order for women to unite all, and all traits interact with each other in dynamic ways. A woman's צניעות affects and is affected by her Binah Yeseirah. These two midos, in turn, complement and are complemented by her Kal Daas. And so on with her special capacity for connecting with others and feeling deeply for them, her nurturing instincts, her own more sensitive feelings, etc. Many of these issues have been dealt with in detail elsewhere, either in this book or in Women Book II. What we are coming to do here is to briefly understand the relationship of these midos with each other.

שבת סב. -נשים עם בפני עצמן הן

Women are a nation unto themselves.

צניעות ובינה יתרה -i

(Note: See under Chapter **D-ii** – חכמת נשים and Chapter **D-iii** - בינה יתירה for greater detail of בינה יתירה. For a comprehensive treatment of צניעות see Section 2)

צניעות is the ability to de-emphasize the superficial aspects of a person or situation in order to focus on its inner essence. Women have greater capacity for צניעות than men. The Midrash explains that when G-d built up the woman He covered each limb with this extra dimension¹.

This allows a woman to more easily focus on the inner essential dimensions of her situation, which subsequently leads to בינה יתירה, to seeing people and situations more holistically and to maintaining her Emunah in situations where spirituality is not so obvious.

"Women have roles that emphasize bringing holiness into realms that are hidden from public view. This implies that we should develop roles for ourselves in which our inner self is active." (Lisa Aiken, pg. 135)²

¹בראשית ב:כב-כג

בראשית רבה יח: ב

...ויבן כתיב התבונן מאין לבראתה... ממקום שהוא צנוע באדם אפילו בשעה שאדם עומד ערום אותו המקום מכוסה ועל כל אבר ואבר שהיה בורא בה היה אומר לה תהא אשה צנועה אשה צנועה:

²As Rebbetzin Heller puts it: External power often involves the capacity to influence events. When Time Magazine names the year's most powerful person (generally a man), the choice is based on who can best externally affect the world, by pushing a detonation button or by saying the wrong thing or through making an important decision. Nonetheless, if you think about who has affected your life on a deep level, who has been most instrumental in creating who you are today, you would probably not consider Time's man of the year or any other public figure. These people influence external realities, while they have very little to do with the internal reality of any one person's life.

In the internal arena, most people - with exceptions - will think back to the family and, in familial relationships, the mother. This implies that, in terms of internal growth, another power track exists, but is not necessarily validated by society. Judaism considers both external and internal tracks equal and, accordingly, assigns men and women responsibilities that support their unique ways of connecting to

and combine the qualities of intuition, holistic thinking and natural insight into people (בינה יתירה), and the ability of a woman to focus on the inner essence of each household member (צניעות). She thereby conducts the highly interpersonal and personalized roles that a family needs from her. For example, it says in אשת חיל (משלי לא: יט):

ידיה שלחה בכישור וכפיה תמכו פלך :

Mrs. Heller (*More Precious than Pearls*, pg. 24) explains:

Spinning involves making separations in order to draw things together again in a new way (מקבא): separating strands of wool from cotton in order to make thread. On a deeper level, one of the things which women are best at is being able to make separations and create joinings in the intimate lives of their families¹.

also links into women's exemptions from גרמא, time based-Mitzvos, and the special women's מצוות – see below.

ii- מצוות עשה שהזמן גרמא

(For a comprehensive treatment of this subject see Women's Issues Book Two, Section Two)

Men Need More מצוות מעשיות

Women have less מצוות than men: they are not commanded in תלמוד תורה, משפט, כהונה, מלכות etc. relating to the public realm of גרמא and a whole host of other מצוות.

Men are more distracted by physical realities and therefore need the direction of defined מצוות to turn physical realities into קדושה-realities. Men need physical realities to be more obviously labeled as מצוות (including various מצוות of marriage and of having children).

Since women have less מצוות than men, there are one of two theoretical possibilities:

i- Women get less שכר

ii- Women get the same שכר as men, receiving greater שכר than men in areas of רשות.

All the מפרשים are clear that women do receive the same שכר in עוה"ב as men receive and that they are also at the same level of קדושה².

Women achieve this by adding an enlarged area of דברי רשות to the defined מצוות in which they are commanded. Women, through their extra capacity of צניעות and their extra capacity to relate to קדושה, can better tune into דברי רשות.

However, women are the same as men in one area. With two exceptions, women are commanded in all the מליית¹.

G-d. This is the basis for Jewish laws (halachot) concerning differences between men and women. These laws give credence to the existence of more than one important power source. Women in Judaism, Copyright (c) 1999 by Mrs. Leah Kohn and Project Genesis, Inc.

¹See also there דרשה צמר ופשתים

²אגרות משה אורח חיים ח"ד סי' מט
צריך לדעת כי אין זה בשביל שנשים פחותות במדרגת הקדושה מאנשים דלענין הקדושה שוות לאנשים

The reason for this is that the מליית are the basic parameters in which we operate, the סדר הדברים (תפארת ישראל and פרשת ויגש, מהר"ל) סדר הדברים to begin with. Once in a framework, a Jew achieves his exalted levels by doing מ"ע. These are called קנין המעלה by the מהר"ל. According to the שיערי תשובה², all the great and elevated levels are achieved through the מ"ע³.

What emerges, then, is that women have the same basic סדר הדברים as men while simultaneously having a different עבודה when it comes to קנין המעלה. (Note that although there are three individual ל"ת from which a woman is exempt, these reflect local exemptions. There are no whole categories of exemptions as there are in the מ"ע.)

What שילוח הקן on רמב"ן says that the תורה legislates in certain broad areas with a number of specific מצוות, leaving it to us to harmonize ourselves with a תורה spirit in that area even where it is not legislated. In fact, most of our lives, both for males and females, are technically דברי רשות (although they too are covered by some מצוות שבכללות like קדושים תהיו). Clearly, הקב"ה wants all of our life to be full of עבודת ד', not just when we are doing מצוות. The מצוות are there to give us very clear and relatively easy access to קדושה while קדושה in the area of רשות is more difficult to achieve.

Therefore, while some have explained that women's natural level of קדושה renders certain מצוות unnecessary because she already has the קדושה-level of those מצוות, another explanation is that she does not need those מצוות because she is more capable of achieving that same קדושה even without the specific guidance and קדושה-access of those מצוות.

אמונה - iii

Women have the capacity to relate to hidden קדושה even in the midst of the seemingly most mundane or challenging of situations (חטא העגל, המרגלים וכו') and to continuously renew that.

In fact, the *Baal Tshuvah* movement has always attracted a higher number of women than men. This is despite the fact that many more resources were put into being mekarev men. Women are seen to be more spiritually open and seeking than men.⁴ Men possibly see admitting to spiritual needs as some kind of weakness.

¹ רמב"ם הל' עכו"ם יב: ג
כל מצות לא תעשה שבתורה אחד אנשים ואחד נשים חייבים חוץ מבל תשחית ובל תקיף ובל יטמא כהן למתים.

² שער ג ; מצוות עשה

³ See also the זכור את יום השבת on, פרשת יתרו, רמב"ן

⁴This phenomenon, of greater female spiritual sensitivity has been noted previously, under very difficult circumstances. In *The Life of W. B. Yeats: A Critical Biography* Tenence Brown observed of the spiritualism existing in the late 19 C:

That movement offered to those who put their faith in mediumship more than a metaphysical account of the universe. It promised direct experience of the supernatural, contact with the dead and with spirits. ... Spiritualism had indeed almost achieved the status of a religion in its own right as belief in orthodox Christianity waned. ... in a climate of middle-class speculation about such topics as mesmerism, phrenology, clairvoyance and faith healing.

The great majority of the mediums who had made Spiritualism a fashionable craze and something of a religious cult in Britain since the 1840s were women. A historian comments of the period: 'the typical spiritualist experience involves a female medium and a male spirit or control' (Skultans 1983: 17). A census of hallucinations by the Society for Psychical Research in the years 1889-92 confirmed this gender difference when it found that women were twice as prone as men to mediumistic experiences (ibid.). Woman, as Alex Owen has argued in *The Darkened Room*, became a site of

Because of this greater natural relationship with קדושה, women are also naturally greater in יראה (see חכמה below in the name of רב צדוק הכהן). Men, who are used to the role of initiator and influencer, are in greater danger of initiating a role independent of and in rebellion to השם. Women's deeper orientation to relationships and their greater role as recipients (among other traits) allows them to stay faithful to השם to a greater degree.

Men function best in the clarity of day (להגיד בבקר חסדיך).

Women are historically better than men in the darkness of night, נסיון or גלות (ואמונתך) (בלילות).

Aside from not participating in the Sins of the Golden Calf and the Spies¹, women were also more faithful in Egypt, to such a degree that the גמרא (סוטה יא ע"ב) states that it was in their Zechus that we were redeemed from Egypt².

A woman is like a tea bag - only in hot water do you realize how strong she is.
(Nancy Reagan)

Because of women's capacity to relate to hidden קדושה, ראש חדש is specifically a חג for women. ראש חדש represents the challenge of finding hidden קדושה in a constantly waxing and waning situation where the light can only be seen in reflection. The cycles of the חדש are akin to the Jewish experience in גלות and are therefore compared to women, whose own monthly cycle is but one manifestation of her being tuned in to this idea³.

Prior to the חטא העגל, חטא ישראל כלל had reached the level of אדם הראשון before the חטא, and would have gone on immediately to ימות המשיח. Women, who did not participate in the חטא, were therefore given a Messianic חג (Rosh Chodesh) already now, i.e. they were given a מקום already in this world⁴.

iv- Serenity

divinatory, almost priestly energy, at the point in Victorian culture where medicine, law, and science vied with religion for authority over the human body.

¹במדבר רבה כא: י
ותקרבנה בנות צלפחד אותו הדור היו הנשים גודרות מה שאנשים פורצים שכן את מוצא שאמר להן אהרן (שמות לב) פרקו נזמי הזהב אשר באזני נשיכם ולא רצו הנשים ומיחו בבעליהן שנאמר ויתפרקו כל העם את נזמי הזהב וגו' והנשים לא נשתתפו עמהן במעשה העגל וכן במרגלים ... הנשים לא היו עמהם בעצה שכתוב למעלה מן הפרשה (במדבר כו) כי אמר ה' להם מות ימותו במדבר ולא נותר מהם איש...איש ולא אשה על מה שלא רצו ליכנס לארץ אבל הנשים קרבו לבקש נחלה בארץ לכן נכתבה פרשה זו (של בנות צלפחד) סמוך למיתת דור המדבר...

²בשכר נשים צדקניות שהיו באותו הדור נגאלו ישראל (ע"ש)

³רקנטי מצוה ב:
וחדוש הלבנה רמז ודמיון לישראל בגלות זה שאנו אומרים שעתידיים להתחדש (פירוש שיתחדשו מגלות לגאולה) כמותה פגימתה ומלואה כאשה נדה ואחר תטהר

⁴For more details on this idea see **Women's Issues –Book Two; Section Four** on ראש חדש, and the חלה, הדלקת נרות וטהרת המשפחה: מצוות the three women's

Men have more natural aggression¹ than women, who are more serene.² מהר"ל describes this female serenity as being in more natural harmony with Olam Haba³.

For each sex this can either be positive or negative, depending on how their traits are used. Educator Barbara Wilder-Smith, with the Tufts University Program for Educational Change Agents, spent a year observing boys' imaginary play in an inner-city school, and found that violent scenarios played a positive role in development. Her report, "Harmonious Discord," described how boys almost invariably built stories around shooting, fistfights, car crashes and other forms of violence. But once their stories ended, no violence followed. As one boy explained when a teacher objected, "But the bad guy has to die somehow!" Bruno Bettelheim says that concocting these stories helps establish a moral compass: good triumphs over evil, courage finds its reward.

Men are more action-orientated, using their more natural aggression in a positive way. For this reason they are also more competitive. Women, in contrast, are more consensual and less hierarchical or competitive in their relationships⁴. This also allows women to be more nurturing and giving, investing less in their own victories and more committed to facilitating the growth of others⁵.

For this reason, writes the ספר החנוך, women are exempt from fighting wars. However, this should not be misinterpreted as women lacking in courage and daring. In אשת חיל the verse says עוז והדר לבושה, on which Rebbetzin Heller comments:

¹In all psychological studies, males proved to be more aggressive. Females given testosterone showed increased aggression and often dominance over males. (e.g. Tavis & Wade, The Longest War, Sex Differences in Perspective; Joslyn in Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 1973, 14)

²Catherine Stoney of Ohio State found significant differences in stress levels between men and women. Women's blood level goes up less than men's in reaction to stress. But women tend to react to a wider range of outside stresses than men, according to Ronald Kessler of Harvard who asked 166 married couples to keep a daily stress diary for six weeks. *Women feel stress more often, Kessler says, because they take a holistic view of everyday life, A man may worry if someone in his immediate family is sick; his wife takes on the burdens of the whole neighborhood. "Men take care of one thing at a time", he says. "Women put the pieces together again."* (Newsweek, June 28, 1999, pg. 40)

³מהר"ל דרוש על התורה:
כי האיש ... אינם מוכנים גם כן כל כך אל השאגן והמנוחה הוא העולם הבא שהוא המנוחה בעצמו. אבל הנשים ראויים ומוכנים לה מצד עצמם שאינם בני פעולה והתעוררות מצד עצם בריאתן, ... כבר הם מוכנים אל השאגן ...

⁴ John Gray, Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus: (pg. 16):

"Martians (men) value power, competence, efficiency, and achievement. They are always doing things to prove themselves and develop their power and skills... They experience fulfillment primarily through success and accomplishment.

"Everything on Mars is a reflection of these values. Even their dress is designed to reflect their skills and competence. Police officers, soldiers, businessmen, scientists, cab drivers, technicians and chefs all wear uniforms or at least hats to reflect their competence and power.

Margaret Eisenhart (in Gender and Higher Education in the Progressive Era):
Far fewer women become scientists than men because courses, grades and interaction with faculty existed in a realm outside of female peer culture. Female students were found to be often ignorant of what major or grades even their close friends had. (The most important thing that was discussed and therefore stressed amongst female students was romance; the most important asset which females felt that they or their peers could have was attractiveness.) It should be stressed that the research was done only on Southern campuses.

⁵George Bernard Shaw: The heroism of a woman is to nurse and protect life, and of a man to destroy it and court death.

"To a significant degree, society has conditioned women for many generations to believe that many obstacles were insurmountable for them. The obstacles in question have been primarily external (such as supporting oneself, managing one's own personal affairs, etc.)"

"Jewish thought, in contrast, suggests that the desirable kind of daring, עז, actually is found more in women."

"There is a very deep relationship between צניעות ...inward-directedness, and fearlessness. צניעות means, in essence, not having a need for external definition of self, not being moved by what happens externally." (More Precious than Pearls, pg. 43)

Because of their unique traits described above, men generally need to be more defined, to have a clearer framework. This is why men tend more towards hierarchies in organizational and business structures than women.

Therefore, men are more defined in מצוות and are given more defined roles (kings, judges, witnesses, soldiers, etc.). Their need for clearer external definition is expressed as a need to go out, build structures, and act in the world with a sense of vision and purpose in order to create their קדושה. Women are capable of taking multiple small tasks/objects/realities and weaving them into a holistic web of קדושה. Men need to be involved with larger sweeps and visions and get more totally involved with them. This requires more macro-action than a woman's micro-action. As Rav Kook puts it, the soul of man is to be the action-person, the promulgator, the conqueror, the leader of discussions¹.

In one sense, this need to be macro-action orientated makes the discovery of קדושה more elusive for a man². It requires, says the מהר"ל, that he channel that creation energy into עמלות בתורה³.

It is the woman's role to bring her husband and children close to the World to Come through her calmness. In this world, the woman also prepares her husband for Shabbos with her tranquil state and therefore it is she who lights up the home with Hadlakas Neros. Her lighting the Shabbos candles is symbolic of her and her husband's contrasting qualities to complete unity.

In contrast to women, men are more predisposed to express this spirituality in terms of strength. They are the ones who rid the world of its negativity (e.g. eradicating people who do injustice) while women want to nurture the positive in the world.

It is for this reason that the male's need is expressed by going out, building structures out in the world with a sense of vision and purpose. This same creation energy is to be channeled by actively delving into the depths of תורה⁴.

v-Other Characteristics

a-רחמניות

¹נפש האיש: הפועל, החוקק, הכובש, והמדביר (עולת ראייה של הרב א. י. קוק על הברכה שלא עשני אשה)

²ייוכל לפעמים לסור עי"ז מהמגמה האלוקית העליונה (ר' קוק שם על הברכה שעשני כרצונו)

³מהר"ל דרוש על התורה

⁴Nechama Furman – Moreshet Essay

During the reign of ישעיהו המלך (639-608 BCE)¹ at the time of doing repairs to the temple, a Torah scroll was found. כהן appointed a five-man committee, including the גדול, to investigate. Although ירמיהו, צפניה and נחום all lived nearby at the time, the committee did not take the scroll to any of them for authentication. Instead, they took it to חולדה, the prophetess, whose judgment was that the scroll was authentic and reflected Divine authority. חולדה's judgment was accepted by everyone; no one considered it inappropriate that an all-male committee should take the scroll to a woman to determine its status. Nor did anyone question her judgment.

The גמרא² questions why ישעיהו did not go to ירמיהו, who was alive at that time. It answers:

³ מפני שהנשים רחמניות הן
Because women are merciful

רחמים is a nurturing מידה and comes from רחם, the womb, which provides a total nurturing environment.

רחמים complements דין, the feminine side⁴. דין is the boundaries and parameters of a thing, defining its environment. רחמים is a fine-tuning of this environment, allowing general principles to be applied according to the specific needs of each individual situation. (The ימים ראש השנה, in fact, comprise such a דין-רחמים package. According to Rav Dessler, יום כיפור is שבת רחמים while יום כיפור is שבת רחמים שבדין).

b- צרות עין באורחים – Women are more tight-fisted with guests

This is learned from no less a great hostess than Sarah Imeinu. Avraham Avinu had to stress that Sarah use the finest flour for their 3 guests (the 3 Angels), fearing that she would use inferior flour⁵.

It is possible that women feel the needs of their בני בית more acutely, making them more sensitive to giving too much to outsiders at the expense of their own family. Otherwise, it is difficult to reconcile this with the fact that women are considered more רחמניות in general. In addition, this should not be interpreted as a general lack of giving or נדיבות. On the

¹ מלכים ב כב:יד-כ and דברי הימים ב לד:כב-כח

² מגילה יד

³ on the פסוק רש"י³ (ב כב:יד) מלכים is even clearer:

אמרו רבותינו לפי שהאשה מרחמת יותר מן האיש (ע"ש תירוק שני)

The מהרש"א explains:

ר"ל דרחמניות הן ותבקש עליהן רחמים לנות מרעה לטובה

⁴ see Chapter B-i above

⁵ בראשית יח: ו

וימהר אברהם האהלה אל שרה ויאמר מהרי שלש סאים קמח סלת לושי ועשי עגות

ב"מ פז.

כתיב (בראשית יח) קמח וכתיב סלת א"ר יצחק מכאן שהאשה צרה עיניה באורחים יותר מן האיש (סלת הוי יותר משובח מקמח) ובת"ת בשם הספר חסידים: דמתחילה אמר אברהם קמח לבד וסתם קמח כולל כל מיני קמח, גרועים וטובים, ואח"כ נמלך אברהם אולי תתן שרה קמח גרוע ולכן הוסיף סולת, ולפי"ז ממילא מבואר דאשה עיניה צרה באורחים. (עיין בעין יעקב ובמהרש"א פירושים אחרים)

Some understand that the nature of women is to have a צרות עין but that historically they overcame their nature whenever the situation demanded it. Either way, it is this ability not to give when giving would be inappropriate (such as in the case of the חטא העגל) and on the other hand to give when appropriate (as in the case of the משכן) that makes women so exemplary in their relationship with ד'.

c- עצלניות – Women are Lazy

ירושלמי פסחים א ד: נשים עצלניות הם

If this is intended to be a normative statement about women at all times, it is contradicted by numerous other statements in חז"ל and later מפרשים. The Sages understand that at no less an event than Sinai the women were considered more energetic than the men in Mitzvos overall (the implication being about the future as well), and therefore received the Torah before the men³. Writing at the end of the 19th Century, the Aruch HaShulchan testifies that women were *Zrizos* in his time when it came to punctilious observance of Halacha and asking questions of Rabbinic authority⁴. And Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch⁵ adds that "G-d's תורה takes it for granted that our women have great fervor and more faithful enthusiasm for their G-d-serving calling."

d- Emotionally Sensitive – Cry Easily

⁶לעולם יהא אדם זהיר באונאת אשתו שמתוך שדמעתה מצויה אונאתה קרובה

One should always be careful not to talk harshly to his wife for, since she cries easily, one more readily transgresses the prohibition of verbally oppressing her.

When turned toward others, this מדה is reflected in an ability to emotionally identify with others and to express empathy, which is the necessary corollary of רחמנות expressed in a

¹שמות לה:כב:
ויבאו האנשים על הנשים כל נדיב לב הביאו חח ונזם וטבעת וכומז כל כלי זהב וכל איש אשר הניף תנופת זהב לד'.
רמב"ן:
ש[הנשים] היו שם בראשונה והאנשים נטפלו להם (וכן בע"א)

² See More Precious than Pearls, Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller, pg. 7

³ש"ר כח: ב
כה תאמר לבית יעקב אלו הנשים וכו' ותגיד לבני ישראל אלו האנשים וכו' ד"א למה לנשים תחלה שהן מזדרזות במצות ע"כ.

⁴ערוך השולחן (הל' ת"ת) ונשים שלנו זריזות דבכל דבר ספק שואלות ואינן מעמידות על דעתן אפילו בדבר קטן שבקטנות.

⁵ויקרא, כג:מג

⁶בבא מציעא נט.

Women usually seek agreement based on each other's feelings. Boys like to negotiate. "And they are good at it," Brawer says. "They believe in fairness, they like to spell things out, and they like to see each side get a square deal. Then they shake on it. After they've reached an agreement, you often hear boys say, 'Deal? Deal?'"²

Studies have shown that a woman's brain responds more intensely to emotion. Mark George discovered that women activated up to eight times the amount of neurons than men did when recalling the same kinds of emotional experiences, especially sad ones. This may explain why depression is twice as common in women as it is in men.³

The female brain may detect others' emotions more accurately. Neuropsychologist Raquel Gur and husband psychologist Ruben showed that although both sexes did equally well detecting happiness in others, women did much better detecting sadness.⁴

Women are also more inclined than men to feel the urge to cry when they are frustrated.⁵

בושה-e

A woman feels shame more easily and therefore takes precedence over men when both are in need of food or clothing⁶. For the same reason, she is put ahead of males waiting to appear in front of a ⁷בית דין.

Shame is a positive emotion when faced with one's own negative actions. One feels a sense of shame, a feeling of smallness, and a desire to hide. The shameful person is saying

¹ספר חיים טובים של הר' חיים ברבי בצלאל (אחי המהר"ל)
ובכל מקום שהנקבה נמשכת אחר השכל, אז גם היא נקראת בלשון זכר, כמו שמצינו בפרשת נזיר (במדבר פרק ו, ב) שמתחלה אמר **איש או אשה** וחזר ואמר **יפליא** בלשון זכר לבד. לפי שהנזירות הוא שכלי, וכל הנשמות אפילו של אשה הלא נקראו בלשון זכר, כמו שפרש רבנו בחיי אצל מיתת שרה (בראשית כג, ג). אבל בפרשת אוב וידעוני (ויקרא כ, כז) כתיב **איש או אשה** וסים בלשון רבים **באבן ירגמו אותם דמיהם בס**. וכן (במדבר ה, ו): **"איש או אשה כי יעשו מכל חטאת האדם"**, הכל בלשון רבים. וכאשר חזרו לעשות תשובה חזר וכלל שניהם בלשון זכר שנאמר (שם פסוק ז): **והשיב את אשמו וגו' וחמישתו יוסף וגו'.**

²Edwin and Sally Kiester in the Reader's Digest, August 2000, **What Moms Need To Know About Sons**

³Readers Digest, April 1999, pg. 110

⁴Ibid

⁵William H. Frey II Crying: The Mystery of Tears: Nature may also make women more prone to tears than men...both boys and girls cry about the same amount until the age of 12. But by the time women reach 18, they are crying four times as much as men, said Dr. Frey, who has conducted research on behavioral, personality and genetic aspects of crying and who has also studied the chemistry of tears. Scientists do not know exactly why women tend to cry more easily, but Dr. Frey said several factors may be at work. One is the hormone prolactin ... which is present in mammary glands and induces lactation but is also found in the blood and in tear glands. Boys and girls have about equal levels of prolactin levels in their blood during childhood. But from ages of 12 to 18, the levels in girls gradually rise, and that may have something to do with why women cry more than men. ...Tear glands in men and women also differ anatomically, and that, too, may lead women to cry more easily.

⁶מס' הוריות פ"ג משנה ז; יו"ד רנא ח

⁷משנה תורה פכ"א מהל' סנהדרין הל' ו

that “I and the transgression cannot both exist.” This restores his true balance by stating that it was not his essence that did that action; rather it was a more superficial part of him. This is similar to צניעות in that both allow one to focus on the real essence of one's self. Women, who excel in צניעות, also excel in shame¹.

f- Talkative – Communal and Holistic

י קבים שיחה ירדו לעולם ט נטלו נשים²

Ten portions of talking were brought into the world. Women took nine of these.

This fits very well with women's focus on connecting, relating and communicating. In contrast to men's approach to use speech primarily as a tool for expressing an opinion, for women, the process of talking has value in and of itself. When a woman relates that she has a problem, for example, she is expressing the need to share that experience. Men, however, very often hear women as asking for advice as opposed to looking for empathy, and are surprised that the advice is not welcome when it seemed to be solicited. Women respond to other people's pain with empathy – a way of connecting and letting them know that they know what they are going through. Many men misinterpret a woman's empathy with an attempt to detract from the uniqueness of the experience.³

John Gray: A man's sense of self is defined through his ability to achieve results while a woman's sense of self is defined through her feelings and the quality of her relationships.

In general, women have better interpersonal skills. It has been discovered, for example, that women smile and laugh more, gaze more directly at others, and sit or stand closer to people than men do.⁴ Women interrupt less, are more likely to be complimentary, and laugh at other people's jokes more.⁵ Women also read non-verbal cues (facial expressions, body movements, and changes in tone of voice) more accurately than men do.⁶ This fits with women's greater verbal fluency, greater insight into people and greater capacity to feel their pain (רחמנות, see above).

Girls begin talking before boys, have larger vocabularies at an earlier age, and produce more varied and sophisticated sentences. Verbal superiority may continue into adulthood. Studies show that women excel at certain verbal-fluency tests, such as listing multiple words that begin with the same letter. Some researchers have also found that women are more adept at learning foreign languages than men are⁷.

¹See **Section Two - צניעות - B-ii - Shame** for relationship between Shame and צניעות

²קידושין מט:

³You Just Don't Understand, Deborah Tannen, chap 2

⁴Psychologist Judith Hall of North-Eastern University in Boston

⁵Linda Carli, Professor of Psychology at Wellesley College

⁶Hall

⁷Readers' Digest from Susan Seligson in Redbook Aug. '93
See **Chapter E** below, where we show the overall superiority of women on verbal tasks.

Greater communication skills are only one indication of women's need for and capacity to have relationships. In Betty Freidan's book The Second Stage which addresses a new direction in feminism, she recounts how she was once approached by an "executive assistant" who defensively and accusingly stated: "...you people who fought for these things had your families. You already had your men and children. What are we supposed to do?"

CHAPTER D: חכמה, בינה, דעת

i- Introduction

ii- חכמת נשים

iii- בינה יתירה

iv- דעתן קלות

CHAPTER D: חכמה, בינה, דעת

i-Introduction

Every מדה is neither intrinsically positive nor negative - it is merely a potential¹. The greater the potential for good, the greater the potential for bad². Chochmah, Binah and Daas are no different. These three, although each separate, build on each other. They represent three levels of wisdom. Chochma represents abstract intellectual understanding³. Binah is the emotional integration of the wisdom, where a person feels comfortable with that knowledge, can relate to it personally and therefore also understands where it is and where it is not relevant to his/her life⁴. Daas is the translation of that wisdom into action. It represents a complete unity between the person and the knowledge, a total connecting with that knowledge. It is no longer just relevant information which one applies. It is now the person - he/she is totally united with that knowledge⁵.

Women, like men, have a potential for דעת ובינה חכמה. In women, these three מדות are uniquely expressed as דעת, בינה יתירה & קל דעת. Negative statements by חז"ל about any of these three מדות simply reflect the negative potential, the flip-side, of the great positive potential of that מדה.

ii- חכמת נשים

חכמת נשים בנתה ביתה

The Wisdom of Women built her home

⁶פיה פתחה בחכמה

Her mouth was opened in wisdom

Rav Tzadok HaCohen states that a woman's חכמה is really בינה which resides in the heart; real חכמה is male (which resides in the brain), while בינה is female⁷. According to this,

¹The possible exception to this is כעס which the Orchos Tzadikim says is always bad.

²כל הגדול מחבירו יצרו גדול ממנו in פשט - מהר"ל²

³רש"י שמות לא: ג - מה שאדם שומע מאחרים ולמד

⁴רש"י (שם): מבין דבר מלבו מתוך דברים שלמד

⁵רש"י (שם): רוח הקודש

משלי, בסוף, אשת חיל⁶

(See More Precious than Pearls, pg. 48-50)

⁷רב צדוק הכהן דובר צדק (pg. 143): דחכמה ובינה הם אבא ואמא (זוהר יתרו פ"ה א) ואבא מוחא ובינה לבא (תיקוני זוהר) כי החכמה שהיא ראשית המחשבה היא כמו האב והבינה באם ... היא היראה המיוחס לאשה

Yet, the Gemorrah in Yuma seemingly insults women's intelligence. It relates the following story: "A wise woman once asked Rabbi Eliezer, 'since everyone served the Golden Calf equally, why were there different punishments for different people?' [He refused to answer her, pushing aside her question by saying] 'A woman's wisdom is only at the spindle¹.'"

However, the commentators understand this Gemorrah to be saying something quite profound about women and certainly not anything insulting at all. The Maharsha explains this reference with regard to the female wisdom that allowed them to spin the goat-skin cover of the Tabernacle (which required exceptional wisdom and craftsmanship as the weaving had to be superimposed on the skin)².

Rav Tzadok HaCohen says that the meaning of the Gemorrah is that a woman's wisdom is essentially in her heart. This, he says, is a reference to her Binah Yeseira. The reference to spinning is a reference to her hands which are branches of the heart. All action stems from the heart and therefore a woman's wisdom is only in the spindle, i.e. her wisdom always finds a way to express itself in the realm of practical implementation³. This is as opposed to male חכמה which does not always find the means of practical expression. This is because his wisdom is sometimes too intellectual and abstract to motivate and inform his body⁴. It is only after this wisdom has been integrated into the heart that the limbs feel this wisdom as well as a natural extension thereof⁵. This is characteristic of a woman's wisdom: she stands as the central figure which will translate abstract wisdom into tangible reality not only for herself but for her husband and family as well. As we have written elsewhere, a woman excels at Yiras Shamayim whose seat is in the heart and which urges her to seek the intended completion of all wisdom in the practical realm⁶.

No wonder, then, that Rav Tzadok HaCohen⁷ says that תושב"כ is from the male side while תושב"כ is from the female side, the לב. This is called חכמה תתאה, for the Oral Law is the translation of the Written Law into our minds and hearts in such a way that we connect and become one with the knowledge. The Written Torah is outside of ourselves, in a separate written document (the Sefer Torah), whereas the Oral Torah exists only in us. (This is why

¹ יומא סו:

שאלה אשה חכמה את ר"א מאחר שמעשה העגל שוין (היינו שכולם עבדו את העגל בשווה) מפני מה אין מיתתן שווה? א"ל אין חכמה לאשה אלא בפלך וכן הוא אומר (שמות לה) וכל אשה חכמת לב בידיה טו

² מהרש"א: ובקרא דבתריה מפורש בחכמה טו את העמים דהיינו חכמה ואומנות יתירה שהיו טוין מעל העזים כדאמרין פרק כלל גדול (ועיין בפירוש גאון יעקב שהקשה 3 קושיות ומחמת זה פירש פירוש מחודש מאד)

³ רב צדוק הכהן ליקוטי מאמרים (p. 182):

אמרו ביומא (סו): אין חכמה לאשה אלא בפלך ... ר"ל שחכמת הנשים עיקרה בלב ... שנתן בינה יתירה לאשה ... והידיים הם ענפי הלב כי כל כוחות הפעולה נמשכים מהלב וע"כ חכמת אשה הוא רק בפלך ר"ל בכחות הפעולה...

⁴ איש דברים שהאדם מבין שטוב להיות כן ולעשות כן ומ"מ אין אבריו עושין כן. (דובר צדק דף 122)

⁵ אבל הרצון שבלב תיכף כל האברים מרגישים ועושים כן כי יש לו התקרבות יותר להם (דובר צדק p. 122)

⁶ דובר צדק (p. 43):

אין חכמה לאשה אלא בפלך פי' חכמת האשה רק השלמת חסרונה ... שהיא המלאכה שהאשה עושה לבעלה שהוא להשלים... והיא היראה כמ"ש כל תורה [של האיש] שאין עמה מלאכה [של האשה] היא עמוד העבודה שהיא היראה ... ולפיכך חכמת נשים היא בלב משכן היראה המשלמת החסרון זהו עיקר חכמתן שמשתוקקת להשלמת החסרונם (pg. 48) כי אם יעשה הכל מצד חכמה [היינו מדות התורה שהיא חכמה שבראש] יבא לבטל כל מעשה המצות בפועל.

⁷ pg. 232 ליקוטי מאמרים

גמרא למד (תושב"כ) חומש (This is why, paradoxically, women learn חומש (תושב"כ) and men learn גמרא (תושב"כ). Women, who are תושב"כ, need to draw from this (תושב"כ). Men, who are תושב"כ, need to bring that into the world by consciously engaging in תושב"כ).

Man, whose physical form in this world derives from the עפר, which is a simple state, is not connected with actualizing tangible forms. Women, who were created from the צלע which is a human form, are better able to express forms in this world¹.

Therefore, women are uniquely wise in matters of the home and/or the world, whereas men are stronger when it comes to abstract thinking². For this reason, both man and woman need each other. Men need women's בינה and women need men's חכמה. Together they form a unity of the highest level of knowledge, Daas³.

¹see דובר צדק pg. 48

²מהר"ל:

... (כיון) שהאשה עקרת הבית של אדם ... א"כ אם הולך (בעלה) אחר עצתה (במילי דביתא) לא יאמר בזה שהאיש שהוא כמו צורה נוטה ונמשך אחר החומר ונוטה ממעלתו, כי במה שהאשה עקרת הבית בזה הצד אין דבק בה ההעדר ואדברה אשה יסוד מציאות הבית ויש ללכת אחר עצתה ... וללישנא אחרינא במילי דעלמא ... כי העולם הזה שהוא גשמי מדריגתו מדריגת האשה ... ויש לו ללכת אחר עצת אשתו בעסקי עולם הזה ... רק במילי דשמיא שודאי אצל מילי דשמיא האי צורה והאשה העלת חומר דבק בה ההעדר (דרך החיים על אבות פ"א מש' ה)

³רמב"ן אגרת הקודש:

כי האדם הוא סוד החכמה והאשה סוד התבונה, והחבור הטהור הוא סוד הדעת (לכן נקרא החבור בלשון דעת כאמור וידע אלקנה את חנה אשתו). (פ"א)

¹ בינה יתירה-iii

בראשית ב: כב - ויבן ד' אלקים את הצלע

And G-d built up the side [of man].

נדה מה: מלמד שנתן הקב"ה בינה יתירה באשה יותר מבאיש

This teaches that G-d gave an extra dimension of Binah to women over that of men.

As an example of this, the Gemorrah states that a woman has greater insight into guests than men do². Binah is the ability to enter a body of information, analyze it and draw a conclusion from it. It is the ability to be able to clarify the dimensions and parameters of something³. For example, we say in the morning blessings:

הנותן לשכוי בינה להבחין בין יום ובין ולילה

He who give the rooster the Binah to distinguish between day and night.

The rooster recognizes that dawn is coming before the dawn arrives. Therefore, בינה is a capacity to see beyond the obvious. In women, this is combined with their extra capacity for צניעות, which gives them an ability to de-emphasize the superficial and to focus on that which is the true essence of the thing.

¹"Binah" A Source of Divine Insight [By Mrs. Esther Wein:](#)

... The Biblical Matriarchs used the attribute of Binah to create the Jewish people. ... Sarah's decision to banish Ishmael was the result of.... intellectual preciseness - Binah - that enabled Sarah to act decisively for the good of the Jewish Nation. ...

Rebecca, the next great Matriarch again decides the course of Judaism. She gives birth to twins, Jacob and Esau. ... Isaac and Rebecca intend for them to work as a team, towards the good of the Jewish people. In this regard, Jacob is supposed to oversee spiritual and intellectual growth, while Esau is charged with physical and material sustenance. ... It is apparent to Rebecca that Esau will eventually use his father's blessing to undermine Jacob's scholarly pursuits, thus jeopardizing the future of Judaism. Rebecca sees that Jacob must become spiritually and materially independent of his brother. ... When Isaac discovers what has happened - and why - he acknowledges the righteousness of his wife's scheme (Genesis 27:33). Without Rebecca's clarity, Judaism would have ended then and there. ...

Jacob ... lives and works for many difficult years in the house of his father-in-law, Laban. ... G-d ultimately commands Jacob to return with his wives and children to the land of Israel. At this turning point, Jacob asks his wives' advice about whether to leave on good terms with Laban or whether they should depart abruptly (Genesis 31:4). Rachel and Leah are aware that their father hopes to infect the young Jewish Nation with his pagan ways and they urge Jacob to sever all connection to Laban's household (Genesis 31:14). Jacob heeds their advice and the family leaves under cover of darkness. Again, due only to the insight of Rachel and Leah, Judaism progresses to its next stage of development, within the land of Israel. ...

Each woman possessed the ability to see what was not obvious to her husband, and that is why there is a Jewish Nation today. ...

(Women in Judaism, Copyright 1998 by Mrs. Leah Kohn and Project Genesis, Inc)

²ברכות י: שהאשה מכרת באורחין יותר מן האיש

³ופירוש בינה הוא דבר הברור (רב צדוק הכהן - דובר צדק 48 pg.)

Men apply their understanding by focusing on one issue at a time (סוגיית) and by analyzing that issue and its relevant parts in order to derive the underlying principles¹. But a woman is able to focus on many issues at the same time, weaving them all into a holistic pattern. This ability comes from the fact that *Nashim Daatan Kalos* (see the next section below). *Kal Daas* means that their Daas can focus on many things, that it is Kal – i.e. it moves easily from matter to matter. A woman is then able to use her Binah to weave these issues into an integrated whole. Binah, says Rav Wolbe, is the power to combine things; an intuitive understanding of how different things are put together in a whole gestalt². This is the same combination which is required to have good insight into people.

Sometimes reality seems fragmented, mundane and distracting. Then a woman's צניעות kicks in, allowing her to be faithful to creating קדושה even from such an external reality.

Therefore, בינה lends itself to a more holistic understanding of things. Thus בינה is also related to the word בנה – build (which in fact is the word used in the original פסוק of ויבן (את הצלע).

A woman builds by taking something from within and expanding on it. She begins by seeing and perceiving an integrated, intuited whole. Her natural insight into people is as a result of grasping people holistically³ as she does other aspects of her environment.

Women are primarily builders of people.⁴ Through the woman's Bina Yeseirah she is able to enter another individual and imbue within them with the necessary understanding and empathy. בינה lends itself more to a personal identification with the subject/person being discussed or related to. Her unique, natural insight into people enables her to conduct a highly interpersonal and personalized role which is essential for her family⁵.

Women are more perceptive at picking up emotions from facial expressions (Dr. Gur, U. of Pen). Female infants are more responsive to faces than their male counterparts. In general, women are more sensitive and better with interpersonal relations. This may be why girls often prefer dolls (they are like play people) and boys cars (they are like play things). "They [men] are more interested in "objects" and "things" rather than people and feelings. ... While women fantasize about romance, men fantasize about powerful cars, faster computers, gadgets, gizmos and new and more powerful technology. Men are preoccupied with "things" that can help them express power by creating results and achieving their goals⁶."

We also see this difference between men and women when it comes to their reaction to stress and approach to problem solving. "Men become increasingly focused and withdrawn...he becomes very quiet and goes to his private cave to think about his problem,

¹ [האיש] הוא בר-דעת. דעת-הוא כח ההפרדה, לראות במה שונה דבר אחד מדבר שני הדומה לו. (בכח זה מחלק הלמדן בין שתי הלכות הדומות, לכאורה, זו לזו). וכאשר הוא מחלק ומפריד, הוא עומד על מהות הדבר. הוי אומר כי דעת הוא הכח ההפשה. (ר' וולבא קונטרס לחתנים)

² בינה הוא כח הצירוף ("צושטעלן"), הבנה אינטואיטיבית של הצד הדומה. ההבנה הזאת דרושה להכיר אדם. (ר' וולבא שם)

³ ברכות י: שהאשה מכרת באורחין יותר מן האיש

⁴ מדרש רבה בראשית פרשה יז פסקה ז
...מעשה בחסיד אחד שהיה נשוי לחסידה אחת ולא העמידו בנים זה מזה אמרו אין אנו מועילים להקב"ה כלום עמדו וגרשו זה את זה הלך זה ונשא רשעה אחת ועשתה אותו רשע הלכה זאת ונשאת לרשע אחד ועשתה אותו צדיק הוי **שהכל מן האשה**:

⁵ Nechama Furman – Moreshet

⁶ John Gray, Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus (pp. 16-18)

mulling it over to find a solution¹. "She is not immediately concerned with finding solutions to her problems but rather seeks relief by expressing herself and being understood²" i.e., her first response to stress is to be more inclusive, whereas a man's reaction is to withdraw and analyze the problem, breaking it down to understand it.

Women use their extra capacity of speech³ to have a heightened sense of communication which leads to connection and empathy. Females express more care and nurturance than males do⁴.

Women feel a greater inner need to connect. This inner need to connect is part of what drives a woman to marry. A woman is not externally commanded to get married but has, instead, an internal imperative⁵.

In situations such as the work place, males tend towards a more individual-oriented strategy and often prefer hierarchical structures. Females tend to prefer a more group-orientated strategy and look for consensus building rather than hierarchical decision-making⁶.

This desire and ability to connect is balanced by women's extra capacity for צניעות. On the one hand, צניעות facilitates the נוקבא (feminine) capacity of a woman to create the appropriate framework and boundaries for a woman so that she does not connect inappropriately or with parties where this relationship would be forbidden or unwise; on the other hand, where the relationship is appropriate, this same צניעות allows a woman to remain focused on the inner essence and potential of others without losing sight of their small and everyday needs.

It is also this empathy, relating and connecting which makes a woman unsuited for הלכה. הלכה requires detachment, categorization, analysis, and non-identification with the parties. Men are from Mars pg. 35: "When she says 'You have no feelings, you are in your head,' he says 'What's wrong with that? How else do you expect me to solve this problem?'" A woman may understand the mindset of the parties better, as both her בינה יתירה and her צניעות allow her to go beyond the externalities of the situation, but הלכה requires evaluation of the external facts rather than attribution of motives and the like.

דעתן קלות -iv-

In the section on Binah immediately above we showed how Kal Daas reinforces a woman's ability to think holistically by allowing her to focus on many different things at the same time. Because there are numerous opinions about what Kal Daas really is, in this section we will work through the various opinions and show how consistent they are with other statements of Chazal.

¹refer to דעת שאינו מיושבת as קל דעת – lit. *Daas which is not settled*; comparing certain cultures which provide a settled דעת (בבל) to others that do not.

¹Men are from Mars, chap 3

²Ibid, pg. 36

³קבים שיחה ירדו לעולם ט נטלו נשים (קידושין מט) ; נשים מדבריות הן

⁴Moir and Jessel.

⁵See Women's Issues –Book Two; Appendix - D: Marriage Related Laws

⁶ Carl Degler, In Search of Human Thought.

The term "Nashim Daatan Kalos" is used negatively only in the following ways:

- i. They will reveal secret information under torture or duress².
- ii. Whereas two men together will be embarrassed in front of each other to sin with a woman, two women will not be as embarrassed (but three will)³.

Building on these statements, some commentators have seen the statement נשים דעתן קלות as a negative statement, implying that women are deficient in this area. However, this appears to contradict the fact that women have בינה יתירה, i.e. that they are superior to men in this respect. They have resolved this by saying that:

- i- Women's בינה יתירה was only until the חטא, whereas קל דעת is after the חטא⁴.
- ii- בינה יתירה is referring to more rapid maturation but not to greater בינה after maturation⁵.

These opinions are difficult, however, because Chazal clearly refer to extra qualities which adult women are meant to have even after the Chet. How do we explain, for example, the fact that women have greater insight into guests than men⁶? These opinions would have to explain these qualities as coming from a different, unspecified feminine מדה.

The Torah Temimah holds of both the idea that women have בינה יתירה in adulthood and that they mature faster⁷. Others have understood that women use their בינה instead of the דעת which men would use. Women are then Kal BeDaas (i.e. weak in Daas) but strong in Binah⁸. According to this opinion, Daas would appear to be a male characteristic. This,

¹מנחות, end

²שבת לג : כי תקיף גזירתא אמר ליה לבריה נשים דעתן קלה עליהן, דילמא מצערי לה ומגליא לן

³קידושין פ :

מתני': לא יתייחד אדם עם שתי נשים אבל אשה אחת מתייחדת עם שתי אנשים...גמ' מ"ט תנא דבי אליהו הואיל ונשים דעתן קלות עליהן ורש"י ע"ז כה.

ד"ה לא יתייחד מסביר: שהנשים דעתן קלות ושתייהן תתרוצנה לעבירה אלא בתלתא

רש"י ע"ז יח: ד"ה ואיכא דאמרי משום מעשה דברוריא שפעם אחת ליגלגה על שאמרו חכמים (קידושין פ:) נשים דעתן קלות הן עליהן ואמר לה חייך סופך להודות לדבריהם וצוה לאחד מתלמידיו לנסותה לדבר עבירה והפציר בה ימים רבים עד שנתרצת וכשנודע לה חנקה עצמה וערק רבי מאיר מחמת כסופא

(He fled from shame)

נדה מה : both on עין יעקב in עין יעקב, בן יהוידע⁴

⁵The states from this דרשה גמ' on עין יעקב on עין יוסף; ותוספות הראש⁵ makes binding נדרים, whereas a boy's נדר is only binding from age 13 and one day.

⁶האשה מכרת באורחים יותר מבאיש

⁷The states that the two sayings are not contradictory at all, referring to different things. בראשית ב כב ת"ת אות מח⁷

עיין בתורה תמימה דברים יא יט אות נח שמאריך בשיטתו

⁸קונטרס לחתנים של הרב שלמה וולבא:

האשה מכרת באורחים יותר מן האיש (ברכות ט ע"א)

האשה נוחונה בבינה יתרה. הוא בר-דעת. דעת-הוא כח ההפרדה, לראות במה שונה דבר אחד מדבר שני הדומה לו. (בכח זה מחלק הלמדן בין שתי הלכות הדומות, לכאורה, זו לזו). וכאשר הוא מחלק ומפריד, הוא עומד על מהות הדבר. הוי אומר כי דעת הוא הכח ההפשה. בינה הוא כח הצירוף ("צושטעלן"), הבנה אינטואיטיבית של הצד הדומה. ההבנה הזאת דרושה להכיר אדם.

ii- Secondly, we explained above that every מדה has its positive expression. The positive expression of קל דעת needs to be explained. It is possible to say that the מדה is דעת and that קל דעת is a negative expression of דעת; however, we suggest a different approach below.

iii- Although the word קל is sometimes used negatively (as in קלות ראש), it is also used positively (e.g. הוי קל כנשר). If קל is used negatively in the phrase קל דעת, it would then probably mean that women's דעת is easily swayed. That is why they are more prone to be influenced to זנות and to reveal secrets under pressure (the two contexts of קל דעת used by חז"ל).

However, this leaves several difficulties:

a- We see that women held out much better than men in several cases, e.g. חטא חטא המרגלים and העגל.

b- Women are described by חז"ל as having a greater capacity for אמונה than men; men need clarity to operate, akin to the brightness of day, whereas women do better than men when life is cloudy or dark¹. In other words, women relate more to אמונה and men to אמת.

c- We need to understand why women were the first ones to receive the תורה if they are weak-minded.

The two examples of קל דעת used by חז"ל are very specific:

i- A woman is less embarrassed by a fellow woman than a man is by a fellow man. There is no implication here that women are more prone to זנות than men; what is being said is that all things being equal between men and women, a member of the fellow sex is more effective a break on male than on female passions. In fact, חטא העגל involved זנות initiated by men, not women.

ii- A woman will give over secrets under torture sooner than a man. This has nothing to do with being less faithful – again, female faith has a better track record than male faith. Nor does it appear to have to do with the ability to absorb physical pain - it is an established fact that women have a higher threshold of pain than men. What it may have to do with is the fact that women are by nature more sharing and trusting than men - they may be less committed to keeping information secret than men, less alert to just how evil those with whom she is sharing the information may be.

The Aruch HaShulchan² explains why women do not practice שחיטה even though they are kosher for שחיטה. Perhaps, he says, it is because we are concerned that they will feel faint because their Daas is weak and kal³. Rav Aaron Soleveichik understands the ערוך השלחן as

¹להגיד בבקר חסדיך ואמונתך בלילות: (תהלים צב:ג)

²ערוך השולחן: י"ד ס"א סקל"ז

³בנשים אולי יש לחוש לעלופי מפני שדעתן רפאוה וקלה

If the source of a woman's קל דעת is her רחמנות, as Rav Aaron Soleveichik claims, then most of the difficulties posed above are answered. Her קל דעת is not rooted in any flightiness or lack of any intellectual process per se. Rather, her רחמים, her emotional identification with others, is what causes her not to be as mentally detached and coldly calculating as a man. To this degree, her בינה יתירה reinforces her רחמים, allowing her to enhance her understanding and identification with others (and even, as we saw, with animals). This, then, has nothing to do with a weakened faith; on the contrary, her involvement with others may well lead her to greater loyalty in her relationship with הקדוש ברוך הוא as well.

Another interpretation is given by Rabbi Aharon Feldman in The River, The Kettle and The Bird: "The Sages... certainly did not mean to say that women are less intelligent than men. On the contrary, the Sages teach us that women have more בינה, another quality of intelligence, than men. There is even a passage in the תלמוד which refers to a wise woman (a חכמה) as possessing this light quality of דעת (פסחים פח) - an inherent contradiction if it refers to lack of intelligence. ...

"From the Sages' application of the principle it would seem that it means that women have a capacity to move from one activity or idea to another with more ease than men (קדושין :פ), while men tend to be more focused upon and involved in a single idea or activity which interests them."

This interpretation is confirmed by scientific studies:

"Females are equipped to receive a wider range of sensory information, to connect and relate to that information with greater facility, to place a primacy on personal relationships and to communicate." (Brain Sex, Ann Moir, pg. 17) Women outperform men on "precision manual tasks." In studies involving quick, accurate, small movements, including pegboard tests (in which subjects place small pegs into holes as quickly as they can), women outdo men.² All these things are connected. They all show that women are less absorbed in their own particular concerns (or less absorbed in a particular סוגיא of learning) and more able to relate to all that is going on beyond them. This could also be what lies behind their superior verbal abilities. Speech is, after all, the primal way in which we connect with others. Men show clearer advantages in mathematical, scientific and abstract thinking – areas which generally require concentration on one task at a time. Women use the left and right side of the brain together, making it much easier to combine different fragments of information³.

¹פרח מטה אהרון ה' דעות - דף ק

²According to psychologist Doreen Kimura of the University of Western Ontario, women outperform men on "precision manual tasks." In studies involving quick accurate small movements, including a pegboard test (in which subjects place small pegs into holes as quickly as they can), women outdo men. (Readers' Digest from Susan Seligson in Redbook Aug. '93)

³See E below, where we bring in greater detail physical and other differences between man and woman.

CHAPTER E: PHYSICAL AND OTHER DIFFERENCES **BETWEEN MALES AND FEMALES**

- i- Physical Differences**
- ii -Other Differences**

CHAPTER E: PHYSICAL AND OTHER DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MALES AND FEMALES

i-Physical Differences

Between the 1920's and the late 1970's, scientific discussions on gender differences were taboo. Differences were attributed to socialization. Freud introduced the concept that women were basically deviant males.¹ Studies like those of Wechsler, who put together the standard IQ tests and stated that "men do not only behave but think differently from women", were ignored.² Due to attacks on the few scientists who did publish results suggesting any biological or innate difference between men and women, a conspiracy of silence developed. In its place, the entire area of what came to be known as 'feminist studies' developed.

However, from the late 1970's onward, a plethora of studies proved incontrovertibly that the role of biology in determining male-female differences was primary. Carol Gilligan's pioneering work on the different pathways in moral development between males and females made a particular impact. In 1982, a decade after impacting on the academic community, her book Different Pathways made these ideas acceptable to the broader public as well.

Stanford University professor Carl Degler³ admitted that previous views were a function of "ideology or a philosophical belief that the world could be a freer or more just place." "The goal was the elimination of nativity, race and [gender] and any other biologically based characteristic that might serve as an obstacle to an individual's self-realization." In 1990, ten of the world's leading biologists, neuroscientists and cognitive scientists held a conference in Vienna. Michael Gazzaniga, director of the Center of Neurobiology at the University of California, Davis,⁴ concluded that male and female differences are primarily biological and only secondarily socially acquired. He stated that, "All we do in life is discover what is already in our brains." Many feminists, too, began to reverse themselves and talk of the differences between men and women.⁵

The one area which remains in dispute is just how physically capable women are. Men have traditionally done better than women in sports, most clearly so in the case of more robust sports. However, in certain sports like marathons, the times of leading women continue to improve faster than those of men, although they are still way behind. Dr. Ellis Cashmore of Staffordshire University, England recently wrote that in sports that demand skill as opposed to pure brawn, women may have been competing at levels comparable with their

¹Carol Gilligan: Freud eventually acknowledged that women did not seem to have the same jealous relationship with their mothers as boys seem to have with their fathers (a result of what he called the Oedipus complex). He regarded this as leading to women's developmental failure, for it was only through the resolution of the Oedipal urges that a proper conscience, or superego, could develop.

²Wechsler himself regarded these differences as more of an inconvenience than something to be celebrated.

³In Search of Human Nature, published in 1991

⁴Conclusions are summarized in Nature's Mind: The Biological Roots of Thinking Emotions, Sexuality, Language and Intelligence (Basic Books, 1992).

⁵e.g. Alice Rossi and Camille Paglia. Information taken from unpublished manuscript by Michael Kaufman.

male counterparts.¹ Therefore, "...gender inequality in these fields is primarily not a function of sexism, merely of common sense."²

The following points summarize recent findings. Most of these studies were preceded or confirmed by numerous others; we have just brought a sampling to give a general picture.

Brain Differences

The sexes are different because their brains are different. "...Until recently, behavioral differences between the sexes have been explained away by social conditioning – the expectations of parents, whose own attitudes, in turn, reflect the expectations of society; little boys are told that they shouldn't cry, and that the way to the top depends on masculine assertion and aggression. Scant attention was paid to the biological view that we may be what we are because of the way we are made. Today, there is too much biological evidence for the sociological argument to prevail. The argument of biology at last provides a comprehensive and scientifically provable framework within which we can understand why we are and who we are."³

There appear to be brain-related differences in male and female emotions as well. The latest research suggest that the emotional brain is "more primitive" in men. Women make use of an emotional processing center adjacent to the speech areas of the brain, which makes it easier for them to link emotions to speech. The female brain is also "architecturally finer—a later arrival in evolution."⁴ Men make use of an older limbic system "present in more primitive creatures," often known as the reptilian brain. This means that male emotion is often more closely linked with action.

"... In spite of greater emancipation in terms of education, opportunity and social attitudes, women are not noticeably 'doing better' than they were thirty years ago.... There were more women in the British cabinet in the 1930's than there are at present. ... Some women ... feel they have failed. But they have only failed to be like men.

¹British Journal of Sports Medicine, quoted in N.Y. Science Times, April 27, '99

²*The He Hormone*, Norman Jean Roy: Since most men have at least 10 times as much testosterone as most women, it therefore makes sense not to have coed baseball leagues. Equally, it makes sense that women will be underrepresented in a high-testosterone environment like military combat or construction. When the skills required are more cerebral or more endurance-related, the male-female gap may shrink, or even reverse itself. But otherwise, gender inequality in these fields is primarily not a function of sexism, merely of common sense.

If you care about sexual equality, this is obviously a challenge, but it need not be as depressing as it sounds. The sports world offers one way out. Men and women do not compete directly against one another; they have separate tournaments and leagues. Their different styles of physical excellence can be appreciated in different ways. At some basic level, of course, men will always be better than women in many of these contests. Men run faster and throw harder. Women could compensate for this by injecting testosterone, but if they took enough to be truly competitive, they would become men, which would somewhat defeat the purpose.

³*Brain Sex*, Anne Moir pp. 5-6

⁴Dr. Ruben Gur, U of Penn: quoted in U.S. News & World Report, July 30, 2001, *Are Boys the Weaker Sex?*: Roger Simon and Angie Cannon

... The best argument for the acknowledgement of differences is that doing so would probably make us happier. The understanding that the roles of father and mother are not interchangeable might make us better parents"¹.

Women - symbolic actions/Men - direct actions

In M.R.I. (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) scans, results showed that women had more (metabolic) activity in a "recently evolved" part of the limbic system, the cingulate gyrus, which leads them to be involved in symbolic actions.

With regard to men, there was more activity in "the more ancient and primitive regions" of the limbic system, leading them to be involved in direct action.²

Women -both sides of brain/Men - more left side

Women have a larger corpus callosum, which connects the two sides of the brain.³ Male brains are more lateralized, as each half works independently.⁴

In M.R.I. scans taken to measure the sizes of many cortical and sub-cortical areas... parts of the frontal cortex, the seat of many higher cognitive functions, are bulkier in women than in men, as are parts of the limbic cortex, which is involved in emotional responses. In men, on the other hand, parts of the parietal cortex, which is involved in space perception, are bigger than in women, as is the amygdale, almond-shaped structure that responds to emotionally arousing information – to anything that gets the heart pumping and the adrenaline flowing. These size differences... are relative: they refer to the overall volume of the structure relative to the overall volume of the brain.⁵

¹Brain Sex, Dr. Anne Moir, pp. 5 – 6

²Dr. Ruben Gur, U. of Pen. quoted in NY Science Times, Feb. 28, 1995, originally in Science, Jan. 27, 1995

³Dr. Sandra Witelson, McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario quoted in NY Science Times, Feb. 28, 1995

⁴U.S. News & World Report: Roger Simon and Angie Cannon, July 30, 2001, *Are Boys the Weaker Sex?*: Quoting Gur: Women's brains are, on average, 11 percent smaller than men's. And while there appears to be a subtle correlation between brain volume and IQ there is no difference in the IQs of males and females. "So we have to ask how women manage to have the same IQ in a proportionally smaller brain." The answer is that female brains are not simply a smaller version of male brains.... Brains are composed of gray matter (where information processing is done), white matter (long fibers covered in fat that, much like rubber-coated wire, transmit electrical impulses from brain to body), and spinal fluid (which acts as a buffer from the skull). The most recent research shows that males have less gray matter and more white matter than do females. And the right and left hemispheres of the brain are linked by a bundle of nerves that helps the two sides of the brain communicate. In women, this bundle—the corpus callosum—is thicker. It's the difference, researchers explain, between a narrow path in the woods and a two-lane highway.

As a result, female brains tend to be more facile when it comes to verbal skills. This may explain why girls utter their first words earlier, string together complete sentences first, and generally surpass boys in tests that involve verbal fluency. "The female brain is an easier brain to teach," says Michael Gurian, a family therapist and author of Boys and Girls Learn Differently. "It's harder for the male brain to learn." Males do have more white matter, however—with longer, more complex nerve networks from their brains to the tips of their toes. And their greater volume of spinal fluid also means that male brains are built to sustain blows.

⁵Larry Cahill: *His Brain, Her Brain*, Scientific American, May 2005: Jill M. Goldstein of Harvard Medical School

In M.R.I. scans that were taken while rhyming nonsense words, men and women did equally well but men used a brain region related to language on the left side of the brain¹ while women used comparable areas on both the left and right sides.²

Males have larger brains but women have 11% more neurons.³ Women have more neurons on parts of the brain used to understand speech, recognize melodies and the tones in speech.⁴ Women consistently do better on verbal IQ tasks.⁵

When a man puts his mind to work, neurons turn up in more highly specialized areas of the brain. Women activate a greater distribution of neuron activity over the brain even when doing mundane tasks like wiggling their thumbs. Some feel that this is a function of women's more integrated approach to understanding, allowing her to use emotional intelligence and intuition as a part of her understanding of the world.⁶

Women have more dendritic connections than men and more connecting tissue, allowing them to transfer data between the brain's right and left hemispheres faster. This may be why it is easier for women to compile diverse input and come to a decision. They are also more in touch with their feelings and better able to express them.⁷

Women can take in information on many levels, and typically absorb a much greater amount of it from their environments than men do. Women often incorporate their values into their shopping habits.⁸

Women's Memory is Sharper

At every age, women's memories outperform men's memories. "Women have a greater ability to associate names with faces than men do, and they're also better at recalling lists.⁹ The events people remember the best are those that we tag with an emotion. Since women use more of their right brains, which process emotions, they may do this automatically."

ii-Other Differences

¹Broca's area near the temple

²Drs. Sally and Bennett Shaywitz, Yale, quoted in NY Sc. Times, above, originally in Nature, Feb. 16, 1995

³The significance of this is not yet known.

⁴Dr. Sandra Witelson, McMaster in NY Sc. Times

⁵Arthur Jensen, 1981

⁶Reader's Digest, April '99 pg. 108-110

⁷Lisa Johnson and Andrea Learned, *Don't Think Pink-* The Complete Summary, Executive Book Summaries, July 2004

⁸Reader's Digest, April '99 pg. 108-110

⁹Reported by psychologist Thomas Crook, president of Psychologix, a research organization that has tested the memories of more than 50,000 men and women. Quoted in Reader's Digest, April '99 pg. 112

Spatial Tasks:

Spatial ability is defined as being able to picture things, their shape, position, geography and proportion, accurately in the mind's eye. These are all skills that are crucial to the practical ability of working with 3-dimensional objects or drawings. Hundreds of studies have shown men to do consistently better than women in spatial tasks.

Out of 105 tests assessing skills in solving maze-puzzles involving the most heterogeneous populations throughout the world, ranging from the most primitive to the most highly civilized, 99 percent showed an incontrovertible male superiority.¹ So too, males do better at map reading than do females.² A Canadian Study, published in the most recent issue of the *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, examined how people navigated through a specific area guided only by their sense of direction. Men and women, the researchers found, each gravitated toward specific methods to find their way: Men would look quickly at landmarks and head off in what they estimated was the right direction. Women, however, would try to picture the entire route in precise detail and then follow the path in their head.

"Young men learn to memorize a set of spatial relations... By contrast, women's sense of space is based on learning a mental network of specific routes...."³

Men do better at constructing a three dimensional mechanical apparatus and they do better at assessing how the angle of the surface level of a liquid in a jug would change when the jug would be tilted at different angles. They also have superior hand-eye coordination, which is necessary for ball sports.⁴

This male advantage in seeing patterns and abstract relationships⁵, what could be called the general strategic rather than the detailed tactical thinking, perhaps explains the male dominance of chess even in a country like the (former) USSR where the game was a national sport played by both sexes.⁶

¹Ann Moir, *Brain Sex*, pg. 14

²Girls and boys were each given a city street map and, without rotating the map, asked to describe whether they would be turning left or right at particular intersections as they mentally made their way across town and back. Boys did better. More women than men like to turn the map around, physically to match the direction they are traveling when they are trying to find their way. (ibid., pg. 17)

Larry Cahill: *His Brain, Her Brain*, Scientific American, May 2005 "Another brain region now known to diverge in the sexes anatomically and in its response to stress is the hippocampus, a structure crucial for memory storage and for spatial mapping of the physical environment. Imaging consistently demonstrates that the hippocampus is larger in women than in men. These anatomical differences might well relate somehow to differences in the way males and females navigate. Many studies suggest that men are more likely to navigate by estimating distance in space and orientation ("dead reckoning"), whereas women are more likely to navigate by monitoring landmarks.

³*Why We Fight Over Directions: His Way, Her Way – Which Is Better?* Jon Bonne, MSNBC News

⁴*Brain Sex*, pg. 16

⁵They are better at mathematics as well, see below

⁶Ibid

It is true that most women cannot read a map as well as a man. But women can read a character better. And people are more important than maps.¹

Analytic and Abstract Thinking:

Men are generally better at math, science, engineering and chess,² and in spatial ability and analytic tasks. Men consistently do better on quantitative and arithmetic aspects of IQ.³ But women have longer attention spans in these areas and do better with tasks that require staying power and repetition, e.g. computation and successive mathematical tasks. A recent study showed that the gender gap in math and science is narrowing.⁴ The greatest difference that study showed reflected low English scores among boys relative to girls. However, boys continue to do consistently better than girls in math on SAT scores, leading some to claim that these tests are gender biased.⁵ The most gifted girl in mathematics never beat the most gifted boy and for every exceptional girl there were thirteen exceptional boys⁶.

Verbal Tasks:

Women are slightly better at verbal tasks.⁷ This is consistent with women's greater responsiveness to environmental stimuli of all sorts.⁸ Women have greater gray matter than

¹Ann Moir, Brain Sex, pg. 7

²e.g. 1991 U.S. Department of Education report, the NAEP

³Arthur Jensen, U of California, 1981

⁴Scientific American, July '97, quoting the Educational Testing Service

⁵*The War against Boys: How Misguided Feminism is Harming Our Young Men*, Christina Hoff Sommers: Boys do, indeed, tend to test better than girls. On the 1998 Scholastic Assessment Test, boys were 35 points (out of 800) ahead of girls in math, 7 points ahead in English. A careful look at the pool of students who take the SAT and other such tests shows that the girls' lower scores have little or nothing to do with bias or unfairness. Indeed, the scores do not even signify lower achievement by girls. First of all, a greater percentage of girls than boys take the SAT (54 percent to 46 percent). Furthermore, according to the College Board's *Profile of SAT and Achievement Test Takers*, many more girls from "at-risk" categories take the test than do "at-risk" boys. Specifically, more girls from lower-income homes or with parents who never graduated from high school or never attended college attempt the SAT than boys from the same background. "These characteristics," says the College Board *Profile*, "are associated with lower than average SAT scores."

In other words, because boys at risk tend not to take the test while girls at risk tend to do so, the girls' average score is lower. Instead of wrongly using SAT scores as evidence of bias against girls, scholars should be concerned about the boys who never show up for the tests they need if they are to move on to higher education.

⁶Arithmetic Envy by Lauren Gee Psychology Today May/June 2002: Girls actually score higher than boys in mathematics until age 13...

Erin Leahey, a doctoral candidate in sociology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, found that at the end of high school, boys' math scores surpass those of girls by no more than 1.5 percent. The scores of more than 12,000 students, ages 4 to 18, revealed few differences in mathematical aptitude.

...Male high school seniors scored higher than females on the math section of the SAT every year from 1966 to 1997.

⁷N.Y. Science Times

⁸Moir, pg. 17

men in verbal areas of the brain even where the comparable female brain was smaller than the male brain.¹ Rarely do women stutter; they pick up foreign languages faster and better, comprehend poor or incomplete verbal communication better, and they absorb verbal data faster.

“Girls say their first words and learn to speak in short sentences earlier than boys. ... They read earlier too, and do better in coping with the building blocks of language like grammar, punctuation and spelling. Boys outnumber girls by 4:1 in remedial reading classes.

“... Girls and women hear better than men.”² When the sexes are compared, women show a greater sensitivity to sound.”³

This may have to do with the fact that women use neural regions on both sides of the brain when they read. In contrast, males draw only on neural regions in the left hemisphere.⁴

As adults, women think of more words that start with the same letter, list more synonyms and come up with more names for colors or shapes more quickly than men. Women who suffer strokes recover their language ability more quickly and more fully.

Overall Academic Ability

In an article featured in the U.S. News & World Report, author John Leo writes that, “Teachers know that girls are better suited to schooling. So if you want to teach boys, allowances must be made.”⁵ Boys are much more likely than girls to have problems with

¹Study at Johns Hopkins, in Scientific American, May, '96, pg. 16

²Researchers at Sheffield University in northern England discovered startling differences in the way the brain responds to male and female sounds. Men deciphered female voices using the auditory part of the brain that processes music, while male voices engaged a simpler mechanism, it said. The Mail quoted researcher Michael Hunter as saying, “The female voice is actually more complex than the male voice, due to differences in the size and shape of the vocal cords and larynx between men and women, and also due to women having greater natural ‘melody’ in their voices. (The Daily Mail, **Men Do Have Trouble Hearing Women, Scientists Find**: London, August 6 - quoting findings published in the specialist magazine Neurolmage.)

³*Brain Sex* by Ann Moir, pg. 17

⁴Drs. Sally and Bennett Shaywitz, Yale University professors of pediatrics and neurology

⁵One of the tragedies of the last 20 years or so is that school systems are increasingly unwilling to make those allowances. Instead, in the wake of the feminist movement, they have absorbed anti-male attitudes almost without controversy. They are now more likely to see ordinary boy behavior as something dangerous that must be reined in. Or they may tighten the screws on boys by drafting extraordinarily broad zero-tolerance and sexual-harassment policies. Worse, they may simply decide that the most active boys are suffering from attention deficit disorder and dope them up with Ritalin.

In U.S. News & World Report, July 30, 2001, *Are Boys the Weaker Sex?*: Roger Simon and Angie Cannon write: The teachers at Thomas Edison Elementary School in St. Joseph, Mo., have begun to put some of the brain science to the test. Three years ago, when third-grade teacher Denise Young asked the boys in her class a question, she would get frustrated if they didn’t respond, and simply move on. Today, she gives them at least 60 seconds to “process” the question. “They need more time to stop, switch gears, and respond,” says Young. “But they didn’t have it, and I think that’s why a lot of boys have gotten into trouble in the past.” She also gives them “stress balls” to squeeze while they’re reading or working out a problem. “It seems to help them engage when they’re also doing something physical,” she says.

...Murphy also tried something new during her disciplinary chats with the boys. “I will not make the children talk when they’re angry, for starters. Boys, in particular, just have trouble verbalizing when they’re upset.” Once they’ve cooled down, Murphy takes them for a stroll. “I find boys have an easier time talking if they’re walking, too—it seems to tap into something in their brains,” she says. In

schoolwork, repeat a grade, get suspended, and develop learning difficulties.¹ In some schools boys account for up to three-fourths of the special education classes. Boys are five times more likely than girls to commit suicide and four to nine times more likely to be drugged with Ritalin. Student polls show that both girls and boys say their teachers like the girls more and punish the boys more often.

Girls get better grades than boys, take more rigorous courses, and now attend college in much greater numbers. While the traditional advantage of boys over girls in math and science has narrowed,² the advantage of girls over boys in reading and writing is large and stable. In writing achievement, 11th-grade boys score at the level of eighth-grade girls. The Department of Education reported: "There is evidence that the female advantage in school performance is real and persistent."³

The school failure of so many boys, magnified and fanned by anti-male hostility, is a severe social problem⁴. The U.S. Department of Education reports that in 1996 there were

three years, Edison Elementary has watched its test scores skyrocket from what Murphy calls "ghetto statistics" to among the top 10 percent in the state. Incidents of in-school suspension have decreased from 300 to 22 this year.

¹Roger Simon and Angie Cannon: U.S. News & World Report, July 30, 2001, *Are Boys the Weaker Sex?*: Across the country, boys have never been in more trouble: They earn 70 percent of the D's and F's that teachers dole out. They make up two-thirds of students labeled "learning disabled." They are the culprits in a whopping 9 of 10 alcohol and drug violations and the suspected perpetrators in 4 out of 5 crimes that end up in juvenile court. They account for 80 percent of high school dropouts and attention deficit disorder diagnoses. And they are less likely to go to college than ever before. By 2007, universities are projected to enroll 9.2 million women to 6.9 million men. Girls now outnumber boys in student government, honor societies, school newspapers, and debating clubs. A recent study found girls ahead of boys in almost every measure of well-being: Girls feel closer to their families, have higher aspirations, and even boast better assertiveness skills. Schools are taking note, too—and they are beginning to act. Early childhood specialists, concerned with ever accelerating curriculum demands, are advocating delayed entrance of boys into kindergarten, to give them time to catch up with girls developmentally. Other districts are experimenting with single-sex classrooms within coed schools, in the hopes that all-boy classes will allow boys to improve standardized test scores in reading and writing, much the way girls have narrowed the gap in math and science. In response to charges of the "feminization" of the classroom—including, critics argue, female teachers with too little tolerance for the physicality of boys—schools are beginning to re-examine their attitudes toward male activity levels and even revamp disciplinary techniques. In *Business Week*, an article titled *Are Men Obsolete?* adds to this point: "From kindergarten to grade school, girls now out perform boys in grades, admissions, student government, and extracurricular activities. "Women are rapidly closing the M.D. and Ph.D. gap and make up almost half of law students." Boys dominate in remedial education stimulant drug prescriptions and suicide. 83% of US jobs are now categorized as "service providing." While many of these require the spatial and mathematical skills at which males still excel, the great bulk rely on the sort of diligent low-ego, cooperative effort at which females traditionally shine.

²Girls take at least as many upper-level math courses as boys, and more biology and chemistry

³Sax and other specialists advocating a later start in kindergarten for boys. "The early curriculum is more accelerated than ever before," says Sax. "Boys are expected to do too much too soon—their brains aren't ready for it." The result, he adds, is too often a lifelong struggle with school. "They begin their school careers in 'the dumb group.' They're frustrated with their lack of ability, they start disliking school, and they begin to avoid it. We're seeing that more than ever now."

⁴Metropolitan Life Insurance Company Survey: *The American Teacher 1997: Examining Gender Issues in Public Schools*. Girls are more likely than boys to see themselves as college bound. Girls are more likely than boys to want a good education. More boys than girls (31 percent versus 19 percent) feel teachers do not listen to what they have to say.

8.4 million women but only 6.7 million men enrolled in college. It also shows women holding on to and improving this advantage well into the next decade. According to one Department prediction, by 2007 there will be 9.2 million women in college and 6.9 million men.

In Canada the ratio is 60-40 and 63-37 among American blacks. These numbers, always overlooked in media laments about "under-representation," have several ominous implications. One is for much more fatherless-ness. College women who can't find college-educated mates won't marry down—they will likely just have their babies alone.¹

Moral Development:

In 1996², Time magazine voted Carol Gilligan as the most influential psychologist of her time. Gilligan's 1982 book, *In a Different Voice*, was translated into many languages and ensured that people would view men and women as being fundamentally different from then on. Until then, studies on moral development were usually based on male subjects, presuming that women grew up on the same trajectory. But Gilligan discovered that this was not so. For example, when asked whether it was right for a man to steal a loaf of bread to feed his family, men standardly answered no, citing rules of justice; women, however, more often said yes, citing human compassion.

Time reported that "Because women's moral judgments placed greater weight on emotional ideas like caring than on abstract notions of justice, they were often graded as

In *The War Against Boys: How Misguided Feminism is Harming our Young Men*, Christina Hoff Sommers writes: How do boys fit into the "tragedy" of America's "shortchanged" girls? Inevitably, boys are resented, being seen both as the unfairly privileged gender and as obstacles on the path to gender justice for girls. There is an understandable dialectic: the more girls are portrayed as diminished, the more boys are regarded as needing to be taken down a notch and reduced in importance. This perspective on boys and girls is promoted in schools of education, and many a teacher now feels that girls need and deserve special indemnifying consideration. "It is really clear that boys are no. 1 in this society and in most of the world," says Dr. Patricia O'Reilly, professor of education and director of the Gender Equity Center at the University of Cincinnati.

It may be "clear," but it isn't true. If we disregard the girl advocates and look objectively at the relative condition of boys and girls in this country, we find that it is boys, not girls, who are languishing academically. Data from the U.S. Department of Education and from several recent university studies show that far from being shy and demoralized, today's girls outshine boys. Girls get better grades. They have higher educational aspirations. They follow a more rigorous academic program and participate more in the prestigious Advanced Placement (AP) program.

The representation of American girls as apprehensive and academically diminished is not true to the facts. Girls, allegedly so timorous and lacking in confidence, now outnumber boys in student government, in honor societies, on school newspapers, and even in debating clubs. Only in sports are the boys still ahead, and women's groups are targeting the sports gap with a vengeance.

"Britain has no Carol Gilligan, no Mary Pipher, no AAUW. It is therefore unsurprising that in Britain the plain truth about male underperformance has been reaching an informed and concerned public. For almost a decade, British newspapers and journals have been reporting on the distressing scholastic deficits of British schoolboys. The *Times* of London warned the prospect of "an underclass of permanently unemployed, unskilled men." "What's Wrong with Boys?" asked the *Glasgow Herald*. The *Economist* referred to boys as 'tomorrow's second sex.' In Britain, the public, the government, and the education establishment are well aware of the increasing numbers of underachieving young males and they are looking for ways to help them.

¹Excerpts from an article by John Leo in U.S. News & World Report, July 17, 2000, *Will Boys be Boys?*

²June 17

morally deficient in psychological studies. The answer in the field was that women's sense of self was too much embedded in relationships; that women's thinking was too contextual, and women's judgments were too influenced by feelings..." Gilligan recalls. "I said, 'Maybe the problem isn't the women. The problem is in the theory.' Bringing women's voices in changes the theory."¹

"... Maybe girls need to be taught differently, talked to differently, to help master the transition to adulthood."²

Interpersonal Relationships, Perceptiveness:

Women are more perceptive at picking up emotions from facial expressions.³ Female infants are more responsive to faces than their male counterparts. In general, women are more sensitive and better with interpersonal relations. This may be why girls often prefer dolls, as they are like play people, and boys cars, as they are like play things.⁴

"Jews believe that the differences in the anatomy of men and women were intentionally designed by G-d...One theory suggests that men's anatomy reflects their being more outer-directed than women...attracted to women's external appearances. That can strongly influence their decision to further a relationship. Women's anatomy, on the other hand, reflects their tendency to develop relationships based on inner qualities and then to generalize those feelings to externals. This suggests that women often find men emotionally appealing and then become physically attracted to them."⁵

¹The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, iii. Male and Female Morality: ...A third area of moral psychology focuses on whether there is a distinctly female approach to ethics that is grounded in the psychological differences between men and women. Discussions of this issue focus on two claims: (1) traditional morality is male-centered, and (2) there is a unique female perspective of the world which can be shaped into a value theory. According to many feminist philosophers, traditional morality is male-centered since it is modeled after practices that have been traditionally male-dominated, such as acquiring property, engaging in business contracts, and governing societies. The rigid systems of rules required for trade and government were then taken as models for the creation of equally rigid systems of moral rules, such as lists of rights and duties. Women, by contrast, have traditionally had a nurturing role by raising children and overseeing domestic life. These tasks require less rule following, and more spontaneous and creative action. Using the woman's experience as a model for moral theory, then, the basis of morality would be spontaneously caring for others as would be appropriate in each unique circumstance. On this model, the agent becomes part of the situation and acts caringly within that context. This stands in contrast with male-modeled morality where the agent is a mechanical actor who performs his required duty, but can remain distanced from and unaffected by the situation. A care-based approach to morality, as it is sometimes called, is offered by feminist ethicists as either a replacement for or a supplement to traditional male-modeled moral systems.

²Time Magazine, June 17

³Dr. Gur, U. of Pen

⁴Larry Cahill: *His Brain, Her Brain*, Scientific American, May 2005

...Many researchers have described disparities in how "people-centered" male and female infants are. For example, Baron-Cohen and his student Svetlana Lutchmaya found that one-year-old girls spend more time looking at their mothers than boys of the same age do. And when these babies are presented with a choice of films to watch, the girls look longer at a film of a face, whereas boys lean toward a film featuring cars.

⁵Lisa Aiken, pg. 125

Men, on the other hand, are much more likely to be attracted to a woman based on physical appearances alone.¹ Hence, the preponderance of advertisements contain more women than men. This applies to advertisements targeting both sexes; those targeting males as well as those targeting females. Where men are being targeted, this is in order to attract them, whereas where females are being targeted, a picture of another woman is in order to model for them rather than to attract them.

Women smile and laugh more, gaze more directly at others, and sit or stand closer to people than men² ... Women interrupt less, are more likely to be complimentary, and laugh at other people's jokes more.³ ... Women also read nonverbal clues more.⁴

Aggression, Independence:

In all societal studies, males are more aggressive. Females given testosterone showed increased aggression and often dominance over males.⁵ Men generally show greater competitiveness.

Men engage the world by seeing it as a hierarchical social order.⁶ ... Life is a contest, a struggle to preserve independence and avoid failure. [Women,] on the other hand, approach

¹ *Sex and the Brain: Researchers say, 'Vive la Difference!'* Published March 16, 2004 by Anahad O'Connor: Male arousal, studies find, is strongly visual, and when men engage in sexual activity or even anticipate it, brain structures once thought to have little connection to sex spring into action. The same brain regions, however, remain relatively quiet when women are aroused.

Dr. Fisher has studied the brains of people in the early stages of romance. For a man, she found, pictures of a new partner light up parts of the brain involved in visual processing and arousal. But women, she noticed, show more activity in areas linked to reward, emotion and attention.

"Men, despite what most people think, fall in love faster than women do, probably because they're so visual," Dr. Fisher said.

² According to psychologist Judith Hall of Northern University of Boston.

³ Linda Carlie, Wellesley College

⁴ Judith Hall. Above quotes from Readers' Digest by Susan Seligson in Redbook Aug. '93

⁵ e.g. Tavis & Wade, *The Longest War, Sex Differences in Perspective*; Joslyn in *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 1973, 14

Men and women differ biologically mainly because men produce 10 to 20 times as much testosterone as most women do, and this chemical profoundly affects physique, behavior, mood and self-understanding.

Testosterone... is a chemical closely related to cholesterol. ... Although testosterone is often thought of as the definition of maleness, both men and women produce it. Men produce it in their testicles; women produce it in their ovaries and adrenal glands. The male body converts some testosterone to estradiol, a female hormone, and the female body has receptors for testosterone, just as the male body does... The central biological difference between adult men and women, then, is not that men have testosterone and women don't. It's that men produce much, much more of it than women do. An average woman has 40 to 60 nanograms of testosterone in a deciliter of blood plasma. An average man has 300 to 1,000 nanograms per deciliter.

Testosterone's effects start early -- really early. At conception, every embryo is female and unless hormonally altered will remain so. You need testosterone to turn a fetus with a Y chromosome into a real boy, to masculinize his brain and body. Men experience a flood of testosterone twice in their lives: in the womb about six weeks after conception and at puberty....(*The He Hormone*, Norman Jean Roy)

⁶ Judith Hall. Readers' Digest by Susan Seligson in Redbook Aug. '93.

the world ... as a network of connections. In this world, conversations are negotiations for closeness in which people try to see confirmation and give support, and to reach consensus.

... Women are also concerned with achieving status and avoiding failure, but these are not the goals they are *focused* on all the time, and they tend to pursue them in the guise of connection. And men are also concerned with achieving involvement and avoiding isolation, but they are not *focused* on these goals, and they tend to pursue them in the guise of opposition.¹

In a world of status, independence is key, because a primary means of establishing status is to tell others what to do; taking orders is a marker of lower status.

... Many women feel it is natural to consult with their partners at every turn, while men automatically make more decisions without consulting their partners. ... Women ... appreciate the discussion itself as evidence of involvement and communication ... [but] when women try to initiate a freewheeling discussion by asking "What do you think?" men often think they are being asked to decide.²

[The female desire for] intimacy says, "We're close and the same," [whereas the male desire for] independence says, "We're separate and different." ... [Therefore, many men will hear a question such as "What about the food is bothering you"] as a challenge that has to be matched, [whereas many women will hear the same question] as a request for more information.³

Women tend to share power, encourage participation, and boost their employees' sense of self-worth. Their male partners exercise more formal authority and care more about hierarchy.⁴

"We've gone from this tremendous assertion of masculinity at the beginning of the century to this ideal of the sensitive male and a gender-neutral society at the end." "If you agree with the biologists that manliness is something permanent and unchangeable, in a gender-neutral society you'll run into problems.

"One is the desire of men to protect those who are weaker than they are: women and, especially, children. Since women are in the work force, they no longer depend on men for support the way they used to, which can make men feel they are not useful and lead them into irresponsibility, violence and criminality."

Lionel Tiger, an anthropologist at Rutgers University, says that public policy has encouraged women's independence from men by extending welfare benefits to single mothers, awarding mothers custody of children in divorce cases and even denying fathers visiting rights. Men, he concludes, have become socially expendable: no longer essential for raising or supporting a family. (*Masculinity in Decline: Men of Steel Feel Like 97-Pound Weaklings*)

¹Deborah Tannen, You Just Don't Understand; Women and Men in Conversation, pp. 24-25

²Deborah Tannen pp. 26-27

³Ibid. pp. 28-29

⁴Judy Rosner, U. of California, Irvine (Readers' Digest from Susan Seligson in Redbook Aug. '93)
In USA TODAY, Jim Hopkins writes: More often than men, women start companies to better balance their work and family lives, not to get rich, says the landmark study by Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) researchers. That helps explain the slower growth of female-owned firms, the researchers say. And it could foreshadow big things for the US economy. That's because the number of female-owned firms is growing twice as fast as all businesses. But since they grow slower, they create fewer jobs. On the flip side, worker friendly policies often lead to less turnover, less absenteeism and higher productivity, say experts on entrepreneurship and benefits.
Women are more likely to pursue self-employment so they can create a family-friendly workplace, a study shows. Entrepreneurs who said the following were "very important" reasons for choosing self-employment:

In U.S. News & World Report, John Leo comments that, "On the whole, women tend to avoid fields with a low social component – mechanical engineering, particle physics, and entomology, for example. Women tend to favor fields with a high social dimension – anthropology, sociology, psychology (particularly developmental and child psychology but not physiological psychology). Even within scientific fields, women lean toward more 'social' areas such as medicine, nutritional science, environmental health, biology, and bioengineering."

"Camilla Benbow and David Lubinski, well-known researchers at Vanderbilt University, have spent more than 20 years tracking a group of 5,000 males and females who had been identified as mathematically gifted when they were 12 to 14 years old. Eight percent of the males but only 1 percent of the females pursued doctorates in math, engineering, or physical science. More females than males received degrees in the life sciences, health, or medicine. The females did not veer away from the hard sciences out of lack of opportunity, doubts about competence, or fear of failure. The 5,000 gifted children knew they were good, but the females had different values and many made different choices."¹

The following article appeared in the Reader's Digest²: "William Pollack, a Harvard Psychologist, has observed what he calls the Boy Code - a set of behaviors encouraged by parents, teachers and coaches, and reinforced by peers. 'For example, our culture insists that boys be stalwart and stoic,' Pollack says, 'rather than act lonely or sad or fearful.'³

Educator Barbara Wilder-Smith, with the Tufts University Program for Educational Change Agents, spent a year observing boys' imaginary play in an inner-city school, and found that violent scenarios played a positive role in development. Her report, "Harmonious Discord," described how boys almost invariably built stories around shooting, fistfights, car crashes and other forms of violence. But once their stories ended, no violence followed. As one boy explained when a teacher objected, "But the bad guy has to die somehow!"

Bruno Bettelheim says that concocting these stories helps establish a moral compass—good triumphs over evil, courage finds its reward.

¹ *What Larry Meant to Say*, John Leo: U.S. News and World Report, February 14, 2005

Even as the number of women earning Ph.D.'s in science has substantially increased - women now account for 45 percent to 50 percent of the biology doctorates, and 33 percent of those in chemistry - the science and engineering faculties of elite research universities remain overwhelmingly male. And the majority of the women are clustered at the junior faculty rank....

Mel Hochster, a mathematics professor at Michigan, belongs to a committee of senior science professors that gives workshops for heads of departments and search committees highlighting the findings of numerous studies on sex bias in hiring. For example, men are given longer letters of recommendation than women, and their letters are more focused on relevant credentials. Men and women are more likely to vote to hire a male job applicant than a woman with an identical record. Women applying for a postdoctoral fellowship had to be 2.5 times as productive to receive the same competence score as the average male applicant.

Experts say they believe one reason women may not be applying for junior faculty positions at elite research universities is that they believe - mistakenly, senior female scientists say - that these jobs are incompatible with having children. (*For Women in Sciences, the Pace of Progress in Academia Is Slow*: April 15, 2005, quoted by Sara Rimer)

² Edwin and Sally Kiester, *What Moms Need To Know About Sons*: August 2000

³ In his book Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons From the Myths of Boyhood...

A girl who had been angered or embarrassed is likely to rush to her mother's arms and tearfully blurt out her story. Boys generally try to work out their problems on their own, not wanting to appear to be "babied."

What is particularly interesting is that while there is evidence that boys may feel more stress in emotional situations, they routinely show less. When placed within earshot of a crying baby, boys have higher increases in heart rate and sweatier palms than girls. But...boys' behavior often masks emotional inclinations. "... It is the unexpected combination of physical aggressiveness and emotional vulnerability."¹

As the expectations of parents, teachers, and peers compounded, the boys' behavior changed. "They became inattentive, indirect... and self-conscious about what other boys thought."

Parents react differently to upset daughters and sons. "The actions can be as subtle as asking a girl what's wrong when she's crying but patting a boy on the head and saying, 'You're OK; now get back out there.'" The result can be emotional isolation that starts in boyhood and plagues men in middle age, often with emotional, and even physical, consequences.

He wants to strike a deal. Women usually seek agreement based on each other's feelings. Boys like to negotiate. "And they are good at it," Brawer says. "They believe in fairness, they like to spell things out, and they like to see each side get a square deal. Then they shake on it. After they've reached an agreement, you often hear boys say, 'Deal? Deal.'"

Group – Minded:

A corollary of male aggression is that they are less group-orientated. Males tend towards a more individual oriented strategy, females toward a more group-orientated strategy.² Females express more care and nurturance.³

Generally, men and women are more external and internal aspects of a whole. Men act at a more macro level, breaking that macro into its specialized parts; women operate at a micro level, building smaller units into greater, more holistic conceptions.⁴ Because of this, men relate more to *אמת*, given and concrete realities; women have deeper *אמונה*, allowing for greater faithfulness to all relationships, including G-d and their husbands. In the *עגל הזהב* and

¹Thompson, quoted in U.S. News and World Report, Simon and Cannon, July 30, 2001: *Are Boys the Weaker Sex?*

²Carl Degler, *In Search of Human Thought*

³Moir and Jessel

⁴U.S. News & World Report, January 29, 2001, ***Are women better leaders?*** Women, according to Fisher, have a natural advantage in "web thinking"...Women have a greater tendency than men to take a holistic, contextual view of any issue at hand, considering a web of interrelated factors, instead of compartmentalizing problems and assessing their linear cause-effect components. For example, Fisher writes in *The First Sex*, "women generally look at individual social problems, such as drug abuse or teen pregnancy, and link them to broader, deeper social ills."

...Harvard Business School Prof. Rosabeth Moss Kanter: "Women get high ratings on exactly those skills needed to succeed in the global information age, where teamwork and partnering are so important."

John Gray, in his book Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus,¹ states that, "Martians (men) value power, competence, efficiency, and achievement. They are always doing things to prove themselves and develop their power and skills... They experience fulfillment primarily through success and accomplishment."

"Everything on Mars is a reflection of these values. Even their dress is designed to reflect their skills and competence. Police officers, soldiers, businessmen, scientists, cab drivers, technicians and chefs all wear uniforms or at least hats to reflect their competence and power."

".... They are more interested in "objects" and "things" rather than people and feelings. ...While women fantasize about romance, men fantasize about powerful cars, faster computers, gadgets, gizmos and new and more powerful technology. Men are preoccupied with "things" that can help them express power by creating results and achieving their goals."

"Females are equipped to receive a wider range of sensory information, to connect and relate that information with greater facility, to place a primacy on personal relationships, and to communicate."

¹pp. 16-18

CHAPTER F: OTHER SOURCES

i- Language

ii- General

CHAPTER F: OTHER SOURCES

i- Language

We can understand a lot about masculine and feminine forces by seeing which words are defined as masculine and which as feminine. For example, all the names of the נשמה are female by definition- יחידה, חיה, נפש, רוח, נשמה, חיה, as are most of our body parts (and all of those which come in pairs). Some words are both male and female, e.g. שמש, מחנה. Some Hebrew words defined as masculine may have feminine endings in their singular and/or plural form and vice versa. For example, many of the Keilim of the Beis HaMikdash are defined as masculine, and have masculine endings in the singular but feminine endings in the plural (such as ארון-ארונו, שולחן-שולחנות, מזבח-מזבחות). This would seem to imply that they are only consistent with their inner essence (male ending – male definition) when they are in the singular. When in the plural, their external expression (the ending of the word) changes to female.

ii- General

Despite the best efforts of egalitarian-minded parents and teachers, boys and girls invariably play separately when left to their own devices. Even where boys and girls are required to play together they usually engage in side-by-side play. The result is the emergence of a "girls' culture" and a "boys' culture" that are strikingly different in play styles, toy preferences and ways of interacting.¹

Besides the male/female differences quoted above, what people say, what they do and how they speak with members of their own sex differs considerably from how they behave when the other sex is around. (Eleanor Maccoby in her book, The Two Sexes, Growing up Apart, Coming Together, claims that this is the only difference that matters.)

See קרבן עולה (towards the end)- רבינו בחיי ויקרא א:ט and רמב"ן ויקרא ג:א- why the קרבן עולה is male, the חטאת is female and the אשם is male.

¹Eleanor Maccoby, The Two Sexes: Growing Apart, Coming Together

SECTION TWO

צניעות

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Secular women often view צניעות as a part of what they see as a package of inequality and discrimination by the Torah against women. Their concept of צניעות extends only so far as women's dress, covering of hair and not singing. Therefore, when dealing with צניעות it is important to take account for the following:

- a- צניעות applies to men as well as to women. (However, women have a special relationship with צניעות.);
- b- Dress is only one of many expressions of צניעות;
- c- צניעות has no real translation and is perhaps best left un-translated. "Modesty" is not a good translation;
- d- צניעות is a positive attribute, not a restrictive one;
- e- Deal with the broader issues of צניעות before dealing with specifically women's issues.

CHAPTER A: DEFINITION

- i- One of 3 keys to unlocking all of Yiddishkeit**
- ii- Literally hiddenness, not modesty**
- iii- Definition**
- iv- Intrinsic**

CHAPTER A: DEFINITION

i- One of 3 keys to unlocking all of Yiddishkeit

צניעות is not just another important character trait amongst many; it is one of the big three fundamentals with which we access the whole of Judaism¹. This we see from Micha, who said:

For what does G-d demand of you except that you engage in justice and loving-kindness and walking modestly with HaSh-m your G-d².

We see modesty put ahead of mercy, strength of character, humility, passion, truth and dozens of other traits. Clearly there must be a lot more to this trait than common sense dictates. If צניעות is a great key to unlocking all of spirituality it must surely apply to men as well as to women and it must surely go way beyond dress alone.

ii- Literally hiddenness, not modesty³

Spirituality is not obvious in this world; it is hidden below the surface. The name for world in Hebrew is עולם, which is related to the word העלם (hidden), i.e. the world which hides קדושה.

Therefore, someone without צניעות will not be able to tune into spirituality. Only someone who can see below the surface of things will see a world of spirituality⁴.

Before the transgression of Adam and Chava, it was possible for man to see a surface reality and see how it led directly to a deeper perception. After the Chet, however, it was only possible to be true to one's inner essence through covering up the surface reality in order to see the hidden spirituality behind it⁵. צניעות and spirituality became inseparable¹. This is ever

¹ ולפי הסמ"ק נז"ש ג"כ מ"ע להיות צנוע מוהיה מחניך קדוש (דברים כג), מובא במשנה ברורה בביאור הלכה ריש ס"ג

² מכות כד.

בא מיכה והעמידן על שלש דכתיב (מיכה ו) הגיד לך אדם מה טוב ומה ה' דורש ממך כי אם עשות משפט ואהבת חסד והצנע לכת עם ה' אלקך (ע"ש ואח"כ בא חבקוק והעמידן על אחת)

³ Amsel, Tzniut: If we assume that the Hebrew term *Tzniut* ... in some way connected to the idea of covering up and hiddenness, then the Torah connects the concept of modesty to the concept of holiness. When Moses, as a shepherd, first encounters God by the Burning Bush on Mount Sinai, God informs Moses that the place he is standing upon is holy ground. Moses' first reaction to this statement is that he hides his face (Exodus 3:5-6). Thus, hiddenness and privacy seems to be the reaction to holiness. This relationship seems to be consistent with many references to Jewish holiness.

The holiest Jewish book, the Torah, is not kept on public display in the synagogue. Rather, it is unseen, hidden in the Holy Ark, and only removed for public reading on special occasions. Numerous laws relating to a Torah scroll teach us that we treat this scroll as we do a human body. For example, we bury a damaged scroll that is no longer usable, in the ground, as we would a dead human body. It is curious, then, that in describing the need to cover up and not handle the scroll, the Talmud refers to someone who touches the Torah scroll directly (without an intermediary) as touching the "naked" Torah (Megillah 32a). The Talmud (Sukkah 49b) also points out that the learning of Torah should ideally take place in private, in a hidden manner.

⁴ Rav Wolbe, shmooze

⁵ מכתב מאליהו ח' ג דף 116:
אחר חטא אדם הראשון... א"א להשיג דרגת לשמה אלא בהצנע לכת.

Since the ability to grow spiritually is the distinguishing feature separating humans from animals, צניעות is therefore a defining human characteristic: “The message that tzniut asks you to project is “internality”: that of all parts of you it is your innermost self by which you want to be defined.”⁴

This leads to a certain shyness of honor and publicity not only for reasons of humility but also because such things make it more difficult to access spirituality.

*"Judaism discourages both men and women from participating in positions where public honor or prestige is a prerequisite for the job...The more peoples' roles encourage them to view themselves as important because of how others react to them, the more these roles can detract from the people's awe and obedience to G-d."*⁵

Another way of looking at Tzinus is to say that it is an attribute of putting things where they should be. Some people are offended by this idea because it has the implication of being ashamed. However, like all Jewish attributes, shame has its positive application. If we are ashamed when things are out of place we have the proper use of shame, a shame to achieve a higher spiritual sensitivity⁶.

iii- Definition

According to what we have said above, צניעות, which means a type of hiddenness, is the ability to defocus the superficial in order to focus on the inner essence of the subject,⁷

¹מהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"א: כי הצניעות היא קדושה.

²שם משמואל (ריש פרשת בהעלותך באמצע הקטע המתחיל ב"והקשה הרמב"ן): כל גלות הוא לשון גילוי דאיתגליא מה דאיתכסיא ויש שליטת החיצונים ח"ו.

³פלא יועץ: צניעות: בזה האדם נבדל מן הבהמה

⁴Gila Manolson, Outside/Inside pg. 22

⁵Lisa Aiken, pg. 135

⁶Based on Mrs. Heller. See **B ii** below when we deal with shame in greater detail.

⁷"...Every woman who is aware of the true reality behind tznius has the desire to properly cover herself up. By doing so, she expresses ... to the world: "if you want to get to know me in a real way, look deeper."... More and more women today are selling themselves short and dressing in a way that screams "body" instead of "mind and soul." This is so, because the majority of us want to be respected for who we are, and who we are in our minds is strongly connected to our appearance. Therefore, many women believe that the ability to make heads turn is a prerequisite to self-esteem. The message that tznius is screaming is "don't rate yourself according to others' approval of the way you look. Your self-perception and definition should depend on the real accomplishments you've made in your life, the true relationships you've formed, and the strengths you possess.": Devorah Sisso, Moreshet

מהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"א : כי הצניעות היא הכבוד בעצמו.

When we are being *Tzanua* we are actually imitating G-d Himself. The Midrash Tanchuma¹ relates how G-d first spoke to Moshe from the Burning Bush, then in Egypt and then at Sinai. Once the Mishkan was built, however, G-d restricted Himself to speaking from there.

כיון שהוקם המשכן אמר יפה הוא הצניעות.... התחיל לדבר עמו באהל מועד
וכן דוד אמר (תהלים מה) כל כבודה בת מלך פנימה

*Once the Mishkan was built, G-d said, "צניעות is a desirable trait".
...G-d then began to talk to Moshe from the Ohel Moed. Similarly,
David said, "The daughter of the king is all glorious within."*

Now, says the Midrash, G-d's true glory could be revealed.

אמר הקב"ה כך הוא כבודי שיהא מדבר מבפנים.

This is a revelation of My true Glory, that I should talk from inside.

We see that Torah wisdom is a type of spirituality, and צניעות therefore becomes a key to reveal wisdom². For wisdom itself is something hidden³. Someone who relates to the world in a surface and material way will simply have no access to wisdom⁴.

מהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"א : מי שכל מעשיו בבלתי צניעות זה הוא גשמי

One whose every action is immodest is simply a physical person.

The Pachad Yitzchak⁵ shows how Judaism teaches us this lesson again and again. He brings the case of the *המשתלח* and the *חטאת הפנים* which were both brought on Yom Kippur. Both had to look externally similar (a white goat), yet they could not be more different in their ultimate destinies: the *Chatas HaPnim* had its blood sprinkled in the Holy of Holies while the *Seir HaMishtalech* was thrown over the cliff, bearing, so to speak, all of

¹תנחומא, במדבר (ג): וידבר ה' אל משה במדבר סיני. עד שלא הוקם המשכן דבר עמו בסנה שנא' (שמות ג) ויקרא אליו אלקים מתוך הסנה. אח"כ דבר עמו במדין שנא' (שם ד) ויאמר ה' אל משה במדין אח"כ דבר עמו במצרים שנאמר (שם יב) ויאמר ה' אל משה ואל אהרן בארץ מצרים. ואחר כך דבר עמו בסיני שנאמר וידבר ה' אל משה במדבר סיני. כיון שהוקם המשכן אמר יפה הוא הצניעות שנאמר (מ"כ ו) והצנע לכת עם אלקיך. התחיל לדבר עמו באהל מועד וכן דוד אמר (תהלים מה) כל כבודה בת מלך פנימה ממשבצות זהב לבושה. בת מלך זה משה ... שהיה מלכה של תורה...ממשבצות זהב לבושה זה אהרן שנאמר (שמות כח) ועשית משבצות זהב...אמר הקב"ה כך הוא כבודי שיהא מדבר מבפנים שנאמר (במדבר ז) ובבא משה אל אוהל מועד וישמע את הקול מדבר אליו.

²משלי יא: ב
בא זדון ויבא קלון ואת צנועים חכמה

³במהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"א:
כי החכמה בעצמה היא צנועה ונסתרת

⁴מהר"ל שם: אבל מי שכל מעשיו בבלתי צניעות זה הוא גשמי ואין ראוי לו החכמה

⁵פחד יצחק: פורים ו

Similarly, says the Pachad Yitzchak, we drink on Purim until we cannot tell the difference between "blessed is Mordechai and cursed is Haman". What this means, he says, is that we get drunk to the point where we can no longer tell Mordechai and Haman apart just by looking at them. This forces us to go deeper, to see the real difference between them.

So we see that *צניעות* applies to wisdom, it applies to the holiest of days, Yom Kippur, and it applies to the one day which is compared to Yom Kippur, Purim. Later we shall see that it applied to the very giving of the Torah. When applied to the self, *צניעות* might be defined as the capacity to define oneself non-externally. It is the mechanism to becoming an internally developed person. It communicates to others that the external person is not the part that you and others will relate to primarily¹.

iv- Intrinsic

צניעות is not something that is by social convention – something we have been socially conditioned to accept. This is shown by the fact that we see it in some animals as well. The Gemorrah states that had the Torah not been given, we would have learned *צניעות* from a cat².

¹Mrs. Heller

²עירובין ק:אמר רבי יוחנן אילמלא לא ניתנה תורה היינו למידין צניעות מחתול וגזל מנמלה ועריות מיונה דרך ארץ מחרגול.
ובמהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"א: והתבאר לך בביאור לגמרי כי המדות אינם בהסכמה מבני אדם כמו שחשבו קצת בני אדם, אבל המדות הרעות הם רעות בעצמם והמדות הטובות הם טובות בעצם, ולפיכך נמצאו קצתם בקצת ב"ח בטבע והבן זה היטב:

CHAPTER B: CONTRAST

i- Humility

ii- Shame

iii- חוצפה

iv- Insecurity

CHAPTER B: CONTRAST

Many people confuse צניעות with humility, and though צניעות and humility do indeed reinforce each other, they are completely different Midos, as we shall show. Shame is a complementary middah to צניעות, and a very positive one at that. Chutzpah is the very opposite of צניעות. Explaining the contrast between these three midos and צניעות will deepen our understanding of the latter.

i- Humility

Humility is seeing one's smallness in contrast to the greatness of his potential or in contrast to the Almighty. צניעות is exactly the opposite - revealing the true כבוד of who one is (or of any situation).

In practice, the two reinforce each other, e.g. משה רבינו's great humility reinforced his ability to define himself internally¹. This is because someone who is arrogant will have great difficulty seeing his true essence as being hidden below the surface. Similarly, someone who is not צנוע is working according to superficial realities, which makes it harder for him to see his ultimate potential or to see his smallness in contrast to הקדוש ברוך הוא.²

ii- Shame

Shame is the feeling of smallness when faced with the contradiction between one's superficial actions and his inner essence –hence shame restores his real identity. When a person feels shame, he/she will commonly say, “I felt so small,” “I wanted to hide” or even “I felt I could die”. This is because when a person sees the חטא which he has done and is ashamed of it, it is as if the person is saying, “I couldn’t have done that! In the space where that transgression exists, my essence cannot exist. To the degree that I am faced with the transgression, to that degree my essence is reduced. In that way I separate my essence from the action and show that it was really the superficial me which did the action.” Therefore shame, like צניעות, shows the true essence of the person. In a sense, shame is the response to transgression as modesty is the response to ongoing reality. Shame is to the unhealthy person

¹See iv below

²מצודת דוד:
צנועים – המסתתרים עצמם מרוב ענוותנותם

It is a common error to feel that either Tznius or Anivus is in contradiction to power. Power is the ability to affect change. In American society, visible and external power is valued. Political power, positions of authority and status, military power and money, are all examples of external power. They have the capacity to effect visible changes in how people live or in the way society functions. However, there are numerous ways of effecting change in society without using visible or external means. (Aiken, p.28)

One form of power is the ability to influence people to change in ways that are neither visible nor readily apparent. This involves influencing others through molding their lives and assisting them in actualizing their potential. This is distinct from that which occurs at corporate or political levels. (Goldberg, Moreshet essay)

iii- חוצפה

חוצפה is the opposite of צניעות. It is an inappropriate expression of something out of place. Therefore, דור שבן דוד בא העזות תרבה וגוי³; it is paralleled by loss of צניעות. (However, Rav Tzadok points out that Chutzpah does have its place; there is such a thing as Chutzpah DeKedusha. One example of this is during תפילה. All requests from השם are an act of legitimate חוצפה – תענית ח).

iv- Insecurity

In Western society, insecurity is equated with a failure to be aggressive. American society values the ability to project personality, yet there is no indication that Americans, at an individual level, have a better self-image.

משה רבינו was a great and assertive leader. He did not go to פרעה and say, "Please, maybe it would be a good idea to discuss the Jewish situation," yet האיש משה ענו מכל אדם. משה was not coming from the view that his external presence was the real משה. He was not a good speaker. The opposite of modest is not forceful but superficial.⁴

In fact, one cannot be truly humble and צנוע if he has a very poor self-image,⁵ for a person with a poor self-image will just reinforce that when working on humility. On the contrary, we see that the אשת חיל is praised for עוז וחדר לבושה: עז, a type of inward courage not to allow the environment to define herself but rather to be inwardly defined.

¹In Horeb, Rav Hirsch explains that the immediate response to the *Chet* of Adam and Chava was for them to feel shame. After that they then covered their nakedness, i.e. introduced modesty (see H i (לבוש = לא בוש). Shame, therefore, preceded modesty.

²Thus we find that women should be given charity ahead of men and, if taken captive, should be redeemed before men. A woman is also given special consideration in not being subjected to public exposure in legal proceedings involving her.

³Sanhedrin 97

⁴Mrs. Heller

⁵רוח החיים פ"ד מש"א
והנה מי שאין לו מעלות אף אם ישפיל עצמו לא יתואר בשם עניו כי במה נחשב הוא שאין לו במה להתגאות. ... העניו האמתי אין מחזיק א"ע שהוא מקיים מצות ענוה כ"א יחשוב שעדיין הוא מתגאה יותר מדאי.

CHAPTER C: SCOPE

i- G-d Himself

ii- The תורה

iii- The maintenance of this world

iv- Wisdom

v- Language

vi- Other

vii- Limitations

viii- Consequences

CHAPTER C: SCOPE

Rabbi Meiselman points out that all great things in Judaism were done in a hidden way. Public roles in Judaism are not considered a spiritual advantage. An action is considered greater if it is not known. Hence great people went to great efforts to hide their deeds. They saw this as the only way to maintain the integrity and internal, spiritual worth of what they were doing¹.

Examples:

יעקב's fight with the מלאך had no witnesses (according to אונקלוס, the name ישראל mean that his struggles were only for the sake of G-d and not for any human audience);

יוסף's great נסיון with אשת פוטיפר was with absolutely no one else present;

משה's encounter with the סנה was also a solitary, unwitnessed encounter.

The Malachim brought Avraham's attention to Sarah's greatness by getting him to notice that צנועה היא.

i- G-d Himself

Manis Friedman: Doesn't Anyone Blush Anymore?:

We know that G-d wants modesty because He Himself is modest. It is part of G-d's modesty that He even limited how far He revealed Himself to the world, containing Himself to a certain degree. ...According to Jewish mysticism, the relationship between G-d and mankind is a marriage, a very modest marriage from which we learn how much G-d cherishes modesty.

...The Holy Temple ... was to contain ...the שכינה, the feminine aspect of G-d. The structure of the Temple itself resembled a womb. G-d is referred to as He, and the Holy Temple as She; G-d is called our Father, the Temple our Mother.

The parallel to a marriage between a man and a woman is carried through most of the laws pertaining to the Holy Temple. For example, a man is not allowed to lie with his wife if one of them is drunk; a priest was not allowed to enter the temple if he was drunk.

G-d told King Solomon, "Build Me a house that I can dwell in it. Make me a fence, and within the fence, make me a courtyard. Within the courtyard, build me a building, with walls. And within those walls, there have to be rooms. And within those rooms there have to be partitions and doors. And on those doors you must hang for Me curtains.

...Only one man was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies, and that was the High Priest. So the question is asked: if something needed repairing, what could they do? ...

Above the Holy of Holies was yet another chamber, from which a basket could be lowered with a workman inside. The basket was closed on three sides, and only open on the side of the wall that needed to be mended. ...

This special chamber above the Holy of Holies was called the "Bedroom," even though there were no beds in it.

The [part of the Temple called] the "Holy" represents the state of innocence that a woman is in before she is married. The "Holy of Holies" is that state of being married, a state

¹ See the דיון חיים which we discussed in **Chapter B iv** above. According to this, great people possibly do not cover their actions because they recognize that in order for their actions to be great they have to hide them. Rather, they hide them simply because they think that there really is not anything special about what they are doing.

of even greater sanctification which is shared with only one person, just as only one priest, the High Priest, could enter the inner chamber. ...

Between the two chambers was a curtain. In the parallel to marriage, a curtain represents the veil with which a bride covers her face and hair. ... The bridal veil distinguishes between a single woman and a married woman.

... From this, we have a very clear definition, very clear borders, as to what our lives are to consist of. First there is the state of being single, when we are to be modest and holy, then the state of being married, when our sanctity and modesty increases. The bedroom, the intimacy of marriage, is the highest state of all, because from this room came the power to repair the walls of the Temple itself.¹

ii- תורה The

The Sages tell us that the first attempt to give the Torah (Luchos Rishonos) failed because of a lack of צניעות, whereas the Luchos Shenios were successfully given because they were given BeTznius.

תנחומא כי תשא לא:

הלוחות הראשונות על שנתנו בפומבי לפיכך...ונשתברו וכאן אמר לו הקב"ה אין לך יפה מן הצניעות

The First Tablets since they were given openly got broken and here G-d informed him that there was nothing better than צניעות.

i.e. when the first לוחות were given there were convulsions of nature - the Jewish people saw sounds and heard visions. In the end, however, this served to ever so slightly distract them from the inner spiritual essence of what was occurring. This slight insensitivity led to the Golden Calf, to a situation where they were no longer able to receive the לוחות. Therefore, when לוחות שניות were given they were given without any of the distractions of nature. The Jews were then able to focus on the true inner spiritual essence of the event.

From then onwards, it was always necessary to have this quality of צניעות to access the Torah in a true way.

מהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"א :

אין ראוי שיהיה האדם נוהג בדברי תורה רק כפי מעלתה שהיא נסתרת

A person ought only to relate to the words of Torah according to its value which is its hidden-ness.

iii- The maintenance of this world

Chazal tell us that there are צדיקים hidden ל"ו in the world at any one time in whose merits the world is maintained. Chazal emphasize that these Tzadikim are hidden, not just because part of their righteousness is not to be boastful, but because the צניעות aspect of their Tzidkus is a primary part of what it is about them that maintains the world.

We see from this that there is clearly much more to צניעות than just the clothes one wears. In fact, modest clothing must be an expression of something deeper, otherwise it becomes an expression of some kind of dress code, of wanting to dress like everyone else,

¹Introduction, pg. xxiii

iv- Wisdom

¹משלי יא: ב - ואת צנועים חכמה

And those who are modest will possess wisdom

The מהר"ל comments: For wisdom by its very nature is *Tzanua* and hidden. Therefore someone whose actions are not modest is a physical person and is not in harmony with wisdom².

Rabbi Akiva's wife came from an illustrious and Torah-knowledgeable family. Yet, she chose to marry a mere, ignorant shepherd who was working for her father. What Rabbi Akiva's wife saw in him that made her want to marry him was that he was *Tzanua*³. From this she could understand his future greatness which would also be in Torah study. One might ask how she could go so far in her conclusions, for even if *צניעות* is a prerequisite for Wisdom, as the Rambam points out⁴, how can we be sure that the person has what it takes in all areas to make the grade? After all, the Mishnah in Avos brings 48 attributes that are necessary to acquire the Torah (and *צניעות* is not one of them). But, we see from this that acting with *צניעות* is tantamount to acting with a certain wisdom. Or, put differently, as Mrs. Heller points out, thinking deeply as opposed to superficially is a certain type of *צניעות*⁵.

v- Language

The Gemorrah *Pesachim* (3a) relates:

Reish Lakish said: A person should never allow a despicable word (דבר מגונה) to leave his lips for the Torah took a detour of eight letters in order to avoid using a despicable word as it says:

בראשית ז) מן הבהמה הטהורה ומן הבהמה אשר איננה טהרה

From the pure animal and from the animal which is not pure.

(i.e. instead of using the word טמאה - impure – it used the longer expression אשר איננה טהורה.) The Gemorrah then goes on to bring other examples and asserts that this should apply

¹בא זדון ויבא קלון ואת צנועים חכמה

²במהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"א - כי החכמה בעצמה היא צנועה ונסתרת ... אבל מי שכל מעשיו בבלתי צניעות זה הוא גשמי ואין ראוי אליו החכמה ... כי אל החמרי מדריגה שפלה.

³מס' כתובות טב: (בסוף); ר"ע רעיא דבן כלבא שבוע הוה חזיתיה בריתיה דהוה צניע ומעלי וכו'

⁴ברית כרותה היגע בתלמודו בצנעה לא במהרה הוא נשכח (רמב"ם הל' תלמוד תורה)

⁵ולכן, לשון הרמב"ם הוא שיש ברית על זה. וברית הוא דבר המקשר בין הבורא וכלל ישראל וכמו שהסביר המהר"ל הכמה מקומות ולכן אולי כוונת הרמב"ם שאין זה אלא תנאי אלא מעיקר היחס בינינו ובין המקום לתלמוד בצנעה

In the *Moreh Nevuchim*³, the רמב"ם states that Hebrew is called לשון הקודש because it does not have specific words for certain physical acts. Rather, it uses borrowed, more sensitive terms⁴. The רמב"ם is difficult to understand, for in the end the הלכה demands that we relate to and talk about these things⁵. We need to know, for example, whether we can pray in a room where someone has just passed wind or where there is a baby with a dirty diaper in the room. Therefore, what is it that we gain by borrowing words if the issue has to be addressed anyway?

However, the words we use affect the whole way we relate to the world. This can best be understood from the opposite extreme, foul language. Foul language in every language is explicitly physical. Psychologists have observed that when someone uses foul language against someone else it has a cathartic effect in the same way that hitting the person does. This is because when the person uses these very physical words towards the other person he is reducing the person, by association, to a more physical stature. He has indeed done violence to his stature.

So too, with positive, more sensitive linguistic usage we refine our thinking and our way of relating to the world, and we are more in tune with קדושה when we do so.

Bava Kama (לח):

Rebbe Chiya bar Abba said in the Name of Rebbe Yochanan: הקדוש ברוך הוא does not deny reward to anyone who merits it, even those who deserve it because of pleasant speech. For in the case of Lot's daughters who had children from him, the eldest called the child Moav (which means from my father, telling the whole world that the child was born of an incestuous relationship with her father). G-d said to Moses: (Devarim 2): "Do not afflict Moav and do not threaten them with war." From this we learn that it is war which is prohibited. But as concerns requisitioning, you may afflict them. The younger of the two daughters was more modest and called her son Amon from Ben Ami – son of my nation, not referring to her father directly. Therefore, concerning the Amonites G-d said: "Do not afflict

¹פסחים ג.

דאמר ריב"ל לעולם אל יוציא אדם דבר מגונה מפיו שהרי עקם הכתוב ח' אותיות ולא הוציא דבר מגונה מפיו שנאמר (בראשית ז) מן הבהמה הטהורה ומן הבהמה אשר איננה טהרה, רב פפא אמר ט' שנאמר (דברים כג) כי יהיה בך איש אשר לא יהיה טהור מקרה לילה, רבינא אמר עשרה וי"ו דטהור רב אחא בר יעקב אמר שש עשרה שנאמר (שמואל א כ) כי אמר מקרה הוא בלתי טהור הוא כי לא טהור תניא דבי רבי ישמעאל לעולם יספר אדם בלשון נקיה שהרי בזב קראו מרכב ובאשה קראו מושבו ואמר (איוב טו) ותבחר לשון ערומים ואומר (איוב לג) ודעת שפתי ברור מלל, מאי ואומר וכ"ת ה"מ בדאורייתא אבל בדרבנן לא ת"ש ואומר ותבחר לשון ערומים וכי תימא ה"מ בדרבנן אבל במילי דעלמא לא ואומר ודעת שפתי ברור מלל.

²ובמהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"ג:

כי לשון נקי יורה על שהשכל נקי מן הפחיתות ... וזה שמוציא דבר מגונה מפיו אשר אין ראוי אל השכל הוא תעוב ופחיתות גשמי ובשביל גאותו אין ראוי לעבודה וזה פסול גמור והבן זה:

³brought in the מהר"ל ibid.

ובמהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"ג: והרמב"ם ז"ל כתב בספרו מו"נ שלכך נקרא לשוננו לשון הקודש מפני שלא הונח בלשון הקודש לשון מיוחד על דבר ערוה, כי ערות האשה נקרא אותו מקום, ונקרא ערות הזכר אבר וכן נקרא התשמיש ביאה, כך פ' הרמב"ם ... ואני אומר מה שעשה הרמב"ם סבה הוא מסובב.

⁴argues vociferously with this. רמב"ן על התורה ד"ה שקל הקודש

⁵see for example אור החיים סימן עד-עז

If one has to shout and curse, the statement he is making about himself is that the way he presents himself is more important than what he is saying.²

Later, we will show that women have a special capacity for צניעות. This applies to speech as well. In פיה פתחה בחכמה it says אשת חיל:

"The mouth is the place which effects the joining of the spiritual and the physical...Saying that the אשת חיל's mouth is opened in wisdom means that the part of her which joins spirituality to physicality emits wisdom...Women...are more inclined to express and define themselves through verbal communication with others...Women tend naturally to see the connection between the physical and the spiritual much more than men do - women are more holistic in this sense."³

vi- Other

A self-defining as well as other-relating concept:

We have shown that צניעות is a way of relating to oneself, of perceiving oneself in terms of one's essence and not externally. Therefore, צניעות applies even where there are no other people present, applying even when one is getting changed or doing other things in private⁴, how one acts in the bathroom⁵ and how a couple relates to each other in their marital relations⁶.

Respecting and Maintaining Privacy

American society in particular stresses the "virtues" of being completely open with everyone. But this is not necessarily a good thing.

מיכה ו ח : והצנע לכת עם אלוקיך

And you should walk modestly with the L-rd your G-d.

¹ב"ק לח:

שאמר רבי חייא בר אבא אמר רבי יוחנן אין הקב"ה מקפח שכר כל בריה אפילו שכר שיחה נאה דאילו בכירה דקאמרה מואב א"ל הקב"ה למשה (דברים ב) אל תצר את מואב ואל תתגר במלחמה מלחמה הוא דלא הא אנגריא עביד בהו צעירה דקאמרה בן עמי א"ל הקב"ה למשה (דברים ב) אל תצורם ואל תתגר במלך כלל דאפילו אנגריא לא תעביד בהו

²Mrs. Heller

³More Precious Than Pearls, pp. 49/50

⁴פלא יועץ צניעות ומדת הצניעות צריכה אפילו כשהוא לבדו בחדרי חדרים מפני כבוד מלך רם ונשא, איום ונורא אשר מלא כל הארץ כבודו.

⁵ברכות סב. אין קורין צנוע אלא למי שצנוע בבית הכסא.

⁶צנועין באכילתן צנועין בבית הכסא וצנועין בדבר אחר (marital relations) (מס' ברכות)

פירוש הרד"ק: ... ואמר הצנע כי הדבר הזה מסור ללב והוא דבר צניעות וגו'

Radak: For this is something which is given over to the heart, and that is what is meant by צניעות

מצודת דוד: ... בצנעה – לא בפרסום רב

In Modesty: Not with great publicity

Many things need to remain hidden in order to maintain their value. All of us have things about our inner selves which we feel a need to keep in our private space and not share with anyone. Sometimes these things are negative, but they may also reflect a person's dreams, aspirations, visions and positive urges.

A person knows how to respect the boundaries that someone else feels he needs and declines to pry beyond this point. He also sets boundaries for himself and does not necessarily pour out everything about himself, especially not to strangers. This does not mean that people like this are closed or insecure people – rather, they realize that certain things are cheapened by speaking about them. They understand that everything has its boundary and its context, and that not to respect these boundaries is not to respect the כבוד of the person who is requesting that boundary.

In fact, it is often an insecure person who is driven to know everything about another person. Maybe "if we could know everything that was going on in every part of our spouse's personality, we would feel more secure. Or maybe our own life is so unsatisfying that we feel we have to borrow from somebody else's life. We're like the mother who must know everything her daughter says, thinks and feels because she lives through her vicariously. Or perhaps our motivation is a need for power"¹

"Many relationships break up not because anyone is doing anything wrong; no one is sinning, no one is mean - but simply due to unfair expectations. Having unfair expectations means failing to recognize and respect another person's personal borders. And that constitutes an invasion of privacy."²

Privacy is also the context in which the male-female relationship can express its holiness:

במדבר כד ה: מה טובו אהליך יעקוב משכנותיך ישראל

How goodly are your tents, oh Jacob; your dwelling places, oh Israel.

רש"י: על שראה פתחיהם שאינן מכוונים זו מול זו

Rashi: [Bilam said this when] he saw the openings of their tents were not opposite each other [so that they didn't look into each other's tents.]

Other:

At this stage, it should be clear that modesty is a whole approach to life, a way of acting and perceiving spiritual cores rather than surface peripheries. As such, it is a

¹Manis Friedman, Doesn't Anyone Blush Anymore, pg. 4

²ibid. pg. 3

fundamental principle of Judaism which shows us how to recognize G-d in this world and have a relationship with him. We have given examples of how modesty effected the very Torah itself, how it impacts on one's wisdom, one's speech, male-female relations and even one's actions in private. We showed how there were laws of Yom Kippur and Purim and how even the *Luchos* were affected by this. If we look through the Talmud, we will see many other examples relating to a further, broad cross-section of human experience¹.

vii- Limitations

Except for the belief in G-d and in the Torah itself, all principles of the Torah operate in dynamic equilibrium with all other aspects of the Torah. No principle stands as an absolute principle in and of itself, but rather it is the combined principles, as they relate to each other including their prioritization when they clash, which determines their truth. Therefore, although it is prohibited to kill, even to the point of *יהרג ואל יעבור*, there are in practice many situations when we would have to kill other people (e.g. implementing the death penalty, war, *עמלק*, *רודף*, etc). The point is that the Torah itself is never suspended. The Torah was given as an integrated whole with all the exceptions to any principle built in. So, too, with *צניעות*: there are times when the expression of *צניעות* is limited by other principles.

The following are some examples:

עמלק davened from on top of the mountain when *כלל ישראל* were fighting *עמלק*. Even though the normative principle is *ממעמקים קראתיך ד'* – *I call to You from the depths* (i.e. it is appropriate to call to G-d from a physically low place), in this case *משה*'s *תפילות* needed to be in an exposed, visible fashion. It was his outstretched arms on the top of the mountain that gave the inspiration to the Jewish People, helping them understand that they were being helped by G-d.

So too, Yeshivos or Organizations may conduct a public relations campaign if they need it for fundraising.

Another example is given of Sarah Imeinu, who was extremely modest. When Yitzchak was born, there was a lot of talk about whether this was indeed Sarah's baby. On Yitzchak's second birthday there was a huge celebration (at the time of his weaning). G-d caused the breasts of all the nursing mothers to dry up and only Sarah was left with milk, and an abundance of it. If she would agree to feed all these babies G-d's miracle would be revealed and Sarah would be firmly established as Yitzchak's mother. Sarah was reluctant to expose her breasts to all these women. At this stage Avraham intervened and said, "Sarah, now is not the time for modesty – expose your breasts²."

¹ קידושין ע"א.

שם בן י"ב אותיות היו מוסרין אותו לכל אדם משרבו הפריצים היו מוסרים אותו לצנועים שבכהונה והצנועים שבכהונה מבליעים אותו בנעימת אחיהם הכהנים... שם בן מ"ב אותיות אין מוסרין אותו אלא למי שצנוע ועניו.

נדה יב.

כל המקיים דברי חכמים נקרא צנוע.

ב"מ:

אין הברכה שורה אלא על דבר הסמוי מן העין

² ב"ר נג: ט

אמנו שרה היתה צנועה יותר מדאי א"ל אבינו אברהם אין זו שעתה צניעות אלא גלי את דדיך.

וכדומה בפסיק רעא רבתי מד

א"ל שרה מה את עומדת? אין השעה הזו של צניעות אלא עמדי והפריע עצמך בשביל קדושת השם.

viii- Consequences

A person who has mastered צניעות is in harmony with the underlying spirituality of this world. Since there are certain תקונים or עבודה which can only be done by someone who can tap into this level of spirituality, such people will be זוכה to these תקונים themselves or to descendants who will take care of them. One such עבודה was that of the גדול on כהן גדול יום כפור when he went into the קדש קדשים in complete צניעות to enact the culminating service of service (the הזאות of the הפנים) on which the fate of the whole world literally depended:

מסכת יומא מז.

תנו רבנן שבעה בנים היו לה לקמחית וכולן שמשו בכהונה גדולה אמרו לה חכמים מה עשית שזכית לכך אמרה להם מימי לא ראו קורות ביתי קלעי שערי אמרו לה הרבה עשו כן ולא הועילו

It also takes a master of צניעות to fight עמלק. This is because the טומאה of עמלק goes so deep:

שם משמואל פורים : עמלק הוא כח פנימי רע

Therefore:

מגילה יג:

אמר רבי אלעזר מאי דכתיב (איוב לו) לא יגרע מצדיק עיניו בשכר צניעות שהיתה בה ברחל זכתה ויצא ממנה שאול ובשכר צניעות שהיה בו בשאול זכה ויצאת ממנו אסתר.

תנחומא במדבר ג:

כל אשה שהיא מצנעת עצמה אפילו בת ישראל ראויה שתנשא לכהן גדול ותעמיד כהנים גדולים שנאמר כל כבודה בת מלך פנימה ממשבצות זהב לבושה

In general:

מגילה י:

כל כלה שהיא צנועה בבית חמיה זוכה ויוצאין ממנה מלכים ונביאים

CHAPTER D: WESTERN WORLD

CHAPTER D: WESTERN WORLD

Since the Western world stresses quantity (macro) over quality, that world has great difficulty appreciating the levels of profundity and depth involved in the woman's role.

The idea that worth is defined by public recognition is an anti-Jewish one. In the western world the people with the most public exposure (the movie stars, rock stars and sportsmen) are the most highly rewarded both financially and in terms of the number of fans they have. Yet, we all know that they are the least likely to be leading morally mature lives.

Even at a simpler level, the most common question we are likely to ask a person we have just met, after asking their name, is what he does. This defines him. If we meet two people and one says that he is a CEO of a company while the second says that he is a male secretary, we naturally relate to the first person as being a person of greater worth, likely to make a greater contribution to the world. Yet, the CEO may have a temper, five divorces to his name, may go home and be horrible to his wife. He may be egotistical and insensitive but he commands more respect in the western world than Joe Simple who controls his temper, is happily married, other-relating and sensitive.¹

Yet, deep down we all know what counts. The proof is that when a person dies, he is always praised for his good deeds; not for his wealth or any other superficial characteristics.

In Judaism, we stress that the more well-known one's good deeds are the less they are valued. Rav Elyashiv lives without titles in a simple home in a back alley; the chief rabbis of Israel are almost never our greatest sages.

The broader society views self-effacement as a detriment to self-development. If one would run for public office, one of the worst things someone could call him is self-effacing or modest. Although modesty might be of value, it would not be considered a primary value. If משה was around today, he would not make the cover of Time Magazine. Despite this, when taking the longer view, leaders who are seen as having an enduring effect are those who have been internally defined.

The opposite of modest is not forceful, for a modest person can be just as forceful as an immodest one. Rather, immodesty is the inability to focus on the real essence of something; therefore, the opposite of immodesty is superficiality.

Ogden Nash: We should have called America Columbia after its discoverer; instead we call it after the one who made the maps – the one who gave it publicity. (Told by R. Beryl Gershenfeld)

See **Women's Dress** below.

¹See מוהר"ל תפארת ישראל פ"א הקטע השני

CHAPTER E: MALE - FEMALE צניעות

- i- Women have a greater capacity for צניעות**
- ii- Women, the ability to translate קדושה into this world**
- iii- Women have a greater capacity for בושה**
- iv- Consequences for non-צניעות women more serious**
- v – בושה, צניעות, and Intimacy**

CHAPTER E: MALE - FEMALE צניעות

i- Women have a greater capacity for צניעות

צניעות is for everyone:

As we showed above, צניעות is a major virtue for everyone, male and female, applying across the board to dress, speech, hearing, etc. and in fact being the means through which all major events and expressions of spirituality went through. When man's physical outer reality was created, he remained a lifeless lump of clay. It was only when this נשמה was breathed into him that he became a living being. Therefore, it is clear that the external is not the essence. Male and female have to activate their צניעות to identify the internal reality that is the real them and others. צניעות is a framework, a system through which we become internally self-aware. "It teaches how to transcend the physical, to search for the deep internal values that are the lifeblood of the Jewish soul".¹

Male Dress:

Thus we see the idea of צניעות in male dress as well:

צניעות both have dress which is distinctive in its לבוש
מזבח of a תלמיד חכם, both have dress which is distinctive in its לבוש.
No steps up to מזבח.

Later, under **Hair**, we will show that a man's טלית over his head and a woman's hair covering have their source in a similar idea, that of the סוד המקיף.

צניעות also applies to the dress of a normal Jewish male. In this regard, the Peleh Yoetz relates the story of a great and holy man, Rabbi Yisroel Nag'ar, who, on a scorching day, had rolled up his sleeves. The Malachim who had gathered to hear his great poetic songs heard a Kol telling them to leave since the man was reducing the Kavod Shamayim in the world. The Ari Zal, who had witnessed the entire incident, explained to Reb Yisroel what had happened and, when he covered his arms, the Malachim returned².

Nevertheless, צניעות applies particularly to women

This is because **women have a greater capacity for צניעות:**

Women are able to bring out צניעות in a special way, carrying it over with unique expression. The source of a woman's extra capacity for modesty lies in her very creation, as she came from a hidden part of man:

ויבן את הצלע (בראשית ב כב, כג)

¹R' Akiva Tatz

²פלא יועץ אכילה ושתיה
וידוע מעשה הרב רבי ישראל נאג'ר בזמן האר"י ז"ל, שהיה משורר על שלחנו בקול נעים, והיו מתקבצים מלאכי השרת כבמחמתי חתן וכלה, והיו זרועותיו מגלות מפני החם, וקל מן שמיא נפל: ברחו לכם מאצל האיש הזה שממעט בכבוד שמים, שאינו יושב בכבוד על השלחן אשר לפניו, ותכף פרחו כלם. והרב האר"י היה רואה מביטו את המראה הגדולה זה, וגלה סודו להרב ישראל נאג'ר, וחרד חרדה גדולה, וקשט עצמו וישב בכבוד, וחזר לשורר כבראשונה, וחזרו מלאכי השרת להתקבץ כבתחלה.

Bereishis Rabah comments that the Hebrew word for build has the same root as the Hebrew word for understand. G-d, it says, meditated from where to create the woman, creating her in such a way that when she stands her private parts would not be visible¹. He then endowed each limb, as He created it, with this extra dimension².

Judaism doesn't merely acknowledge but also emphasizes maintaining the fact that G-d found it necessary to create man and woman with varied characteristics. Not only did G-d create them differently, but He also blessed them in their disparity (Genesis 1:27, 28). It is held within Judaism that every physical creation contains and reflects spiritual meaning. In order to identify with the deeper significance of the differences we must accentuate rather than undermine them. Our physical anatomy reflects our spiritual potential. When the Torah tells of the creation of woman, it describes that she was formed from Adam's rib (Rashi on Genesis 1:27). This alludes to the idea that women's influence on the world would be in an internal manner. This is also evident by the fact that women's reproductive organs are internal. Conversely, men's reproductive organs are exterior, representing a more external influence on the world.³

Lisa Aiken (Bereishis Rabbah): The woman's reproductive organs are internal, suggesting that the optimal way for a woman to function is internally. Men's corresponding externality suggests that they should develop themselves externally.

The brother of the מהר"ל, Rav Chaim, points out that the letters of HaShem written out in full, יהוה, come to the numerical value of 45 which is the same value as אדם, man. If we take only those letters which are not the actual four letters of the name, i.e. the underlined letters - ה-א-ו-י, we then get the hidden letters whose numeric value comes to 19, the same as חוה. This teaches that a woman's holiness is essentially hidden, he states, to the point that even the prophecies of the 7 female prophets are written in a more Tzanua form⁴.

In Vogue magazine, Sally Tisdale writes, "...Privacy is a condition of the (female) body; it is more than a social construct or an idea...The boundary of my body is made and shaped by what my body does and by what can be done to it... I've never met a man who

¹darshenen that השם was מתבונן, i.e. there was an extra dimension of השגחה to create this dimension of female צניעות.

²בראשית רבה יח: ב

...ויבין כתיב התבונן מאין לבראתה...ממקום שהוא צנוע באדם אפילו בשעה שאדם עומד ערום אותו המקום מכוסה ועל כל אבר ואבר שהיה בורא בה היה אומר תהא אשה צנועה אשה צנועה, התבונן:

³Rachelle Goldberg, Moreshet: While men have the responsibility of confronting the external sphere of existence on a societal level, women focus on the internal spheres. Their task is to mold character and personality on an individual basis in personal domains and in the home, which is the stronghold of Jewish strength and continuity.

⁴ספר חיים טובים של הר' חיים ברבי בצלאל (אחי המהר"ל)

ואם תכתב אותיות השם המיוחד במלואו יו"ד ה"א ו"ו ה"א, יעלה מספרו מ"ה כמנין אדם. והנותר שלו שהוא יו"ד ה"א ו"ו ה"א עולה במספר י"ט כמנין חוה. להגיד שגלוי שכינה על האשה אינו דרך כבוד כלפי מעלה. ואף על גב שהיו כמה נשים נביאות בישראל, לא תמצא שום מקום וידבר ה' אל הנביאה לאמר, מטעם שפרשתי. ובלשונו הקדוש תמצא, כי מה שהוא נוכח לזכר הוא נסתר לנקבה, להגיד שכל כבודה של בת מלך להיות פנימה ונסתרת.

cares half as much about curtains as almost any woman I know, and I don't think this has anything to do with a propensity for domestic chores."

Therefore, women are more easily in touch with קדושה when surrounded by physical realities (e.g. relationships, mundane tasks, slavery).

Men need physical realities to be more obviously labeled as מצוות (including various מצוות of marriage and having children.)

Therefore, women have roles that emphasize bringing holiness into realms that are hidden from public view.

Given her innate sense of privacy, the Jewish woman's enormous potential for accomplishment accompanies her wherever she goes. Thus, Torah assigns her the responsibility of sanctifying any space she inhabits. At home, at work or in the community a woman is charged with transforming every physical space into a spiritual domain fit for G-d's presence. In the Jewish tradition, a married woman visits the *mikveh*, a pool of natural water, in which she immerses after every monthly cycle according to Jewish law. She sanctifies this womb-like environment, a close companion to the first space a baby inhabits and one of the most profoundly private spaces in the human life cycle.¹

Generally, men and women are more external and internal aspects of a whole. Men act at a more macro level, breaking that macro into its specialized parts; women operate at a micro level, building smaller units into greater, more holistic conceptions. Because of this, men relate more to אמת, given and concrete realities. Women, on the other hand, have deeper אמונה.

ii- Women, the ability to translate קדושה into this world

Because spirituality is hidden in this world, it takes the צניעות of מדה, the ability to look below the surface, to identify and bring קדושה out. Therefore, because of women's superior relationship with צניעות, they are the ones to finally bring קדושה into this world. Women are the מלכות of מדה which is the final expression of קדושה in this world (the כלי which can hold the צורה)². As such, the שכינה, which is the final manifestation of G-d's presence in this world, is a feminine word. As a כלי, the female provides the context and parameters in which the male can express himself. The woman provides the womb, the total environment, warmth, food and air that the fetus needs to survive. So, too, at an adult level:

¹Lecture by Mrs. Feige Twerski, adapted from "Privacy: Is It a Feminine Trait?" published 1993, in The Jewish Women's Journal in Judaism, Copyright 1999 by Mrs. Leah Kohn and Project Genesis, Inc.

²The ספירות begin after Keser, with Chochma on the male side, Binah on the female side and work their way through Daas, Chesed Gevurah, Emes/Tiferes, Netzach, Hod and Yesod before they get to Malchus which is the final sefirah. Any Hashpaah from HaSh-m has to work its way through these Sefiros in order to finally manifest itself in this world. Therefore, since Malchus is the last of these Sefiros, they all have to go through Malchus. Another name for Malchus is Nukva, which means female.

And just as the wall protects the city so too the female, who completes the male, protects him. For this reason it is written ויבן, that He built, for every building is something which creates boundaries and protective walls¹.

But it is not just the ability to maintain spiritual achievements which is the female power. It is the capacity to pursue them to begin with:

Avraham passed onto the Jewish people the inheritance of being straight and clear thinking. ... Sarah provided the dimension of passion and desire for the holy. Therefore her test was to be captured by Pharaoh and Avimelech, to be faced with cleaving to the wrong parties ... Sarah is like the heart of the Jewish people. ...As the Zohar puts it, Avraham and Sarah are like the soul and the body, the mind and the heart, the form and the material which holds the form ... This intense passion for spirituality which Sarah had was vital to be able to attain higher dimensions of spirituality, and that is why Avraham's merits are attributed to Sarah².

The word for female, נקבה, means to designate, articulate or define, as in: ויאמר (לבן) ואמר פריש אגרך עלי (מפרש which the תרגום translates as נקבה שכרך עלי ואתנה (בראשית ל כח) (ואתן).

The word אם (eim) comes from אם (im) - the conditions under which something will express itself.³

This is why the world was created from and תורה was given from the Feminine Side of השם. Both existed in some higher, more spiritual form (the Torah in שמים) which had to be brought down into this world. This required a framework, a force that would define the parameters in which these forces would operate. That force is נקבה. מידה uses the צניעות to focus on the essence of each situation and then provide the means for that essence to be expressed in this world.

See קרבן עולה is male, the שלמים could be male or female and the חטאת is female. ג: א - ויקרא, רמב"ן

iii- Women have a greater capacity for בושה

See B ii where we explained how בושה and צניעות are intrinsically related. It would therefore make sense that if women have a greater capacity for צניעות they would also have a greater capacity for בושה. Thus we find that women should be given charity ahead of men,

¹ וכמו שהחומה מגינה על העיר, כך האשה מצד שהיא משלמת האיש היא מגינה עליו. מפני כך כתיב ויבן (את הצלע) שכל בנין שעושה גדר וחומה (מהר"ל חידושי אגדות נדה מה: ד,ה מלמד)

² שם משמואל, חיי שרה שנת תרפ"א דף רנט: ... אברהם ... הוריש לישראל בחינתו להיות ישרי המוח והשכל ... ושרה היתה בחינת התשוקה וחפץ לאלקות, והיתה הנסיון שלה שנלקחה לבית פרעה ואבימלך, ולא את דבקת בהו ... וכאילו שרה היא בחינת הלב שבישראל ... והם דברי הזוה"ק שהמשיל את אברהם ושרה לנשמה וגוף דהיינו בחינת המוח והלב, והמחקרים לצורה וחומר ... ובזה יתפרשו דברי הזוה"ק ... (ד) שרה זכתה לחיין עלאין להו לבעלה ולבנהא בתראה. ... שתלה לאברהם בזכות שרה ... דהשגת חין עלאין זוכין לעומת העבודה בתשוקה עצומה ...

³ Rav Moshe Shapiro

iv- Consequences for non-צניעות women more serious

Since women have a greater potential for *צניעות*, they fail to use their potential to a greater degree than men when they do not activate this part of themselves.

In addition, a lack of *צניעות* in women affects men to a greater degree than the other way around²: advertisements targeting men often have scantily clad women but advertisements targeting women do not have men dressed this way³ (see Chapter F below).⁴

"There is another reason for the emphasis of *צניעות* for women. Men by nature can be exploiters. And women can be exploited. This is a consequence of the sin in the Garden of Eden. Woman was supposed to be an "ezer knegdo" – to contribute spiritually. But she misdirected her potential to convince man to sin. Therefore she had to learn to correct this part of herself ... her attachment to her husband, since it was inappropriate manipulation of this attachment that led her to encourage him to sin."

*v – *בושה*, *צניעות* and Intimacy*

We have stated that women have a greater capacity for both *צניעות* and *בושה*. This is also a necessary ingredient to enhance intimacy. Studies have shown that a lack of *צניעות* in the area of intimacy undermines the feeling of holiness and specialness in the relationship and reduces it to a base, purely physical relationship, with which both parties quickly get bored. This leads the parties to seek their "excitement" elsewhere, causing infidelity, or to demand of each other increasingly exotic and unusual interactions in the hope that that which

¹אשה בושה לבא לבית דין (יבמות מב).

²As one teenaged girl put it: I no longer see it as "my body must be hidden out of shame", but rather that my body should be hidden because there are men out there who can't handle seeing a woman without thinking of her first as an object and then as a person. Women in Judaism, Copyright (c) 1999 by Mrs. Leah Kohn and Project Genesis, Inc.

³It is true that there has been a recent trend for men in advertisements to be more scantily clad. However, this is still far less common than ads involving women whose physical attractiveness associated with the object is meant to get the consumer to want to buy the product.

⁴Mrs. Heller: The fact is that percentage-wise, men exploit women more than women exploit men. ... An example from today's world would be the tremendous budgets that advertising agencies have for researching which types of ads appeal to men versus women. If you want to sell a man a car, add a beautiful young woman to the ad. Does it work? Ad agencies put thousands of dollars into campaigns of this sort, precisely because this approach works. They don't do it to convey a moral message. They do it because it sells cars.

On the other hand, one of the most efficient ways to sell a product to women is to include a role model. The role model woman will differ according to the product. A computer ad in Ms. Magazine, for instance, will feature an important looking executive. The feminine message is, "I want to be her," whereas the masculine car ad would provoke a man to feel, "I want to have her" - two completely different approaches, which reflect the different fundamental natures of men and women.

Women in Judaism, Copyright 1999 by Mrs. Leah Kohn and Project Genesis, Inc.

In 1999, a highly acclaimed and popular book was put out by Wendy Shalit called Modesty, Discovering the Lost Virtue. In it, she shows that the current approach in the USA of sex education at a relatively young age reduces sex to the mundane and leaves the parties spiritually and emotionally unsatisfied. The trivialization of intimacy as just another school subject removes all “aphrodisiacal” elements and reduces it to no more than a satisfying of animal appetites in a technically proficient and safe way. Women in particular suffer the consequences of this, for women find it hard to gain any satisfaction from a physical relationship without any emotional connection.

Shalit argues against the myth that female modesty is an indication of low self-esteem. Being modest – together with a certain hesitancy and aloofness – is a way of a woman telling the world that “I am worth waiting for, and worth concealing.” The lack of obvious availability increases a woman’s worth in her eyes and the eyes of others. It prevents the cheapening of relationships, and ultimately of marriage, which is inevitable in a promiscuous society. Shalit does not share the Jewish commitment to no pre-marital physical relations, and ultimately she seems to know nothing about the holy, spiritual aspects of a husband-wife relationship. The best she can manage is to say that modesty “may even be proof of G-d, because it means that we have been designed in such a way that when we humans act like animals, without any restraint and without any rules, we just don’t have as much fun.” But her message is a refreshing move towards the Jewish approach in this issue nevertheless.

Shalit stresses that modesty increases, rather than decreases, attractiveness, and hence desire. Modesty is ultimately suggestive of something beyond the purvey of one’s immediate senses, heightening, not decreasing, even the physical aspects of the relationship. It is time, Shalit says, for women to be more open about their capacity for sexual embarrassment. Female embarrassment is a natural trait, not socially constructed, although it can be socially *deconstructed*. Sexual hesitation on the part of a woman arises from the mature hopes of a dignified relationship with one man.

CHAPTER F: FAMILY

- i- Decline of Marriage in Western World**
- ii- Home/family: The primary institution of Jewish civilization**
- iii- Women: The central figures in the home**

CHAPTER F: FAMILY

i- Decline of Marriage in Western World

Marriage is in definite, serious decline in American society. Only 67 percent of American women aged 35 to 44 were legally married as of 1998. This contrasts with 81 percent in the period between 1890-1940. This trend is more or less paralleled by other countries on the map¹ and reflects several developments, including rising age of marriage, increasing popularity and loss of stigma of cohabitation, high divorce rates and growth in the number of children born out of wedlock. Ironically, it is linked to better education (and therefore better financial prospects) but also to a belief by people that marriage is not such a great thing after all².

People are getting married older and older³, less and less are describing their marriages as “very happy”⁴ and more and more people are living together without getting married.⁵ While people who describe themselves as Catholic or Protestant have a much lower divorce rate than the average, people who define themselves as Jewish do only slightly better than the national average.⁶

The decline of marriage and the family has now been going on for half a century. By 2001, less than a quarter of the households in the United States were made up of married couples with their children. These statistics result from a number of factors: many men and women delay both marriage and having children, more couples live longer after their adult children leave home, and the number of single-parent families grows much faster than the number of married couples.

Indeed, the number of families headed by women who have children grew nearly five times faster in the 1990's than the number of married couples with children⁷. Some of these

¹The exceptions to this are Poland and Romania.

²That people are staying single longer may stem in part from the option of living together without marrying, which has lost much of its stigma in recent years. But perhaps a more basic motivation is widespread pessimism about marriage, particularly among women, as noted by David Popenoe and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead of the National Marriage Project of Rutgers University. They suggest that this attitude may reflect certain expectations of emotional intimacy in marriage and of men's participation in child-rearing and household work. (Their observations are based on U.S. data and so may not apply to other countries.)

³Median ages of first marriage for men and women in 1960—23,21
Median ages of first marriage for men and women in 1999—27,25

⁴Percentage of first marriages described as “very happy” in 1976—54
Percentage in 1996—38

⁵Number of cohabiting, unmarried couples in 1960: 439,000
Number in 1998: 4.2 million

⁶Percentage of Catholic and Protestant marriages that end in divorce after five years:20; Percentage of Jewish marriages that do: 40
(Psychology Today, January/February 2000, The States of Our Unions)

⁷The number of married-couple families with children grew by just under 6 percent in the 1990's. In contrast, households with children headed by single mothers, which account for nearly 7 percent of all households, increased by 25 percent in the 1990's.

women had children while still married. However, there are a huge number who had children out of wedlock¹ (despite the huge number of abortions²). The implications of this are vast and widespread. They affect the emotional health of the nation, education, and many other areas.

The number of unmarried couples in the United States nearly doubled in the 1990's to 5.5 million couples from 3.2 million in 1990. Some of those couples have children. The percentage of married-couple households with children under 18 has declined to 23.5 percent of all households in 2000 from 25.6 percent in 1990 and from 45 percent in 1960. For the first time the number of Americans living alone, 26 percent of all households, surpassed the number of married-couple households with children.

Unmarried couples represent 9 percent of all unions, up from 6 percent a decade ago. The number of non-family households, which consist of people living alone or with people who are not related, make up about one-third of all households. They grew at twice the rate of family households in the 1990's.

Demographers point to several factors to explain the figures. People are marrying later, if they marry at all. The median age of the first marriage for men has increased to 27 years old from 22 in 1960; for women, it has increased to 25 years old from 20 in 1960. The booming economy has allowed younger people to leave home and live on their own. Divorce, while leveling off, has left many middle-aged people living alone. Advances in medicine and

¹The result was an increase in the proportion of births by unmarried white women from 5 percent in 1964-1969 to 26 percent in 1998, and among black women, the proportion rose from 35 to 69 percent. The result was an increase in the proportion of births by unmarried white women from 5 percent in 1964-1969 to 26 percent in 1998, and among black women, the proportion rose from 35 to 69 percent.

Charles Murray wrote the following article in The Wall Street Journal, condensed in the Reader's Digest (March 1994), Tomorrow's Underclass

Nearly 30 percent of all live births are of children born to unmarried mothers-about four percentage points higher than the black illegitimacy rate in the 1960s.

Meanwhile, illegitimacy has now reached 68 percent of all black births and often some 80 percent in inner cities.

White illegitimacy...22 percent...White illegitimacy is overwhelmingly a lower-income phenomenon.

Black crime and dropouts from the labor force rose sharply as the overall black illegitimacy rate passed 25 percent.

As white illegitimacy reaches critical mass, we should expect the deterioration to be as fast among low-income whites in the 1990s as it was among low-income blacks in the 1960s.

Illegitimacy is the single most important social problem of our time-more important than crime, drugs, poverty, illiteracy, welfare or homelessness.

Through thick walls of rewards and penalties, societies have historically constrained the overwhelming majority of births so they take place within marriage. In the past 30 years those walls have caved in. It is time to rebuild them.

²According to a novel theory advanced by economists George A. Akerlof, Janet L. Yellen and Michael L. Katz of the University of California at Berkeley, wider availability of the birth-control pill and legal abortion led to dramatic changes in American attitudes toward marriage. Before the early 1970s, the stigma of unwed motherhood was so great that few unmarried women were willing to have sex unless it was understood that marriage would follow if pregnancy occurred. In those days, if a woman became pregnant, the man felt obliged to marry her. Such "shotgun marriages" became rarer, thanks to abortion and contraception. Because women could, theoretically, choose not to give birth, men began feeling that it was the woman's fault if an unwanted pregnancy was carried to term and therefore felt no responsibility for the child. Increasingly, women no longer believed that they could ask for a promise of marriage in the event of pregnancy.

bulging stock portfolios have permitted many elderly people to live independently for a longer period of time.

Over fifty percent of American marriages end in divorce¹. Cohabiting first only makes divorce more likely². Sixty percent of second marriages end in separation or divorce³. The median length of an American marriage in 1988 was seven years, with two out of ten marriages ending before the third anniversary⁴. Children who grow up from these divorced unions suffer their own baggage⁵. Meanwhile, many of the marriages which do last are no tea party either. Over 20 percent of American couples hit, shove, slap, or push each other at least once a year⁶. In a large study, half of all American newlyweds had significant marital problems due to unexpected changes in their lives and relationships even though 85 percent of these couples had had premarital sex and 54 percent had lived together before marriage. They reported a dramatic increase in the number of arguments they had and the tendency to criticize each other after marriage⁷. Forty percent of American children will have divorced parents by the time they are eight years old, and half will see a second pair of parents divorced by the time the children leave high school⁸.

Divorce rates are now climbing steeply amongst older people as well⁹. Divorces take place for many reasons¹⁰. Economic trends make divorce more palatable¹. Therapists are quicker to counsel divorce², and state laws have made them simple to obtain.

¹Divorce rates in most Western countries are much higher now than they were before 1970, probably resulting in part from the growing economic independence of women, which makes it easier for wives to walk away from bad marriages. The divorce rate tends to be higher in those countries where women are most apt to work at paid jobs.

²One out of three couples who don't cohabit before marriage get divorced, and three out of four couples who do cohabit first get divorced. (McManus, p.23) One out of three couples who don't cohabit before marriage get divorced, and three out of four couples who do cohabit first get divorced. (McManus, p.23)

³Weiner-Davis, p.13

⁴McManus, p.105

⁵Children may suffer from the decline in marriage rates. One comprehensive analysis of 92 studies on the effects of divorce concluded that the negative repercussion on minors was weak. Other studies, however, have suggested that the adverse effects are delayed and only become manifest when children are grown. Another consequence of the decline in marriage, suggested by Akerlof, is that men who delay marriage or remain single are less likely to be employed, tend to have lower incomes than married men and are more prone to crime and drug use. -- Roger Doyle in *Scientific American*, December 1999.

⁶Notarius and Markman, p.20

⁷McManus, p.146

⁸Notarius and Markman, p.21

⁹The dislocations of retirement shake apart some marriages. Couples who move to another state often leave behind family, friends and the social-support system that got them through difficult times. Retirement also means an end to the activities that give structure to people's lives-and give husbands and wives and escape from one another.

¹⁰A 1989 Gallup poll showed that 47 percent of divorces were attributed to "incompatibility"; 16 percent to alcohol or drug abuse; 17 percent to infidelity; 10 percent to arguments over money, family, or children; and 5 percent to physical abuse. (McManus, p.123)

There is a wide gap between what is happening in the world and what people believe should be happening. Despite a 50% divorce rate, most people expect to remain married for the rest of their lives³. Despite the increasing trend away from having children, most people believe that those with children lead richer, happier lives⁴. Despite the perception that faithfulness to one's partner has been eroded, especially after former President Clinton set the example⁵, most believe that this is wrong. Despite the fact that more and more children are born out of wedlock, this is not what the majority believe in. Yet, millions of those same people sat glued to the TV to watch the ultimate trivialization of marriage - total strangers willing to marry each other, on TV, for their money and good looks.⁶

¹Still, 22 percent of divorced female retirees live in poverty, defined as an income below \$7,990 a year for someone 65 or older.

²Sometimes the professionals seem eager to denigrate their clients' commitment to marriage. "Women have an incredible amount of hope," says Mary Maracedk, a counselor at the oldest women's shelter in Massachusetts. "We want them to get over the hope that the ideal marriage may still come out of it." Yet a hopeful woman, trying to make a go of a not-so-good marriage, is not always a fool.

³NY Times Poll, April 2000

If you got married today, would you expect to stay married for the rest of your life, or not?

- | | |
|-----------|-----|
| 1. Yes | 86% |
| 2. No | 11 |
| 9. NS/Ref | 3 |

⁴NYT poll, April 2000:

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement....Most people who have children lead richer lives than do people without children.

- | | |
|-------------|-----|
| 1. Agree | 63% |
| 2. Disagree | 29 |
| 9. NS/Ref | 8 |

⁵President Clinton survived a sex-and-lies scandal when the Senate refused to remove him from office despite his affair with former intern Monica Lewinsky and his impeachment by the House. Other famous adulteries include FDR and Lucy Mercer, Marilyn Monroe and John (and maybe Robert) Kennedy, John F. Kennedy and (fill in the blank) Ingrid Bergman and Roberto Rosellini, Prince Charles and Camilla Parker-Bowles (Newsweek, Dec. 1999)

⁶The NY Times (February 17, 2000) reported the following: The prospective brides stand on a stage in wedding gowns, waiting for a proposal on the Fox broadcasting network called "Who Wants to Marry a Multimillionaire?" -- the latest offbeat format to shake up television ratings. Fox's two-hour special featured a parade of would-be brides competing to be chosen by a multimillionaire and culminated in an on-the-air wedding presided over by a Nevada judge. Drawing stunning ratings, it attracted more young viewers -- especially female viewers -- than even the ABC "Millionaire" show. 22.8 million viewers watched the show. In its final half-hour, the show drew more than a third of all women younger than 35 watching TV Tuesday night.

One widespread reaction to the show's format was a revulsion -- the kind that apparently helps, not hurts, ratings -- that women had agreed to marry themselves off to an unknown man on a television show.

Although many women complained that the show reinforced stereotypes of women desperate to be married, the Fox Web site (www.whowantstomarry.com) was so flooded with requests from women to be on the next edition of "Multimillionaire" that it crashed yesterday afternoon. But Mike Darnell, the Fox executive who created the show, defended the concept, saying he planned to do another show "the other way around," with a female millionaire choosing a husband.

The networks have been lining up shows that reach into real-life activities not usually meant to take place on television. CBS has already scheduled two shows for the summer featuring people living together in enforced situations, one in a house where every move will be on camera, the other on a desert island off Borneo. Each also involves big prize money for its last remaining contestant.

The format of the Fox show included parades in evening gowns and beachwear, and extensive interview segments where the women described their backgrounds. The multimillionaire, shown only in shadow, then narrowed the group of candidates to 10, with the help of a panel made up of his friends and family. That group went through more interview sessions to lower the number to five. Contestants then appeared in wedding gowns. The multimillionaire made his choice, kneeling to propose. The wedding followed. Fox executives said the contestants had all undergone appropriate health tests. They said that a "standard prenuptial agreement" was signed.

Washington Post February 24, 2000

Darva Conger who married Rick Rockwell exactly one commercial break after meeting him during the Feb. 8 taping of the Fox ratings sweeps stunt, told Diane Sawyer on ABC's "Good Morning America" yesterday that she disliked the big galoot at first sight, thought he was inconsiderate to kiss her on the lips after they had wed and never had any intention of consummating their marriage because they were, after all, strangers. She plans to dump him but is going to hang on to her new SUV and other wedding trophies--except for the \$35,000 ring, which she said she plans to part with.

Meanwhile, Fox is working on another quickie marriage show for syndication. "I Do, I Don't" is one of two hastily hitched shows in the works in Hollywood in an attempt to cash in on the Rick & Darva mania that has gripped the nation. Over at competitor Universal, they're talking up "Wed at First Sight," in which two people who meet for the very first time will exchange vows.

Yesterday morning, Darva told Di that her intentions had been "pure." That is to say, she only went on "Who Wants to Marry a Multi-Millionaire?" because she wanted to take a "paid holiday"--paid by Fox, that is--in Las Vegas and to "be on TV and wave to my mom and my family and friends."

Conger said she never intended to get married--but then, she also said she wasn't attracted to Rick the minute she met him. Sure, she's legally wed to Ricky Rocky--but she doesn't consider herself really married because she's a "Christian woman, which means if I'm not married in a church with a preacher, I am not married before God and I am not married in my heart."

And of that pesky legal contract, our girl says she's going to get it annulled lickety-split. Things might have turned out differently for poor Rick the Rock if only he hadn't gone and kissed her right after she promised to love and honor till death do them part.

"I would like to think that someone that truly had respect for me, and had an interest in me in a romantic way, and cared about me as a person would have shown a little bit more courtesy and perhaps kissed me on the cheek and said, 'I'm delighted to meet you.' That's what I would have hoped for. That did not occur.

"I'm not a big believer in public displays of affection," added the woman who agreed to get herself hitched to a man she didn't know on TV in front of 23 million strangers. Conger said she spent almost no time with her new hubby on their two-week honeymoon, never was with him alone, and spoke only "on brief occasions." She said he makes her uncomfortable and "is just not a person that I would ordinarily have even a friendly relationship with."

Fox's fiasco with the wedding special has turned into a windfall for rival networks' news organizations, which are mopping up in the ratings as they follow the story in the final days of the February sweeps.

"Dateline NBC" snared 14 million viewers--about 4 million more than the previous Tuesday, thanks to an interview with Ricky Rocky, which got teased on Tuesday morning's "Today." Rick's on "GMA" this morning, even though he told NBC that he hoped his "Dateline" appearance would be his last in relation to the story--right.

"GMA" devoted much of yesterday's broadcast to Darva, who's going on "Today" this morning. She also will appear on tonight's "20/20."

But don't feel too sorry for Fox. Yes, the studio has had to watch the "Multi-Millionaire" gravy train pass it by, after learning that Rick had a sordid past that included a restraining order for allegedly abusing a former girlfriend. (Rick says he never hit her but did let the air out of her tires.)

But Fox hopes the dormant daily show "I Do, I Don't" will ride the couple's coattails. The Fox division Twentieth TV is pitching the show to stations now, Variety reports. Couples contemplating marriage will go through a series of tests to determine their compatibility and will be rated by a panel of experts and the audience. If they score big, Vegas wedding bells will peal at the end of the show.

Betsy Streisand wrote the following article in the U.S. News & World Report, March 13, 2000 **Reality Bites Back; Networks Eat It Up:**

This week CBS will fly 16 strangers--and a planeload of TV cameras and surveillance equipment--to a deserted island off the coast of Borneo to film its new summer series *Survivor*. The "contestants," ranging in age from 22 to 72, must pull together to find food, build shelter, and survive

ii- Home/family: The primary institution of Jewish civilization

Many secular women are upset with the idea that Judaism considers them the core of the Jewish home. This is based on the idea that the home lacks the same potential for expressing oneself that the work place offers. Somehow, women are left stuck as domestics while men get to have all the fun.

This idea, however, is based on western view of the family and the home which has indeed downgraded the idea of the home as a center for fulfillment. The state of marriage and the family in the Western World is seriously declining and is hardly considered the nurturing ground for spiritual fulfillment. Although we see this decline as a relatively recent phenomenon, Rav Hirsch understood its sources as starting much earlier:

Rav S.R. Hirsch (ח' בראשית לב: pg. 498) ... *Esau (was) a "finished made man" (עשו (מלשון עשוי). What Jacob had achieved after struggling for it for twenty toilsome years ... Esau ... already had in full measure when Jacob left home; and while Jacob ... had succeeded in obtaining the happiness of being a father of a family, Esau had become in the meantime a political personality, a leader of an army ... Family life ... in Jacob ...and the glitter of political power in Esau. For thousands of years the battle has raged.*

In the Jewish concept, home (and not the synagogue) is, and always has been, the center of Jewish life. The Book of Shemos is about how a holy family tribe turns into the nation which ultimately received the Torah at Sinai. It begins by listing the 70 names of those who went into Egypt. In a revealing statement, the verse reads:

שמות א : א

ואלה שמות בני ישראל הבאים מצרימה את יעקב איש וביתו באו

And these are the names of the children of Israel who came into Egypt with Jacob.

A man and his home came.

The verse stresses that the core of the future Jewish people was a man and his home.¹ It required a family unit to lead to the national unit.

in the wild for up to 40 days. Every week one person will be sent packing, and whoever lasts longest gets \$1 million.

1984 again. Then there is *Big Brother*, the network's Orwellian soap opera in which 10 strangers spend 100 days confined to a house, cut off completely from the outside world and recorded nonstop by cameras and microphones. Though these "houseguests" are forbidden to watch TV, they will be on it daily; the accompanying webcast will never sleep. One by one, house members will be voted out by the contestants and the audience; again, the last person standing gets a big cash prize.

ABC will join the voyeurathon with *Making the Band*, a weekly show that will follow eight attractive young men as they attempt to become the next boy-band supergroup (a la the Backstreet Boys). Midway through the series, which debuts later this month, three of the finalists will be dumped from the group. The network is so sure of the show's appeal that it had already ordered extra episodes.

Harvey Ruben, clinical professor of psychology at Yale University. "These shows take advantage of the most base voyeuristic instincts in people. It's like the Romans watching the Christians being fed to the lions."

"We have taken one of humankind's greatest accomplishments—technology—and used it to allow ourselves to slosh around in a sinkhole of mire," says Stuart Fischhoff, professor of media psychology at Cal State Los Angeles.

¹Rachelle Goldberg, Moreshet: A popular view is that "women are encouraged by society to devote themselves to others, in the process, denying their own goals and needs." (Jack, D.C. 1991) Judaism doesn't discourage aspiration to individual success in careers, profession or interest. Conversely, such effort is desirable. Career, profession or interest must however, be secondary to the primary

This very same theme is expressed many times. For example, when we are commanded to celebrate our emergence into national life through the Exodus from Egypt, we are commanded to take a Korban Pesach. We are specifically instructed to eat the Korban as a family unit.

שמות ב: ג שה לבית אבת שה לבית

And there is no doubt, says the מהר"ל, that a person's house is a central Torah principle, for a house is ultimately a G-dly, holy place¹. Commenting on the Mishnah which says that one's home should be a meeting place of the Chachamim, the מהר"ל says that the home is like the body of a person. Just as the body of a person receives its Chiyus, spirituality, and purpose from the soul, so too, a house should act as a receptacle for the Sechel².

The home is seen as that which provides a person with all that he needs in his immediate environment. In this sense, it is a symbol of completion. Thus,

ברכות י: ותשובתו הרמתה כי שם ביתו וא"ר יוחנן שכל מקום שהלך שם ביתו עמו

The home is called a Mikdash Me-at, a mini-sanctuary. It is through the family unit, say the Sages, that G-d rests His Shechinah. (The Gemorrah in Kidushin states that the requirement is that families be of pure lineage as the mechanism of spirituality is so sensitive.)³

Therefore, the maintenance of a marriage (and thereby the family) is the only instance (other than נפש) which justifies the deliberate rubbing out of השם's name, normally a grave transgression and חלול ד'. This is the case of the סוטה⁴.

Concerning this the Rambam, at the end of his laws on Chanuka, writes:

If he can only afford Shabbos candles or Chanuka candles, or similarly, if he can only afford wine for Kiddush or Shabbos candles, then in both cases, he should

goal of building a Jewish home. Marriage and family are the framework for the existence and continuity of Jewish values. Both men and women must have their priorities clear - the happiness and welfare of the family unit takes precedence.

The family isn't a burden. It is the basis of the individual's happiness. According to the Jewish ideal, no pleasure in life can remotely compare with the deep abiding joy of family relationships.

¹מהר"ל: ואין ספק כי ביתו אשר שם דירתו הוא עיקר גדול כאשר הוא בית אלוקי קדוש (דרך החיים על אבות פ"א מש' ד ע"ש שמתאר איך הזוג של המשנה בא לתקן את הבית)

²מהר"ל, אבות א-ד: ויהיו בביתו חכמים ודבר זה ראוי לביתו כי ראוי שיהיה ביתו דומה לבית שהוא הגוף כי הגוף של אדם מקבל ג"כ השכל

³קידושין ע: כשהקב"ה משרה שכירתו אין משרה אלא על משפחות מיוחסות שבישראל שנא' (ירמיהו לא) בעת ההיא נאם ה' אהיה לאלקים לכל משפחות ישראל, לכל ישראל לא נאמר אלא לכל משפחות מכאן כי משפחה היא היא נושא שכינה בישראל (עלי שור ח"א, דף רנד) עיין שם כל הפרק ענין היחוס עיין גור אריה על בראשית ב-כד ד"ה והיו לבשר אחד

⁴שבת קסט. ...לעשות שלום בין איש לאשתו אמרה תורה שמי שנכתב בקדושה ימחה

purchase Shabbos candles, for G-d's Name gets wiped out to make peace between a man and his wife¹. ...

Once we are alerted to this idea we see it everywhere, for it is around the family in the home that Kiddush is made, that Shabbos and festive meals are eaten, and for which havdalah and Chanuka candles are lit.

iii- Women: The central figures in the home

Rav Yossi said: My whole life I have never called my wife, my wife. ... Rather, I have always called my wife my home².

In fact, this idea is so basic that the Gemorrah points out occasions where the word בית and אשה are used interchangeably³. The מהר"ל says that it is built into the very fabric of the order of the world that the woman is the core of the home⁴. And, since she is the foundation of the home existing as a tangible reality, it is her wisdom which, in matters of the home, ought to be followed⁵.

The בית is an institution which reflects פנימיות, for which women have a special capacity. As Rabbi Shimon Schwab⁶ puts it: "בית also means the inside, as the פסוק says מבית מלך. כלל ישראל of פנימיות בית יעקוב יעקוב בית יעקוב. ומחוץ תצפנה."

Both men and women are obligated in the two mitzvos of נר שבת, נר חנוכה. Men have deferred נר שבת, which illuminates the interior, to women, while women have deferred נר חנוכה, which illuminates the street for פרסומא ניסא, to the men⁷.

Women have a primary responsibility for bringing up the next generation. There is no society in the history of man which did not regard the family as the core unit on which the entire social edifice rests. It is the women who will mold the next generation in their values and psychological makeup. This is hardly a consolation prize.

In fact, at two critical junctures in Jewish history there was a dispute about who should and who should not be included in the future Jewish family and nation. Avraham and Sarah had a dispute about whether Yishmael should remain a part of the Jewish nation or be kicked out and form a new nation of his own. In the next generation, Yitzchak and Rivka had a similar argument about Eisav. Would Eisav stay as the bechor and become the industrial,

¹רמב"ם הל' מגילה וחנוכה ד: יד
היה לפניו נר ביתו ונר חנוכה או נר ביתו וקדוש היום נר ביתו קודם משום שלום ביתו שהרי השם נמחק לעשות שלום בין איש לאשתו. גדול השלום שכל התורה ניתנה לעשות שלום בעולם שנאמר (משלי ג) דרכיה דרכי נעם וכל נתיבותיה שלום

²שבת קיח:
א"ר יוסי מימי לא קריתי לאשתי אשתי...אלא לאשתי ביתי

³יומא ב. ביתו זו אשתו

⁴מהר"ל (דרך החיים על אבות פ"א מש' ה):
האשה עקרת הבית של אדם ודבר זה הוא כך בסדר עולם ...

⁵מהר"ל שם: האשה יסוד מציאות הבית ויש ללכת (במילי דביתא) אחר עצתה

⁶Collected Writings, pg. 326-327

⁷Rabbi Schwab, ibid

material, technological provider from within the Jewish people or would he, too, do this as a great and independent civilization, that of the Western World? In both cases it was the woman who one out. It was she who determined where the Jewish people would begin and end, guiding our entire future history, just as women determine the Jewishness of every child born.

What does this have to do with צניעות? "Women have roles that emphasize bringing holiness into realms that are hidden from public view. This implies that we should develop roles for ourselves in which our inner self is active."¹ The home is just that place of hiddenness where a woman is at full throttle.

A woman's other attributes are also perfectly suited for this role. Women have the perfect qualities of intuition, holistic thinking and natural insight into people to conduct the highly interpersonal and personalized roles that a family needs. For example, it says in אשת חיל:

ידיה שלחה בכישור וכפיה תמכו פלך :

Mrs. Heller² explains: "Spinning involves making separations in order to draw things together again in a new way: separating strands of wool from cotton in order to make thread. On a deeper level, one of the things which women are best at is being able to make separations and create joinings in the intimate lives of their families." (See also there Darsha Tzemer U'Fishtim)

In addition, women excel at nurturing. Studies have found that this nurturing nature is an essential part of a woman's being. Moir and Jessel found the following: "A woman is more sensitive than a man in her very being....The very bias of her brain leads her to attach much more importance to the personal and interpersonal aspects of her life. Norman Deutch Feschbach in "Studies of Empathetic Behavior in Children" explains how girls react more empathetically than boys when told stories to elicit different emotions.

In the Women's Counter-Revolution on the kibbutz, many women reverted back to the female's natural traditional occupation. Many families have reverted to accepting the nuclear family system on the kibbutz. The care and nurturance of children is viewed by many women on the kibbutz as a source of personal fulfillment....

When Devora sang the "Song of Devora" thanking G-d for the victory, she referred to herself as the "Mother of Israel". Even though she was a brilliant judge and prophetess, the greatest role she saw for herself was as the mother of the Jewish people. Ruth was yet another virtuous woman who converted to Judaism. Her union with Boaz produced King David's grandfather. She is referred to as the "Mother of Royalty," which is a true reflection of her doing good deeds for others.³

תורה women are happy with their roles:

¹Lisa Aiken, pg. 135

²More Precious Than Pearls, pg. 24

³Nechama Furman – Moresheet Essay

A skeptical outsider should be invited to go see this for herself¹. Liz Harris writes on Chassidic Women in the New Yorker: She had expected to find an oppressed group, worn down by drudgework and a family system that exalted men and denigrated women. Instead, she found strong, independent women who had good marriages and warm, thriving families. She was impressed by their "remarkably energetic, mutually supportive community of women, an almost Amazonian society...the greater majority...seemed...to be as occupied with worthy projects as Eleanor Roosevelt, as hospitable as Welcome Wagoneers."²

Tamir Frenkiel, a feminist and professor of comparative religions, converted to Judaism after scrutinizing many religions. She found that the Jewish lifestyle is uniquely attuned to women's needs and to their emotional and spiritual growth.

Frenkiel found Jewish women to be powerful figures, marvelous achievers, multi-dimensional and possessing deep inner strength. They were powerful and influential members of their families and their communities. Such women could not have lived for thousands of years under an oppressive system. On the contrary, it was traditional Judaism that was nourishing these women, and, in fact, was the source of their strength. (Voice of Sarah xi -xiii)³

¹Occasionally, a die-hard who has heard this from Torah women will still respond with: 'Oh that's because they have been conditioned to that role'. She has thus set up the case in such a way that it can never be proven to her. In such cases, it is better not to argue the point. Exposure to great Torah women over an extended period of time will, however, bring this person around.

²The article was expanded into a book, Holy Days: The World of a Hasidic Family, MacMillan 1985 (Quoted from an unpublished manuscript by Michael Kaufman)

³Jonathan Rosenblum reported in the Jerusalem Post (June 2000):

... Dr. Yitzhak Kadman, executive director of the National Council for the Child, recently exploded the myth [that Chareidi women have no choice in the number of children they bear and are miserable doing so] as "complete nonsense." And Prof. Menahem Friedman of Bar-Ilan University characterizes Chareidim as "excelling" at child rearing due in large part to the community's great emphasis on children.

One group of chareidi women who have incontestably made large lifetime decisions are those who were not raised in observant homes.

Rutgers sociologist and self-described feminist Debra Renee Kaufman interviewed 150 ba'alot teshuva, most of them veterans of the women's movement and the sexual revolution, for her book *Rachel's Daughters*. These women are all quick to point out that "the most valued part of their lives has to do with their lives as women within Jewish orthodoxy." Not one expressed any doubts about her "theological equality in Orthodox Judaism" or doubts that she is as "capable and worthy of spiritual bonding with God as men are."

Upon entering the Orthodox community, these women found themselves for the first time members of a community in which the traditional "feminine virtues" - modesty, the centrality of home and family, sharing rather than competing - are those emphasized by the society at large. As a consequence, they are "able to make demands on men as husbands and fathers in ways they believe less possible in the secular world."

Orthodoxy empowers them, they said. "Before I became Orthodox," one woman told Kaufman, "I was male-identified. You know: what's male is better. Not in Judaism. If anything, it is a bit reversed."

Orthodox women engage in a daily round of communal activities dominated by other women. Many find that their female friendships are deeper than in the past because they no longer "compete with one another for men's attention."

One teacher of the laws of family purity reports that many secular Jewish women are "brought to tears by the thought of a society in which every move is not subject to the lens of male appraisal, and where they may be truly free to be themselves."

Even the laws of family purity, with their mandated periods of sexual separation and coming together, are experienced positively. "The family purity laws are so in line with me as a woman... [I]t is commanded that I not be sexually taken for granted, that I have two weeks each month for myself,"

George Foot Moore, professor of religion at Harvard, stated that "the social and religious position of women in Judaism is ...a moral achievement."¹

אגרת התשובה לרבינו יונה הדרש השלישי הקטע הראשון

Marriage is particularly good in a Torah life-style. However, it increases happiness for women in the broader, Western world in general:

The NY Times, Aug. 4, '98 pg. F7 reported the following:

Countering the conventional wisdom that marriage is bad for women but good for men, a University of Chicago researcher (Dr. Linda Waite, a professor of sociology) says she has found that marriage brings considerable benefits to both women and men. It lengthens life, substantially boosts physical and emotional health and raises income over that of single or divorced people or those who live together, she says.

... The notion that marriage damages a woman's emotional well-being derives from the 1972 publication of "The Future of Marriage" (Yale University Press) by the sociologist Jessie S. Bernard. In it she reported that married men are better off than single men on four measures of psychological distress: depression, neurotic symptoms, phobic tendency and passivity. But married women, she said, score higher on these negative traits than single women.

Although the findings were never replicated and were disputed even then, they entered the lore of popular culture. They matched the then evolving belief that marriage is an oppressive institution for women.

... Dr. Waite found that married women live considerably longer, drink less alcohol and use less marijuana and cocaine than unmarried women. Those who marry have a precipitous drop in much negative behavior whereas their unmarried counterparts experience an increase in negative behaviors. ... Those who separated or divorced over the five-year period became miserable. Men and especially women who married for the first time experienced a sharp increase in happiness. Overall, married women reported being happier than single women.

This does not mean that a woman cannot apply her special sensitivities beyond the home. חוה was called אם כל חי - the mother of everyone. "To the extent that every woman has some of that first woman in her, each can relate to all people, not only to her own nuclear family."² However, just as all צדקה רוחנית, including צדקה, must halachically go in concentric circles from the nuclear family outwards, so too, a woman's attention must move from inside out. More than that, whatever her husband (and other family members) achieves beyond the

one woman told Kaufman. Going to the ritual bath, these women feel "connected to history and other women."

Because their intimate lives are wholly reserved to a private domain, Kaufman discovered, "the ba'alot teshuva seem to stimulate and deepen their sense of sexuality."

After decades of marriage, Orthodox women still report experiencing the excitement of new brides upon returning from the ritual bath. In a Los Angeles Times first-person feature story, a former "Cosmo girl" describes her Orthodox wedding: "After the ceremony, before the dancing..., Aaron and I went to a separate room to spend a few private moments. There, he held my hand for the first time. That small gesture had a richness and intimacy I could never have imagined."

¹Judaism in the First centuries of the Christian Era, vol. 11, 126 – Shocken

²More Precious Than Pearls, pg. 20

This is how the *Peleh Yoetz* explains the Gemorrah which states that a woman who sends her husband and children to study Torah gets even greater reward than they do¹. For we have a principle:

גדול המעשה מן העושה

Greater is the one who causes others to act [to do good] than the actors themselves².

Michael Kaufman in *Science, the Kibbutz and Feminism* (pg. 160) reports:

"The decision of labor between the sexes was found to be universal, in all societies and cultures. Anthropologist Judith Brown made the point that 'something more enduring than culture' might lie at its source. She emphasized that nowhere in the world was the rearing of children the primary responsibility of men. In an article in *Current Anthropology*, she asked why women are almost always the preparers and processors of food."

Loss of family also undermined the relationship between daughters and fathers:

In A Return to Modesty, Discovering the Lost Virtue, Wendy Shalit says the following:

When I talk to women my age and hear some of the things they're going through, the kind of treatment they put up with from these boyfriends of theirs, the first thing I ask them is, "Does your father know about this?" They look at me as if I'm from another planet. Of course their fathers don't know.

The Marquis of Halifax considered his daughter a "tender plant," requiring the sort of pruning and shelter only fatherly rules could provide: ones "written out of kindness rather than authority." This was in 1688, but when I read that passage I immediately thought of my own father. I'm a much stronger person for having a "paternalistic" father who is always telling me what to do. I know he's that way because he loves me. Also, when a man gives up on me because I won't sleep with him, because he "needs to know if we're compatible," it's easy to doubt myself, and at such times there's really no substitute for a booming male voice at the other end of the line.

But today it is even thought to be sexist for a father to give away his daughter on her wedding day. That, we are told, is a concession to the view that "women are property." Wedding ceremonies, as the scholar Ann Ferguson puts it, can "perpetuate the public symbolic meaning of heterosexism and women as legal possessions of men."

Yet what is really so terrible about "belonging" to someone who loves you? This radical notion that girls shouldn't be too attached to their fathers because that's the source of all evil is ironically very similar to Freud's view that girls don't develop an advanced superego because they remain too long in the Oedipus situation. Yet it is typically the girl without a strong relationship with her father who is too insecure to develop a superego. In a sexual landscape without any rules, girls lacking male approval are more often taken advantage of.

¹גדולה הבטחה שהבטיח הקב"ה לנשים יותר מן האנשים" (ברכות יז.).

²פלא יועץ (נשים):
ובזה (שמאפשרות לבעליהן ובנותיהם ללמוד תורה) זכות ל"גדולה הבטחה שהבטיח הקב"ה לנשים יותר מן האנשים" (ברכות יז.). כי גדול המעשה מן העושה.

CHAPTER G: WOMEN'S DRESS

i- Clothing - General

ii- Women's Dress

iii- Hair

iv- Women's Beauty

CHAPTER G: WOMEN'S DRESS

Clothing – General

“In virtually every culture, clothes are a basic requirement. Even in the hottest tropical climates, the inhabitants wear some minimal form of clothing. Nowhere, however, do animals instinctively cover up. Why is this? What is the connection between human beings and clothing that spans all ages and cultures?”¹

“Clothing makes the statement: I am much more than what meets the eye. If you want to see the real me, you'll have to look deeper.”²

This we see from the clothes of the Cohanim. The verse says:

תצוה כח ב :
ועשית בגדי קודש... לכבוד ולתפארת... (ד) ועשו בגדי קודש

And you should make holy garments ... for Kavod and glory.

The Ramban says that these garments had the look of the garments of royalty³. Clearly, the clothes themselves were meant to reflect the exalted role of the Cohanim. As the Shiurei Daas explains, it is human nature to internalize the surface impression that is made on us. When we see how the Cohanim are dressed we are guided to relating to the Cohanim as fulfilling a vital spiritual role⁴. (However, those who actually made the clothes were expected to go beyond this. They were not commanded to make the clothes *LeKavod U'LeTiferes*. Rather, they were told to make the garments *Lekadsho*, for since the garments were part of the Mishkan environment which would bring in the Shechina, they ought to transcend the superficial impressions of the clothes and focus only on the inner reality⁵.)

"The message of clothing is directed not only outward, to others, but also inward. What you wear powerfully affects how you see yourself. ... I have a friend who got all dressed up to take her comprehensive exams for her Master's degree, ... [saying] 'Remember

¹Dina Coopersmith in Jewish Women Speak about Jewish Matters

²Gila Manolson, Outside/Inside pg. 28

³רמב"ן: אלה בגדים לבושי מלכות הן בדמותן

⁴שיעורי דעת (ח"ב שעור ב):
כי לפי הרושם החצוני שהדבר עושה עליו מצטייר אצלו גם תוכנו של הדבר וחשיבותו - לכן הי' נחוץ שבגדי הכהונה יעשו גם כן בנוי והדור חצוני. זהו ענין "לכבוד ולתפארת"
ובחינוך מצוה צט (בגדי כהונה): משרשי המצוה היסוד הקבוע לנו כי האדם נפעל לפי פעולותיו... ע"כ ראוי להתלבש בגדים מיוחדים (אליה) כשיסתכל בכך מקום שבגופו מיד יהיה נזכר ומתעורר בלבו לפני מי עובד זה כעין תפילין וגו'
עיי' עוד במלבי"ם פרשת תצוה רמזי הבגדים

⁵שיעורי דעת שם: אבל אף שרצה הקב"ה שיהי' לכבוד ולתפארת וצוה למשה שיראה שיעשו כן, בכל זאת צוה לו שלחמי לב לא יזכיר כלל מענין כבוד ותפארת רק שיעשו "לקדשו" בכונה קדושה וטהורה וליחד יחודים על כל עבודה ועבודה כדי שתחול על לכהנו לי". והוא משום שהם העוסקים במלאכת הקדש שהיו צריכים לעשות מעשיהם השראת השכינה. וכמו שנתבאר, לא הי' ראוי שיכוונו גם לכבוד ולתפארת שזה הי' מגרע כוונתם הרמה.

the book *Dress for Success*? Looking my best helps give me the confidence I'm going to need to ace those exams."¹

"Like all pairs of inner form and outer matter, the pair of נשמה and body should be in perfect balance...When אדם and חיה were created they were not ashamed because the vessels of their bodies perfectly reflected their נשמות... A core which is angelic deserves to be clothed like an angel - when the clothing looks like an animal (after the חסא), shame is inevitable. Shame is the result of breakdown between inner and outer dimensions."²

¹*Outside/Inside* pg. 28. The lack of dress codes today has led not only to a certain loss of the dignity of people, but also reflects a certain lack of people's belief in themselves. The following, edited, article appeared in *Reader's Digest*: by Ned Crabb

When I was a boy (henceforth WIWAB), a youngster began the slow metamorphosis from childhood to manhood when, during such quaint activities as going out to dinner with his family or attending a semi-formal dance, he hung up his baseball cap and sported a fedora, a smaller version of the one Dad wore. Similarly, girls put aside their Girl Scout berets and stocking caps and began imitating their mothers' more dignified millinery.

Hats were once prominent among those garments that symbolized a transition from looking like a child to looking like an adult. A complete ensemble of such adult clothing gave the wearer an appearance and sense of dignity.

Today, we have lost much of the personal dignity once inherent in our clothes, especially our casual clothes, and I do believe it began with hats. More and more adults are now dressing like children, as "dress down Fridays" and other excuses for "fun" clothes intrude upon offices everywhere.

And what are we wearing these days instead of fedoras or even newsboy-style caps for men and cloche or wide-brimmed hats for women? We are wearing a baseball cap, once a thing of manly distinction but now made ridiculous because it is almost universally worn reversed, and because it has an open semicircle in what once was the back of the cap and an inelegant little plastic, adjustable strap.

No man, and certainly no woman, looks good or sporty or "cool" in a reversed baseball cap. They look, if you'll pardon the vernacular, like dorks.

Grandfathers and fathers, once figures of veneration in tweed coats and cardigan sweaters, and grandmothers and mothers, once figures of respect in dresses or tailored slacks and starched blouses, are now seen disporting themselves in public in sweat pants. These are among the ugliest clothing ever conceived, looking, even when laundered, like toddlers' dirty pajamas. They should have never left the locker room.

Now, three generations of an American family—children, parents and grandparents—can promenade the avenues of the world's great cities or spas similarly haberdashed and coutured: baggy shorts; T-shirts or sweat shirts with cartoons of woodpeckers or wart hogs or other images of popular-culture icons or asinine one-sentence philosophies; enormous ugly sneakers garishly decorated with various colors and stripes, zigzagged leather strips and mesh fabrics, looking like Buck Rogers spaceships straining to zoom away from the wearer's feet; ridiculous little "fanny packs" around their waists; and inevitable those ghastly caps.

WIWAB, grown men and women had too much respect for themselves and their families to dress like clowns. And this has nothing whatever to do with class or wealth or race. Once, and not so terribly long ago, adults of every class, race and income level conformed, within a wide enough range to permit many different expressions of individuality and regionality, to a generally accepted idea of what men and women should look like. Even the poorest Americans did not look like something that popped out of a jack-in-the-box.

September 9, 2004 (AP) *Schools, offices button down dress codes* - It's the latest trend in fall fashion: Workers and students who dress down or show too much skin are being told to button up. Tired of staff members who they see as pushing the limits of professionalism and good taste, a growing number of employers are issuing lengthy dress codes, some with photos to illustrate the do's and don'ts. More schools also are getting stricter about student attire... The good news, say those who monitor trends, is that modesty and more formal attire are gaining favor even with teens and 20somethings. Many employers say that young workers are the most frequent dress code offenders.

²Akiva Tatz, *Living Inspired*, pg. 118-119, see there all of chap. 11

After the חטא אדם הראשון there was a permanent new reality. Now even after משיח the concept of clothing remains; תחיית המתים will take place together with clothes¹. Adam HaRishon did not need clothes because his נפש הבהמית was in complete harmony with his inner essence and was therefore its outer garment. In the italicized section below we show that Adam's נפש הבהמית was in fact his garment. Only when this harmony was disturbed did Adam HaRishon find himself naked. He then needed a new set of outer garments to reflect his inner spirituality:

And before the Sin of the Adam HaRishon, the Animal Soul was incorporated into man and it was called Ketones Or (garments of flesh) but when he sinned it was separated from him and it was given into the hands of the Sitra Achra ... and therefore [Adam and Chava] knew that they were naked. ... and this is the idea of the clothes of Adam Harishon which came into the possession of Nimrod and afterwards to Eisav ... and Yaakov who was a parallel of Adam HaRishon (דוגמא דאדם הראשון) and therefore it is written that Rivka took the garments of Eisav etc. and she dressed Yaakov in them ... and per force it had to be so for Yaakov was metaken the Chet of Adam HaRishon and therefore [when he entered into Yitzchak] the smell of Gan Eiden entered with him and [Yitzchak] smelled the smell of his garments ... and so too the tearing of the coat of Shaul and the incident where השם grabbed the garment of Yeravam ... and this is the idea behind Vashti's demanding the removal of the clothes of Benos Yisroel that they should be naked and we see just the opposite in the case of Ester, for the verse says: ותלבש אסתר מלכות – And Ester dressed in Royalty. Similarly we see in Zechariah Gimmel that Yehoshua was dressed in clothes soiled by excrement etc. and He dressed him in clothes etc. and the Satan stood on his right side to seduce him.

All of these incidences have to do with those original clothes of the First Man [that really showed that his Animal Nefesh was but an extension and an outer garment of his inner spirituality] and they were all attempts to prevent humankind from wearing those garments [i.e. of sublimating this Animal Nefesh]².

Now, in a post-Adam HaRishon world, clothing is capable of restoring the balance. Hence the word לבוש can be understood to mean לא בוש. Above we explained that *Busha* is that מידה which allows us to declare that our true essence is not in harmony with the negative actions which we might have done. Somebody who is in a state of לא בוש, no embarrassment, is in a natural state of reflecting his/her true essence on an ongoing basis.

Almost every person intuitively has some level of these ideas at least insofar as understanding what nudity and clothing means. As Gila Manolson puts it, “My neighbors found it gloriously

¹ (סוכה נא/נב) Rav Dessler 3rd חלק, pg. 41. However, according to the deeper understanding we bring immediately below (according to the מאסף on the שלמה), the idea of clothing is that one's outer self is in harmony with and a reflection of one's inner self. According to this, Adam HaRishon also had נפש הבהמית. Therefore, the type of clothing that is being talked about concerning תחיית המתים, does not mean clothing of the sort that we wear today, but rather akin to those worn by אדם הראשון קודם החטא.

² קודם חטא אדם הראשון היה נכלל נפש הבהמית באדם והיתה נקראת כתנות העור וכשחטא נפרדה ממנו ונמסרה ביד ה"א... ולכן וידעו כי עירומים הם ... זה ענין הלבושין של אדה"ר שבאו לנמרוד ואח"כ לעשו... ויעקב שהיה דוגמא דאדה"ר ולכן כתיב ותקח רבקה את בגדי עשו וכו' ותלבש את יעקב... וע"כ כי הוא תיקן חטא אדה"ר וע"כ נכנס עמו ריח גן עדן וירח את ריח בגדיו... וכן קריעת המעיל של שאול ושהקב"ה תפש בבגדו של ירבעם ... וענין ושתי שהיתה מפשטת בנות ישראל ולהיפך באסתר ותלבש אסתר מלכות וכן מ"ש (זכריה ג) ויהושוע היה לבוש בגדים צואים כו' וילבשהו בגדים כו' והשטן עומד על ימינו לשטנו הכל הוא על הבגדים הנ"ל שכל קטרוג השטן ואחיזתו באלו הלבושים שלא יתלבש בו האדם... (המאסף שלהאבן שלמה, פ"א על ס"יב - ס"ק י)

entertaining when one of my children, then a toddler, innocently showed up at their front door straight from the bathtub. If the same child were to repeat that behavior at age ten, however, I suspect they'd be less amused. And if the visitor were an adult, they'd probably slam the door, lock it, and call the police¹."

We intuitively understand that this reaction is linked to our essential human spirituality. "A dog can trot around au naturel without offending or even being thought of as "naked," since we understand ... that an animal is not much more than it appears to be - an essentially physical being governed by its instincts. Because a baby's existence is similar to that of an animal, no one blushes at the sight of its bare bottom; at the same time we do call it naked in recognition of its human potential. A ten-year-old, however, is considerably more than an animal ... and a twenty-year-old even more so, which is why an adult who parades around without clothes isn't called cute but rather an exhibitionist."²

Clothing, therefore, has an enormous and *Kedusha*-orientating role to play in our lives. However, everything has an equal and opposite potential: the greater the potential for קדושה the greater the potential for טומאה. Therefore, clothing can be used to deceive, to show an outward reality which does not have inner dimensions. The roots of this go back to שם and יפת who were both rewarded מדה כנגד מדה for their מצוה of using clothing to cover their father's nakedness. שם was given the מצוה of ציצית while יפת was given beauty in clothing.

Each was given a reward that they could relate to. שם was given ציצית. ציצית is a reminder to keep מצוות מצוות. The outer clothing now became a חוץ for the totality of spirituality. יפת, whose peak expression is Greece, relates to the aesthetic rather than the spiritual realm. The aesthetic is half way between the physical and the spiritual. Therefore, it is of value in providing a bridge, a springboard between the physical (חם) and the spiritual.

יפת אלקים ליפת וישכן באהלי שם

G-d grants the aesthetic realm to Yafet, provided that he subjects this to the morality of Shem.

Therefore, the purpose of clothing, the gift of יפת, is not just to cover the body; it is to alert and direct us to the spiritual beauty of the person. Clothing, then, is a powerful force to be used positively or negatively. This is why מעיל, a coat, is related to מעילה – the abuse of holiness (הקדש), and בגד is related to בגידה, treachery and deception. When clothing is used to make the associations (קשר), it leads to untruth (שקר – same letters). A false expression of inner and outer realities;

Where clothing is used correctly, it is a vehicle of sanctification:

שמות כח ג :

ואתה תדבר אל כל חכמי לב אשר מלאתי רוח חכמה ועשו את בגדי אהרון לקדשו לכהנו לי

רש"י : לקדשו להכניסו לכהונה על ידי הבגדים שיהא כהן לי וגו'

Therefore clothing, and the purpose which they achieve, are a central idea in Judaism. *Happy are you, oh Israel, Peleh Yoetz* exclaims. "For even the impoverished amongst you

¹Outside/Inside pg. 26

²Outside/Inside pg. 27

have special Shabbos clothes. But for one who has the means, it would be ever so good and pleasant if he fulfilled the Ari Zal's instruction to purchase four white garments, and that the his shirt, pants, shoes and even his hat should be special Shabbos clothes. This way the profane weekdays and the holy Shabbos do not mix at all¹.

The deeper the spirituality, the more hidden it will be in this world and the greater the role of the clothing. We see this, says the Shem Mishmuel², from Esther's appeal to Mordechai to take off his sackcloth and put on the clothes she had sent him. Mordechai refused. Esther's appeal to Mordechai was to do things in a more hidden way³, just like the Cohanim, whose עבודה is internal and therefore removed from the public eye. Interestingly, the Leviim (whose job as singers gave them a more visible role) did not need to wear special garments⁴.

The Shem Mishmuel adds further:

והנה אמרו ז"ל (חולין קלט:) אֶסְתֵּר מן התורה מניין שנאמר ואנכי הסתר אסתיר פני וגו'

Esther had a great כח to bring [holiness down] from the hidden world. She could do this even under the adverse condition of Galus when there is Hester Panim [hence her name Esther]. Therefore, she sent clothes to Mordechai to hint to him that she thought it was necessary to bring a spiritual force down from way up, from the hidden world, and for that clothing is relevant, for every internal matter needs clothing (as we have already stated with reference to the Bigdei Kehuna)⁵.

Therefore, there is an extra dimension of צניעות for a תלמיד חכם and for the כהנים. Both wore special garments. The תלמוד (בבא בתרא) says that the garment of a תלמיד חכם is a long coat. The מהר"ל (in חדושי אגדתא) explains that this was to show an extra dimension of צניעות. The תלמיד חכם wears an under-layer of shirt and pants which show the shape of the body (כי) and then an outer garment which covers even the shape of the body.

¹פלא יועץ לבישה ואשריהם ישראל, אפילו עני שבהם יש לו מלבוש לשבת. אבל מי שידו משגת, מה טוב ומה נעים שיקיים דבר האר"י זכרוננו לברכה (פרי עץ חיים, שער יח, פ"ד) שיהיו לו ארבעה בגדים לבנים, ושיהיה לו גם החלוק והמכנסים ונעלים אשר ברגליו, ואפילו הכובע ששוכב בו מיוחד לשבת בפני עצמו באופן שלא יערב חל בקדש כלל וכלל.

²שם משמואל פורים ריש שנת תרעב (שמות ב שנת תרע"ב):

³ותשלח (אסתר) בגדים להלביש את מרדכי ולהסיר שקו מעליו ולא קיבל. ויש להבין מה חשבה אסתר במה ששלחה לו בגדים, האם חשבה שמחמת חוסר בגדים לבש שק ואפר. וכ"ק אבי אדמו"ר זצ"ל ה"ה פירש שרמזה שצריכין לעשות הכל בהסתר כשמה ומדתה עכתה"ק.

⁴אבל עדיין צריכין למודעי, למה שלחה להסיר שקו מעליו, הלא היה די שהבגדים יהיו מלמעלה והשק על בשרו... ונראה דהנה בשבת קודש שעבר אמרנו בשם כ"ק אבי אדמו"ר זצלה"ה בטעם בגדי כהונה כי כהנים כאשר הם פנימיים ועבודתם בחשאי צריכין בגדים לעבודתם. אבל הלוויים אשר עבודתם לערמא קלא אינם צריכים בגדים לעבודתם עכ"ד.

⁵... שכחה היה גדול להמשיך מעולם הנסתר אפילו בעודם בגלות בשעת הסתרת פנים, ע"כ שלחה למרדכי בגדים לרמז דעתה שנצרך להמשיך ממעלה מעלה מעולם הנסתר, ולזה שייכים בגדים כי לכל דבר פנימי צריך בגדים כנ"ל בבגדי כהונה

(See further in the שם משמואל there, continuation that מרדכי did not accept her claim, but that after she had taken care of his objections she returned to her מהלך, as indicated by the words: ותלבש אסתר מלכות.

The תלמיד חכם, because of his Torah, is much deeper than the average person. Therefore, his extra garments of צניעות announce to everyone that they should look further and deeper than normal¹.

Similarly, the special clothing of the כהנים were similar to that of תלמידי חכמים in their צניעות: Cohanim not only covered their entire bodies but also wore an additional outer garment, the *Meil*, which covered even the shape of the body. This was because of the special nature of their עבודה in the בית המקדש. Things which are revealed are subject to external forces. Therefore, in addition to the clothing of the Cohanim the עבודה they did was not done in an open public square or the like but behind the walls of the Beis HaMikdash. Even Jerusalem, with its extra dimension of holiness, was surrounded by mountains. All of this was to prevent externality and its forces from dominating².

The corollary of this is true as well. Someone who is externally orientated will only have control over that part of reality. Thus אשת פוטיפר was left holding יוסף's garment because all she saw was יוסף's external beauty.

See Lisa Aiken, To Be A Jewish Woman, 122-124; 128

See The Jewish Observer, April 1991, pg. 38-39, "When Fashion is eloquent, what does it say?"

ii-Women's Dress

"For the specific issue of clothing, the ramifications are more serious for women, as they are also, interestingly enough, for Torah scholars and for the Mishkan. ... What do women, Torah scholars, and the Mishkan have in common?

"Torah scholars are human beings who are granted a degree of awe from the public due to their tremendous Torah knowledge. To the extent that they represent G-d's words on earth, they deserve extra respect. However, if we are taken in by external charisma, good looks, and public-speaking skills and do not discern their internal holiness, we have missed the boat. Their unique inner essence is so vital that it necessitates special external protection - extra physical modesty.

"Similarly, the Tabernacle represents the dwelling place of G-d on earth. Its vessels and structure were made of the finest materials, including gold, silver, and beautiful fabrics. If we were to see it as a mere building devoid of spiritual content, we would be missing the purpose for which the Tabernacle was built – connecting to G-d. All the vessels, therefore, required special coverings to de-emphasize the sparkling fancy exterior in order to enable us to focus on the awesome spirituality below the surface.

"Just as Torah scholars contain within them awesome wisdom and the Tabernacle vessels contained awesome spirituality, women, according to Judaism ... are exemplified as having a rich inner world. ... If women are viewed externally, devoid of internal character and spirituality, they are stripped of their unique gift and strength. Therefore, regarding clothing, there is more of a focus on modesty for women than for men.

¹Rabbi Beryl Gershenfeld

²שם משמואל: [דכשהדבר באיתגליא ולא באיתכסיא] יש שליטת החיצונים ח"ו ומחמת זה היתה צריכה להיות העבודה [מכוסה] בבית המקדש ובתוך החומה ובמ"ש (תהלים קכה) ירושלים הרים סביב לה) והיינו שלא תהיה בה שליטת החיצונים ח"ו (ריש פרשת בהעלותך ד"ה והקשה שהרמב"ן)

"Furthermore, a special danger exists that women will be degraded when societal focus remains on the external. Cultures that "respect" women primarily for their physical characteristics are much more likely to degrade and take advantage of them.¹"

Western View

In corporate culture, secretaries are (often) the least modestly dressed, and less so the middle managers. Executives dress almost like Orthodox women (some dress like men, but that has to do with feminine apologetics) with nothing approaching promiscuous because they have to be taken seriously. At a gut level we know this. Envision Margaret Thatcher coming to parliament dressed immodestly. צניעות is therefore not just for a woman in front of men, but a way of women dressing more dignified even for fellow women. It is not just a matter of sexuality, but rather a matter of dignity - even if only women worked in the business, women would still dress in this way.²

Although there is a cultural aspect there is also an idea that is trans-societal: when someone wants to appear dignified he/she will wear something as opposed to nothing. We know that we have the capacity to lower others into being just bodies, and therefore we try to make ourselves more dignified and less vulnerable. This is why the Nazis found that one of the ways to make people most vulnerable, least able to cope, etc. was to take off their clothes. Why different societies have different standards is a different question.³

Our society today is so physically oriented that a young female teenager who is not thin could feel invalidated as a person.⁴

"The more obvious superficial parts of you can easily outshine your inner dimensions. As any photographer knows, too much light can wash out the subtlety and beauty of a photograph. In the same way, when all of your light shines unfiltered, your inner self can be lost from the picture."⁵

"Judaism sees a woman's physicality as more encompassing than that of a man. This is apparent in the great number of activities her body can engage in besides intimate relations: pregnancy, childbirth and lactation, all of which most women feel to be profound experiences of their womanhood. In addition, more of the female body is commonly seen as arousing (as reflected in advertising). These factors combine to give women a strong sexual dimension and presence. A woman's consequent power to attract and influence men is well known to both sexes - and can destroy her spirituality or express it, depending on how she uses it."⁶

Concomitantly, men are more likely to be attracted to a woman based on a purely physical attraction, even to a stranger at a distance. Women are much more likely to require

¹Dina Coopersmith in Jewish Women Speak about Jewish Matters, pgs. 56-7

² Mrs. Heller

³ Mrs. Heller

⁴ Mrs. Heller

⁵ Gila Manolson, Outside/Inside pg. 24

⁶ *ibid.* pg. 38

an emotional involvement in order to feel attraction. Therefore, although the הלכה forbids a male to look at a female just for her beauty, many פוסקים say that no such prohibition exists for women looking at a handsome male¹. As ר' עובדיה יוסף puts it:

שו"ת יביע אומר ח"א ס"ו אות ה: שאינן בנות הרגשה (ע"פ נדה יג).

Rabbi Aharon Feldman explains the difference between the way women and men use clothing. He shows how clothes for men are used primarily to show status and gain respect in the community whereas women's clothing are their "attractors"².

At a deeper level, just as women are the כלים to receive the צורה from above, so the משכן was the כלי to receive the שכינה. Therefore, the לבושים of the משכן and of a woman are compared:

שבת צח: למה משכן דומה? לאשה שהולכת בשוק ושפוליה מהלכין לאחריה

To what can the Mishkan be compared: To a woman who walks in the market and the ends of her dress follow her.

This is not just a superficial comparison but reflects the essence of what these לבושים are supposed to be communicating.

For these reasons there is a special emphasis on women's dress. Nevertheless, her situation is not entirely unique, as it parallels to בגדי כהונה, to the dress of תלמידי חכמים and even to a ספר תורה. We are very careful to keep a ספר תורה "dressed" and properly housed. It is obvious to everyone that this is a כבוד to the ספר תורה and not an insult.³

a- As affects men:

דינים: Two interacting צניעות-ערוה

On one hand, no matter what a woman does to provoke a man he is completely accountable. But in Judaism, our attitude is never to ask what somebody else's responsibility is (as in a 'rights-oriented' society). In Judaism we always ask "What is my *duty*?" as opposed to "What is my *right*?" This is because spirituality is always achieved by giving out rather than by taking in. Therefore, both men and women should look at themselves and say, "What can I do to improve or prevent this situation?" Always make it "my problem": through ערבות even someone else's חטא becomes mine. Each side must ask, "What is *my* role?": Duties vs. Rights.

Therefore, we are responsible for how others perceive us and we need to take charge of how others see us.

How others perceive us affects how we perceive ourselves. Since a woman has a certain power which, like all power, can be used in damaging ways, she therefore must project herself from a more inner place.

¹אוצר הפוסקים כך ט עמוד 44

²The River, the Kettle and the Bird, pg. 47 & 48

³ R Beryl Gershenfeld

There was once a Jewish women's libber in the States who went around smearing paint over sensuous ads. Later, she came to ארץ ישראל on aliyah. At just this time there were a series of incidences whereby some חרדי men were caught spray painting over bus stops with advertisements displaying inappropriately clad women. The secular public and press were outraged, but this woman, although completely non-observant herself, completely supported it.

“A married woman who has her values straight won't go out dressed as “Vogue” while letting “slob” suffice at home. Instead, she will give most attention to her appearance when in the company of the person who should be most important to her, her husband.”¹

The מדרש states that a man who looks at an inappropriately dressed woman in a sensuous way is פוגם her; he blemishes her. This implies that he hasn't only done something to himself by his looking, but also to her. This is because part of her potential is to project herself in a way that will be appropriately perceived. When this potential goes unfulfilled she is left with a פגם, a certain gap in her שלימות. (The idea that perception is an active, actualizing force can be readily understood. Certain things were created in the world to be used, e.g. a domestic animal for labor or for food, but other things were created to be perceived – e.g. ants – to learn from and appreciate. In such cases, we grant or deny the ant its purpose by our very perception. So, too, each one of us has a dimension, however small, whose purpose (amongst others) is to be perceived.)

b- Which parts need to be covered:

The issue is not only whether this part or that part of the body is less sensuous or more sensuous (ערור) ("Did the rabbis really think that a man would get aroused by seeing a woman's biceps?"), but whether it reveals inner essence of a woman (צניעות). The same applies with regard to a man.

Face and hands are not covered, voice is:

The Face:

The face is called פנים, which comes from the word פנה, to turn. The face is the turning of the inner essence outward, the first point at which we are able to access the true uniqueness of the individual. Therefore, it is not a part of the superficiality of man, which needs to be covered. Thus, when אדם was first created as a He/She androgynous being, he was דור פרצופים: man faced the world with the full force of his spirituality - he was all face. There was therefore no possibility of sin at that stage, as there was no back to man (רב צדוק) (הכהן-מחשבות חרוץ).

The mouth, the organ of speech, is in the face. Speech is the act of taking a spiritual idea, turning it into a physical sound, and transmitting it to someone else's physical organ (the ear) who then re-translates it into a spiritual, abstract or intellectual idea. Speech is therefore the point at which the physical meets the spiritual, where the spiritual is translated into the physical. This is appropriately located in the face, the place where spirituality is turned outwards.

¹Outside/Inside pg. 40

The גמרא in ברכות discusses the blessing one says when seeing a crowd of 600,000 people or more. This is a new unit, large enough to be a nation, and therefore fit for a new blessing. The blessing is חכם הרזים ברוך אתה. The Sages explain:

ברכות נח: שאין דעתם דומים זה לזה ואין פרצופיהם דומים זה לזה

For neither their minds nor their faces are similar.

At a time when all we see is a mass (in fact a nation) of people, we give credence to the fact that G-d still recognizes the uniqueness of each one. We realize that each one must be unique despite the fact that we cannot know the individual uniqueness of a whole nation. Each one has a different face (and even identical twins have slightly different faces). The blessing we make is that just like we see that part of each individual, their face, which indicates to us that they are unique, so G-d actually knows the uniqueness (דעותיהם) of each one¹.

Hands:

Hands also reflect the spiritual uniqueness of the individual. It is the primary tool of body language which is such an essential component of our speech, and speech begins at a point of the person which is spiritual.

Handwriting and fingerprints are both unique to each individual. Therefore hands, like the face, reflect a more internal part of the person, an extension of their unique (and hidden) selves.

Both the face and the hands are remnants of pre-חטא reality. Before the חטא, Adam and Chava's whole body reflected their internal spiritual reality.

See also Lisa Aiken, pg. 134-5

The Voice

“The מהר”ל says that the voice is above reason and knowledge. It reveals the innermost core of the person. Because relationships can be corruptible, a woman should not reveal her innermost core to anyone but her husband.”²

iii- Hair

The hair of a woman is considered *Ervah*³ (and therefore strictly speaking one may not say a דבר שבקדושה in our times in front of a married woman's uncovered hair, though there are leniencies in this today)¹.

¹ולכן פירש רש”י ד”ה חכם הרזים: היודע מה שבלב כל אלו

²Mrs. Ruth Wolf, Moreshet

³ברכות כד.

אמר רב ששת: שער באשה ערוה, שנאמר (שיר השירים ד') שערך כעדר העזים.

Das Moshe prohibits a married woman from going into a public place with her hair uncovered.

Das Yehudis requires that a woman cover her hair in a courtyard or semi-private place, even if men are not usually found there. Some Poskim interpret this to include even private open areas, for

This is learned from the Sotah, a woman whose husband suspects her of infidelity and warns her not to be alone with a certain man. After this warning she meets privately with that man and is seen by two witnesses. The Sotah woman is brought in front of the Cohen at the entrance to the Temple. He uncovers her hair and places an offering in her hands². Rashi tells us in the name of the Sifri: *He reveals the locks of her hair in order to embarrass her; from here [we learn] that a revealed head is an embarrassment (or a disgrace) for the daughters of Israel.*³ The Sages understand from these words that it is a Mitzvah for a married woman to cover her hair⁴.

example one's own backyard. The Biur Halacha writes "the prevailing custom is for women to cover their hair even in the privacy of their homes." The Chasam Sofer writes in a Teshuva that since women have adopted this practice it has taken on full status of Jewish law as stated in the Maagen Avroham. Others however are lenient in this regard if the private area is certainly not visible to the public. Thus, a woman may not uncover her hair in her backyard if it is visible to the public. If she is not visible to the public, according to some Poskim she must cover her hair regardless, while other Poskim maintain that she is not halachically required to cover her hair, but it is a lack of tznius to have her hair uncovered. In a woman's own home she is not halachically required to cover her hair. However, the Zohar states that a woman must cover her hair in her own home even when she is alone. He says that if she uncovers her hair it harms her home and her children on a spiritual level. Conversely, a woman who is scrupulous to cover her hair brings bracha to her home, her husband and her children.

In certain communities, women shave their heads either immediately after the wedding or the following day. The Torah does not require this. The obligation is for a woman to cover her hair, not to cut it off. Three possible reasons are given for the practice: 1) Since it is almost impossible to cover the head so that no hairs will be visible, shaving one's head ensures that no hair will ever be exposed. 2) This avoids the worry that any of her hair will float above the water in the mikvah, thereby creating a chatzitzah- separation. 3) If her head is shaven, the walls of her house cannot see her hair. Nevertheless, a husband has the right to object. Moreover, Chazal have cautioned women against looking unattractive to their husbands.

There are hairs that are difficult to keep covered, like the small hairs that grow in front of the ears. These are called "sair shechutz letzamasah"- literally hairs that stay out of the net. According to many poskim a woman is not required to cover these hairs. This however, refers only to those hairs that do not remain or are difficult to keep under the covering. A woman may not let any hair hang out of her head covering, not in front, in back or on the sides. There are Poskim who are stricter in this regard and maintain that women must cover even the sair shechutz letzamasah. Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l is often quoted as saying that a woman may uncover less than a tefach (he writes that this is a two inch strip across the forehead) that avoids the biblical prohibition of "tefach bisha ervah"- a tefach uncovered on a woman is nakedness. It should be noted that many Poskim disagree with this opinion and Rav Moshe himself writes that despite this lenient opinion, it is proper that a woman cover all of her hair and not even leave less than a tefach exposed. In addition, experience has shown that many women who "follow" Rav Moshe's opinion actually uncover more than a tefach and transgress halacha according to all opinions. (Rachel Branfman, Moreshet)

¹המשנה ברורה (או"ח עה ס"ק י) מחמיר שלא לאמר וכן בחזון איש (או"ח ס' טז ס"ח). אמנם הערוך השלחן (או"ח סע"ה ט"ז) והאגרות משה (או"ח ח"א סמ"ב) והבן איש חי (פרשת בא סי"ב) מקילין.

²במדבר ה יח: והעמיד הכהן את האשה לפני ה' ופרע את ראש האשה ונתן על כפיה מנחת הזכרון...

³רש"י שם: סותר את קליעת שערה כדי לבזותה, מכאן לבנות ישראל שגלוי הראש גנאי להן (ספרי) עיין במדבריה מה שמקשה ומתקן לפי רש"י

וכאן כותב רש"י דגנאי הוא ואילו בפירושי על מסכת כתובות (דף עב ע"א ד"ה אזהרה): שמע מינה דאין דרך בנות ישראל לצאת פרועות. וכן הלשון במדבר רבה פרשה ט: כך שלא יאמר הכהן אני פורע ראש האשה ורוחו גסה עליך לכן נאמר לפני ה' ופרע ופרע למה שדרך בנות ישראל להיות ראשיהן מכוסות ולכן היה פורע ראשה ואומר לה את פרשת מדרך בנות ישראל שדרך להיות מכוסות ראשיהן והלכת בדרכי העובדי כוכבים שהן מהלכות ראשיהן פרועות הרי לך מה שרצית, ונתן על כפיה את מנחת הזכרון

⁴כתובות עב.

ואיזוהי דת יהודית? יוצאה וראשה פרוע. ראשה פרוע דאורייתא היא! דכתיב: (במדבר ה') ופרע את ראש האשה, ותנא דבי רבי ישמעאל: אזהרה לבנות ישראל שלא יצאו בפרוע ראש דאורייתא

In fact, hair covering for married women has been a historic reality amongst the Jews.¹ Another Biblical instance points to this idea in the story of Korach, who led a rebellion against Moshe Rabbeinu. One of his co-rebellions was On ben Peles of Shevet Yehuda².

The גמרא in סנהדרין 110a asks why און בן פלת is included among בני ראובן in the first verse of this episode and is then excluded when משה calls to those involved towards the end of the chapter. It answers: *And On – [the name means] that he sat BeAninus; Peles - for wondrous things were done to him; the son of Reuven – a son who saw and understood (Reu-Ven). Rav said: “On ben Peles’s wife saved him. She said to him: What do you have to gain from this [machlokes]. If this side [Moshe Rabbeinu] wins, you will remain a student [i.e. a follower without any independent standing]; and if this side [Korach] wins, you will still remain a student.” He said to her: “What should I do?” She replied: “I know that this whole assembly is holy, as it says:*

במדבר טז : כי כל העדה כלם קדושים

*Return [to the tent] and I will save you.” She inebriated him with wine and hid him in the tent. She went and sat in the doorway [of the tent]. She undid [i.e. exposed] her hair. Whoever came, saw [her hair exposed] and turn around [and left]*³.

Amazing! Here was a group of people that would happily rebel against Moshe Rabbeinu. But, so deeply ingrained was the idea that a woman should cover her hair that they would not draw near if a woman was present with her hair uncovered (דכולה כנישתא קדישתא).

Many centuries later, the Talmud⁴ describes a situation in which a man uncovers the head of a woman and is required to give her 400 zuz as reparations for embarrassing her. Clearly, it was understood that uncovering a woman’s head was acutely embarrassing for her, implying that the norm is for women to cover their heads⁵.

¹Amsel, Jewish Clothing: In biblical times, women covered their heads with veils or scarfs, as a sign of chastity and modesty. The unveiling of a woman's hair was considered a humiliation and punishment (Isaiah 3:17;) In Talmudic times, too, women always covered their hair (e.g., Nedarim 30b. Numbers Rabbah 9:16).

Some Midrashic sources interpret this custom as a sign of woman's shame and feeling of guilt for Eve's sin (Gen. R. 17:8; Eruvin 100b and Rashi ad loc). If a woman walked bareheaded in the street, her husband could divorce her without repaying her dowry (Ketubot 7:6). Girls did not have to cover their hair until the wedding ceremony (Ketubot 2:1). In some contemporary Sephardi communities, however, it is the custom even for unmarried girls to do so. Some rabbis compared the exposure of a married woman's hair to the exposure of her privy parts (Berachot 24a), and forbid the recital of any blessing in the presence of a bareheaded woman (*ibid.*). Pious women took care not to uncover their hair even in the house.

²במדבר טז:א-ב: ויקח (רש"י: ויקח: לקח את עצמו לצד אחד להיות נחלק בתוך העדה) קרח בן יצהר בן קהת בן לוי ודתן ואבירם בני אליאב ואון בן פלת בני ראובן

³(סנהדרין קט:): ואון - שישב באנינות, פלת - שנעשו לו פלאות, בן ראובן - בן שראה והבין. אמר רב: און בן פלת אשתו הצילתו. אמרה ליה מאי נפקא לך מינה אי מדרבה אנת תלמידא ואי מר רבה אנת תלמידא. אמר ליה מאי אעביד. אמרה ליה: ידענא דכולה כנישתא קדישתא ניהו, דכתיב (במדבר ט"ז) כי כל העדה כלם קדשים. אמרה ליה: טוב, דאנא מצילנא לך. אשקיתיה חמרא, וארויתיה, ואגניתיה גואי, אותבה על בבא, וסתרתי למידיה, כל דאתא חזיה, הדר. אדהכי והכי אבלעו להו איתתא דקרח וגו'..."

⁴בבא קמא דף ס ע"א

⁵Similarly, in Bamidbar Rabah we see the following case: There are those types of people who, when a dead fly falls in their cup, they remove it, such it and finish drinking. This is akin to the Rasha who sees that his wife is overly friendly with the male servants. She goes out to the market with her hair

The Gemorrah in Yumah notes the remarkable achievement of Kimchis, who had seven sons that became Cohanin Gedolim. When the Chachamim asked her what her secret formula was, she stated that it was because even the walls inside her house had not seen her hair, i.e. she kept her hair covered even in complete privacy.¹

The example of Kimchis is instructive because it gives us an insight into the reason behind this commandment.

From here we see that the צניעות of covering one's hair does not only have to do with men seeing it. קמחית claimed that her own internal sense of צניעות was never violated whether anyone saw or not.

To understand this, we need to give a real definition of צניעות which is so inadequately translated as modesty. Michah the prophet explained to us that צניעות is not just another important character trait amongst many but that it is one of the big three fundamentals through which we access the whole of Judaism².

For what does G-d demand of you except that you engage in justice and loving-kindness and walking modestly with HaSh-m your G-d³.

We see modesty put ahead of mercy, strength of character, humility, passion, truth and dozens of other traits. Clearly, there must be a lot more to this trait than common sense dictates. If צניעות is a great key to unlocking all of spirituality it must surely apply to men as well as to women and it must surely go way beyond dress alone.

The key to understanding this is the insight that spirituality is not obvious in this world; it is hidden below the surface. The name for "world" in Hebrew is עולם, which is related to the word העלם (hidden), i.e. the world is that reality or place which hides קדושה.

exposed and growing wild on both sides. She washes where there are males washing. It is a Torah mitzvah to divorce such a woman.

במדבר רבה פרשה ט
יש לך אדם זבוב מת נופל לתוך כוסו והוא נוטלו ומוצצו ושותהו זה הרשע שהוא רואה את אשתו לבה גס בעבדיה יוצאה לשוק וראשה פרוע ופרומה משני צדדיה ורוחצת במקום שבני אדם רוחצין זו מצוה מן התורה לגרשה

You see from this that uncovering her hair was considered, in this case, as a part of a broader pattern of open flirtation with licentiousness.

¹ יומא מז. אמרו עליו על רבי ישמעאל בן קמחית: פעם אחת סיפר דברים עם ערבי אחד בשוק, ונתזה צינורא מפיו על בגדיו, ונכנס ישבב אחיו ושמש תחתיו, וראתה אמן שני כהנים גדולים ביום אחד. ושוב אמרו עליו על רבי ישמעאל בן קמחית: פעם אחת יצא וסיפר עם הגמון אחד בשוק, ונתזה צינורא מפיו על בגדיו, ונכנס יוסף (עם) אחיו ושמש תחתיו, וראתה אמן שני כהנים גדולים ביום אחד. תנו רבנן: שבעה בניו היו לה לקמחית וכולן שמשו בכהונה גדולה. אמרו לה חכמים: מה עשית שזכית לכך? - אמרה להם: מימי לא ראו קורות ביתי קלעי שערי אמרו לה הרבה עשו כן ולא הועילו וביקרא רבה פרשה כ (מעשה בשמעון בן קמחית שיצא לדבר עם המלך הערבי ניתזה צינורא מפיו על בגדיו וטמאתו ונכנס יהודה אחיו ושמש תחתיו בכהונה גדולה אותו היום ראתה אמן שני בניה כהנים גדולים אמרו ז' בניו היו לה לקמחית וכולם שמשו בכהונה גדולה שלחו אחריה אמרו לה מה מעשים טובים יש בידך אמרה להם מעולם לא ראו קורות ביתי שערות ראשי ואמרת חלוקי, אמרו כל קמחייא קמח וקמח דקמחית סלת וקרון עלה (תהלים מה) כל כבודה בת מלך פנימה

(מתנות כהונה - ד"ה כל קמחייא וכו') קמח של כל בני העולם הזה קמח, וקמח של קמחי זאת הוא סלת ועל שם שנקראת קמחית דרשו כן.
עיין במשנה ברורה ס' עה ס"ק יד

² ולפי הסמ"ק נו יש ג"כ מ"ע להיות צנוע מוהיה מחניך קדוש (דברים כג), מובא במשנה ברורה בביאור הלכה ריש ס"ג

³ מכות כד.
בא מיכה והעמידן על שלש דכתיב (מיכה ו) הגיד לך אדם מה טוב ומה ה' דורש ממך כי אם עשות משפט ואהבת חסד והצנע לכת עם ה' אלקך (ע"ש ואח"כ בא חבקוק והעמידן על אחת)

Therefore, someone without צניעות will not be able to tune into spirituality. Such a person will always see only the superficial reality of the world, and that is not where holiness lies. Only someone who can see below the surface of things will see a world of spirituality¹.

Before the transgression of Adam and Chava it was possible for man to see a surface reality and recognize how it directly led to a deeper perception. Hence, the first man and woman wore no clothes. But after the Chet, it was only possible to be true to one's inner essence through covering up the surface reality in order to see the hidden spirituality behind it². צניעות and spirituality became inseparable³. Without צניעות, man is reduced to being no more than a sophisticated animal, doomed to seeing only material and not spiritual reality⁴. This concept is even more true when we, the Jewish people, find ourselves in Galus. For it is the essence of Galus to hide spirituality⁵.

Since the ability to grow spiritually is the distinguishing feature separating humans from animals, צניעות is therefore a defining human characteristic: "The message that tzniut asks you to project is "internality": that of all parts of you it is your innermost self by which you want to be defined⁶."

צניעות could then be defined as the ability to defocus the superficial in order to focus on the inner essence of the subject, thereby revealing the true glory/כבוד of the situation. As the מהר"ל puts it, צניעות is the Kavod of the situation⁷ for it reveals its true inner identity.

We see that Torah wisdom is a type of spirituality and צניעות therefore becomes a key to revealing wisdom,⁸ for wisdom itself is something hidden⁹. Someone who relates to the world in a surface and material way will simply have no access to wisdom¹⁰. In the words of the Maharal: *One whose every action in immodest is simply a physical person*¹¹.

It is clear from this that Tzniut is a way of looking at the world. It is a trait which a person first and foremost acquires for himself and only secondarily for the world at large. This idea, that צניעות is as much for oneself as it is for others, is a fundamental principle that relates to all areas of צניעות¹².

¹Rav Wolbe, schmuess

²מכתב מאליהו ח' ג דף 116:
אחר חטא אדם הראשון...א"א להשיג דרגת לשמה אלא בהצנע לכת.

³מהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"א: כי הצניעות היא קדושה.

⁴פלא יועץ: צניעות: בזה האדם נבדל מן הבהמה

⁵שם משמואל (ריש פרשת בהעלותך באמצע הקטע המתחיל ב"והקשה הרמב"ן):
כל גלות הוא לשון גילוי דאיתגליא מה דאיתכסיא ויש שליטת החיצונים ח"ו.

⁶Gila Manolson, Outside/Inside pg. 22

⁷מהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"א: כי הצניעות היא הכבוד בעצמו.

⁸משלי יא: ב
בא זדון ויבא קלון ואת צנועים חכמה

⁹במהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"א:
כי החכמה בעצמה היא צנועה ונסתרת

¹⁰מהר"ל שם: אבל מי שכל מעשיו בבלתי צניעות זה הוא גשמי ואין ראוי לו החכמה

¹¹מהר"ל נתיב הצניעות פ"א: מי שכל מעשיו בבלתי צניעות זה הוא גשמי

¹²In fact on the verse:

With all this in mind, let us return to the topic of covering hair. It emerges that when a woman covers her hair she increases her own capacity to access spirituality. This is why Kimchis had such spiritual children, each one a Cohen Gadol.

But why specifically the hair on a woman's head? The head is that part of the body encasing the mind, and as such, it represents our exalted status as human beings. The hair per se does not seem to serve a protective purpose;¹ it is rather there to radiate beauty – physical beauty if seen superficially and spiritual beauty if seen properly. Many cultures intuitively understand that a head-covering of some sort makes a statement about the uniqueness of the person wearing it. In Western societies, university graduates wear distinctive four-cornered, tasseled caps, Indian chiefs wear special headdresses and the High Priest in the Temple wore a distinctive hat called the *mitznefet*. So, at one level, a married woman covers her hair as a sign of the added dignity now accorded to her².

But there is more than that. When the first woman was created, the verse states that G-d then brought her to man. The Baal HaTurim tells us that G-d braided her hair (i.e. arranged it in an attractive manner) and then brought her to Adam³. What is the significance of this? We know that Adam did not relate to her external beauty, and therefore she did not need to wear clothes. This implies that a woman's hair, emerging as it does from the top of her entire being, is something that radiates more than physical beauty.

The physical shape of the body reflects its spiritual state. Our sensual organs are lower down, our emotional center higher up (the heart), and our brains on top. (Apes have their behinds as the highest part of their bodies, reflecting their essence as sensual.)⁴ The fact that one's primary hair grows on the top of one's head, covering the brain, tells us something about its purpose. As we shall explain, the continuous growth of the hair is reflective of the higher spiritual process whereby we continuously sort out the purity from the impurity within us and push the impurity outwards. Let us explain this in greater depth:

The beginning of the verse telling us that G-d braided Chava's hair tells us that G-d created an extra dimension of Binah:

ב (כב) ויבן ה' אלקים את הצלע אשר לקח מן האדם לאשה ויבאה אל האדם :

הגיד לך אדם מה טוב ומה ד' דורש ממך כי אם עשות משפט ואהבת חסד והצנע לכת עם אלוהיך (מיכה ו ח)

For a man will tell you what is good and what G-d demands of you – only the doing of justice and the doing of kindness and walking modestly with your G-d.

Rav Mordechai Yaffe (לבוש תכלת ח) states that the verse is coming to tell us to be הצנע even in חדרים when we are completely alone from other people and all there is, is our relationship with השם.

¹Or any other purpose. This is unlike other parts of the body which may also radiate a certain beauty, but also have other purposes as well (Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller).

Another interesting thing about hair is that, along with nails, hair is the only part of our external bodies which keep on growing. Nails have a clear purpose, protecting the ends of our fingers and toes. Seemingly, hair has no such purpose – one could shave all of one's hair and not be physically affected.

²Gila Manelson, Outside/Inside

³בעל הטורים בראשית ב כב: (כב) ויבאה - כתיב חסר והוא עולה כ"ד, שהקב"ה קשטה בכ"ד קשוטין ככלה שצריכה כ"ד קשוטין והביאה לו. עיין מס' שבת צה.

⁴רב צדוק הכהן, מחשבות חרוץ

Binah is the ability to sort things out - the pure from the impure (from the word **בין**). As an example of this, the Gemorrah states that a woman has greater insight into guests than men do¹. A person takes knowledge and wisdom – Chochma, sorts it out and prioritizes it using Binah, and finally integrates and applies it with Daas.

Women have an extra capacity to sort things out, to push the impure outwards, and therein lies the special power of their hair.

There is one other fact we need to know about a woman to understand this, and that is that she was created with an extra capacity for Tznius. The Midrash explains that when G-d built up the woman he covered each limb with this extra **צניעות**-dimension².

We already defined **צניעות** as the ability to de-emphasize the superficial aspects of a person or situation in order to focus on its inner essence. This allows a woman to more easily focus on the inner essential dimensions of her situation. This now combines with Binah, the ability to enter a body of information, analyze it and draw a conclusion from it. Tznius allows one to see the essence of something. Binah is the ability to then be able to clarify the dimensions and parameters of something³. For example, we say in the morning blessings:

הנותן לשכוי בינה להבחין בין יום ובין לילה :

He who gives the rooster the Binah to distinguish between day and night.

The rooster recognizes that dawn is coming before the dawn arrives. Therefore, **בינה** is the capacity to see beyond the obvious and Tznius allows one to use this Binah to see and distinguish real from pretentious spirituality.

A woman's job in this world is to engage the material, sanctify and elevate it. Because of this, a woman is always challenged by her environment, always having to sort out what is important and peripheral, what will elevate and drag down. **צניעות** and **בינה יתירה** combine the qualities of intuition, holistic thinking and natural insight into people (**בינה יתירה**) and the ability of a woman to focus on the inner essence of each household member (**צניעות**). She thereby conducts the highly interpersonal and personalized roles that a family needs from her. For example, it says in **אשת חיל** (משלי לא: יט):

ידיה שלחה בכישור וכפיה תמכו פלך :

Mrs. Heller (More Precious than Pearls, pg. 24) explains:

Spinning involves making separations in order to draw things together again in a new way (מקבא): separating strands of wool from cotton in order to make thread. On a deeper level, one of the things which women are best at is being able to make separations and create joinings in the intimate lives of their families⁴.

¹ ברכות י: שהאשה מכרת באורחין יותר מן האיש

² בראשית ב: כב-כג

בראשית דבא יח: ב

...ויבן כתיב התבונן מאין לבראתה... ממקום שהוא צנוע באדם אפילו בשעה שאדם עומד ערום אותו המקום מכוסה ועל כל אבר ואבר שהיה בורא בה היה אומר לה תהא אשה צנועה אשה צנועה התבונן:

³ ופירוש בינה הוא דבר הברור (רב צדוק הכהן - דובר צדק pg. 48)

⁴ See also there דרשה צמר ופשתים

The actual hair covering is called **סוד המקיף**. Each person has five levels of soul. The first three, **נפש**, **רוח**, **נשמה**, are contained within the body of the person. The next two, the **חיה** and the **יחידה**, are attached to the body but not contained within it. According to one Kabbalistic view, the **חיה** surrounds the body while the **יחידה**, the highest of the souls, is attached to the body on top. This is known as the **סוד המקיף**, an aura of **קדושה** which surrounds the body¹. It is in order to express this idea that a man covers his head with a **טלית גדול** when he davens in the morning. A woman, who has an even greater sensitivity to **צניעות**, expresses this idea by covering her head all of the time. Amongst Ashkenazim, the **טלית** is also only worn after marriage (with the exception of the Yekkes); and even amongst the Sephardim where the **מנהג** is to wear a **טלית גדול** from the time of **בר מצוה**, the **מנהג** is to wear it over the head only after marriage.

Some learn that it is the **תפילין של ראש** which comprises or contributes to the **סוד המקיף**. Therefore, Rav Shimon Schwab claimed that a woman is not obligated to wear **תפילין** because she, by covering her hair, is 'wearing her Tefilin' all day².

How does all of this connect with covering the head?

At one level, the covering represents the idea that at her highest levels, the level of her brain at the top of her head, a woman operates entirely below the surface at the deepest of levels in the way in which we have described. The *makif* of her hair-covering shows that she can access levels through this *midah* of *tznius* which are even deeper than those which reside within her.

Why Only a Married Woman:

Still, why does this head-covering specifically relate to a married woman?

Outside/Inside pg. 48-49: "Cross-culturally, when we want recognition of our higher status, we draw attention to our head. A graduating university student wears a distinctive, tasseled, four-cornered cap. Dignitaries from almost all religions wear impressive-looking headgear. The priests of the Jewish Temple wore turban-like head apparel. Among members of a Native American tribe, the chief wears the largest headdress. All intuitively recognize that the head, where the mind lies, represents the seat of our humanness, and that by emphasizing it, you create an ever stronger statement of your stature as a human being."

"In this view, a woman covers her head upon marrying as a sign of the greater dignity now attributed her. (From this perspective even a bald woman would cover her head.) ... Many women, in fact, regard their head covering as a queen does her crown."

There is an additional point that is intertwined with the first. At one level, despite Western views to the contrary, a married woman is actually more attractive than a single one. In addition, a husband and wife are consecrated solely to one another and their relationship is intensely private and inherently different than their relationship with any other person. Among the areas which demand intense privacy is that of the physical relationship between husband and wife, particularly that of sexuality. While a married woman should always

¹ בספר החרדים פ"ג: ובכמה דוכתי בזהר מפורש שמאיר אור זה על ראש הצדיקים ועל זה נאמר שד' בראשם ועשיו הדבר נסתר ולעתיד יהיה נגלה ... וזהו שאמרו ז"ל צדיקים יושבים ועתירותיהם בראשיהם לא אמרו עטרות אלא עטרותיהם שכבר היו בעולם זה בנסתר ... גם על ראשי בעלי תשובה מאיר ... ועא"פ שהאור נסתר לעיני המון העם לחסידי הקדושים היה נגלה בשמן הגמ' ומי שיודע בעצמו שהוא צדיק גמור או בעל תשובה גמור תריך שיהיה תמיד בישוב ובכובד ראש ונותן לב על האור הזה שעל ראשו וגו' ובהמשך מביא מהזוהר ששייך מענין הזה לכל בן אדם וזה הסוד של כיסוי הראש וז"ל הזהר: לא יהך בר נש בגילויא דרישא ד אמות מ"ט שכינתא שריא על רישיה וגו'

²In Rabbi Pesach Eliyahu Falk's Modesty: an Adornment for Life, pg. 243

present herself to the outside world as neat and attractive, she must protect her relationship with her husband by not presenting herself in a manner that is attracting or tempting to others. Therefore, a married woman is obligated to cover her hair while in public since a significant part of her sexual appeal is her hair. In covering her hair a woman makes a statement that she wants to reserve that aspect of her femininity for her husband alone and she heightens the level of intimacy they can share together.

Once a woman has been married, even if she is now widowed or a divorcee, she will continue to cover her hair, for at some level she has undergone a deep and irreversible change. Such a woman has gone “from sexual naïveté to direct knowledge of intimacy. ... When a woman who is no longer sexually naive displays something sensual about herself, it is now likely to “radiate more energy” because of her own experiential awareness of what it can evoke. ... When a woman covers her hair upon marrying she makes the statement: “My eyes have been opened - and at the same time, I intend to keep my sexuality where it belongs: in the intimacy of marriage.”¹ (In fact, the ridding of this naïveté even outside of marriage was considered reason enough to cover one’s hair. Thus Tamar covered her hair after Amnon had assaulted her.² To counter the fact that her privacy had been tampered with and in order to maintain her natural sense of *בושה* and *צניעות*, Tamar covered her hair when in public. This was a refinement that went beyond that which is normally expected of single girls.³ This would also explain why a divorcee or a widow would continue to cover her hair.

In the time of *חז”ל*, even non-Jews had this sensitivity of covering their hair when married⁴. The state in which we find ourselves in now, of married women not feeling the need for a particular modesty once married, is completely unnatural⁵.

The sexual aspect of a woman’s transition cannot be separated from the spiritual. In fact, in Judaism, intimacy is nothing but the culminating expression of the unity of the marriage – an act which unites the couple at every level.

This, however, is not the whole story. Something about marriage allows a woman to express her feminine powers far more powerfully than she can as a single person.

G-d created man in order to give to him in the best possible manner. This is achieved by man becoming a creator of goodness in His own right. To facilitate this, G-d set up the world in such a way that it was incomplete; man was now given the mandate to complete the world, becoming G-d’s partner in the creation.

G-d originally created man as a male-female entity, *דו פרצופים*, with a male face looking in one direction and a female face in the other. G-d then divided man into two half-*אדם*, a male and a female. Each one now had a back, signifying that they were lacking. Each one now needed to join with the other in order to achieve completion - a capacity they had since they were originally created as one. Therefore, marriage is not merely the love of two people to each other; it is the uniting into a new reality, a whole *אדם*, which reflects the uniqueness of marriage (*ועל כן יעזוב איש את אביו ואת אמו ודבק באשתו והיו לבשר אחד*). By uniting, man and woman are actually imitating G-d in the highest sense, for they are engaging in the creation of new being, an *אדם*. (Even when they have children they don’t achieve this,

¹Outside/Inside pg. 46-47

²שמואל ב יג יט

³Modesty-An Adornment for Life, pg. 245

⁴מס' סנהדרין נח

⁵Modesty-An Adornment for Life, pg. 227

The power of marriage turns out, then, to be the greatest expression of man's creative potential, the greatest imitation of G-d he can undertake on this earth. It is thus an enormously powerful vehicle, expressed in slightly different ways by the husband and the wife. A woman's power lies in her capacity to access a higher source and then to turn what she receives into holiness. But, until she marries, she has no consistent way of receiving, of being a kli to take things and create brocha from them. Marriage is the great enabler for a woman; it unleashes enormous spiritual power in her. A woman therefore gives recognition to this by covering her hair – the idea that there is a level of spirituality that extends well beyond her merely human frame. To express her power properly, she will have to access the hidden spirituality that lies below the surface – she will now have to draw on a deeper level of tznius, which is the quality that allows one to do just that.

According to this, a woman is not covering her hair to be perceived properly by others. Rather, she is doing this for herself. Thus, it is even possible for a woman to seem more attractive wearing a wig than when exposing her real hair. In fact, “there is no reason why a woman should not look attractive; they are prohibited from looking attractive...It can still make her more aware of G-d's presence¹”, more aware “of her special status as a married woman².”

iv- Women's Beauty

Western View

Study in '82: Beauty ads comprised 68% of all ads in Cosmopolitan magazine, with women portrayed as sexy and seductive. (Gloria Joseph and Jill Lewis)

Study in '78: 750 photographs in Time, Newsweek, Ms., and a number of newspapers - faces of men and bodies of women emphasized. (Dane Archer, U. of C. Santa Cruz)

Study late 80's of Johnny Carson show: Whenever women were shown conversing with each other, the emphasis was on dieting and weight-related matters. (M & W White)

Late 60's: Onset of mass anorexia and bulimia, use of laxatives and diuretics etc. A one-time ad in the Cornell University newspaper offering help produced 62 responses; an article in Psychology Today (March '77) drew over 800 responses ranging in age from 12 to 55.

Other studies have shown how articles in women's magazines project a very rigid concept of what a woman's body should be (picture of attractive short woman showing how she can look taller, etc).

¹ Lisa Aiken, pg. 133

² Gila Manolson, *Outside/Inside*

The manipulation of those who control the fashion industry; e.g. colors.

The Jewish view of Beauty:

Aaron Lopiansky, Time Pieces, pg. 128-9:

True beauty is present when the packaging of an object directs us towards its content... For instance, the בית המקדש is described as יפה נוף (רחל, יוסף, כט: יז). If the outward appearance is more appealing than the interior warrants, this is called a יופי of שקר or הבל (see entire article entitled, The Hod that is Israel, the Yofi that was Greece).¹

¹The following are rough notes of a talk on Chanuka and Beauty given by Rabbi Gershenfeld to the CLS Kiruv Training Program:

There's nothing in a society that doesn't come with a message. Art is a way of awakening peoples' emotions via beauty to an idea the artist wants to express. Societies train people to appreciate different types of beauty although it's not a given that the idea may be a correct one.

The esrog of Succos is a beautiful fruit, but how is its beauty defined? Yavan's sense of beauty alone can't be that which defines our sense of beauty, for Yavan only sees the external. There are many other beautiful fruits to choose from were that our definition. Succos 31 defines it as eitz Hadar - it's the fruit that lives (dar) on its tree from year to year. Meaning it's connected to where it comes from. Or that it's a tree whose taste of wood and fruit are equal. I.e., the fruit expresses the taste of the tree.

The greatness of true Jewish beauty is that it's always expressing its connection to its source.

And that's the battle between Greece and Judaism. Greece says beauty is always only the here and now – no further. Israel's sense of beauty – hadar – however is a beauty that is a reflection of another beauty; that of Shomaim – it's a beauty of pointing back up to Hashem as the true Source. Greek beauty is here and it stays here, only going down and down into the here and now. The beauty that Klal Yisrael has to have in order to overcome a Yavani based society, the culture we live in, is when we have a hadar which leads our thought and being back up to HKB"Hu.

The essence of Chanuka is mehadrin min hamahadrin – beauty that returns to it's roots. We fight the Greek sense of here and now – only what you see is what there is – with the Jewish sense that – no! beauty is to recognize a level of our darkness and point upwards to a light, to an expression out of the physical world to the spiritual world, setting our sites on what is higher and elevated. Klal Yisrael wants to be able to take the good out of that beauty and show it comes from Hashem, showing that it comes from the source.

There are three main cultural styles of beauty in the world aside from Torah, each one expressing it's own vision of the world in beauty amongst other ways; the Hindu, the Greek and the Moslem. All cultural beauty comes with a message, an idea, a statement about the world and the place of man within it. These three statements are based on ancient sources as follows:

The Hindu is – don't look at the physical world so much. The world is a fake – it's a myth. Get beyond and above that and see the mystical world of multi facets (polytheism.)

For example, the architecture of the Hindu temple is a conglomeration of adornment. You can't see nature – it's all overlaid by sculptured figures and ornaments crowd its surface, stand out from it in thick masses; break it up into a bewildering series of irregular tiers. It is not a unity but a collection, confused. It doesn't try to mesh things together but each part goes it's own way. The lines of the building are completely hidden by the decorations, as if to deny the reality of this world's need for structure expressed in form. Physical expressions are unimportant – they're unreal.

Similarly, the sari, the traditional dress of India; other-worldly oranges and greens and purples that don't go together and seem garish, expressing that things aren't natural, shifting the focus away from the natural shape of the body.

The Moslem has its roots in the gigantic temples of Egypt; those massive immensities of pyramid stone which look as if only the power that moves in the earthquake were mighty enough to bring them into existence, are something other than the creation of geometry balanced by beauty. What is there most of all is force, inhuman force, calm but tremendous, overwhelming. It reduces to nothingness all that belongs to man. He is annihilated. The Egyptian architects were possessed by the

Women have a special capacity to radiate beauty:

כתובות נט:
אין אשה אלא ליופי

רב צדוק הכהן, דובר צדק (pg. 48)
שופרד לנשי כי יופי הגולם מיוחד לנשים ולא לאנשים ... ולכך יצירת האיש היה מן העפר מגולמים
פשוטים כמו עפר ... אבל יצירת האשה מן הצלע שהוא גולם האדם

מגלת אסתר ב: ז
ויהי אמן את הדסה היא אסתר בת דדו כי אין לה אב ואם והנערה יפת תאר וטובת מראה ובמות אביה
ואמה לקחה מרדכי לו לבת:

consciousness of the awful, irresistible domination of the ways of nature; they had no thought to give to the insignificant atom that was man.

Islamic dress too reflects this; black, covering the face, one uniform fits all, completely obscuring the human form. The veil hides the face and leaves behind only a uniform and the sense of control, submission; that there's no human being here everything's tight control belonging to G-d. The individual is lost. Irrelevant.

Finally, Greek architecture is the expression of men who were kept firmly within the visible world by their mind. The Greek temple is the expression of man's pure intellect over the world and nature.

No submission like Egypt. No metaphysical rising above the world like the Eastern Religions. Everything's pure simple straight – The man in control and nothing beyond. They build their temples on top of mountains overlooking seas implying control of the elements. No superhuman force is needed – you don't feel G-d around you – it's an expression of 'me.' 'It's who we human beings are – we're on top of everything.' The Parthenon is the home of humanity in the world at ease. Calm. Ordered. Sure of itself and the world.

Greek dress emphasizes the body – tight clothes trying to wake the sensual urges get the behema out. It's all what's here now. Reveal as much as you can make it as prost as you can, and why not when that's all there is...

Torah beauty is none of these. It's Hadar. Jewish beauty is like the moon to the sun – taking the light and reflecting it back to its source. You don't see me – you see my Tselem Elokim; you see grandeur – you see greatness – you see awesomeness – you see kavod. Jewish values and attitudes aim to express hiddur.

The Jewish sense of dress is also one of bekavod - showing that the person is mechabad. There's more here than what you see. Clothes aren't going to clash – they'll come together in a focus and show there's a unity that shows and connects to what I'm doing – a Shma Yisrael - Hashem Elokeinu - Hashem Echad. Hadar.

Chanukah candles are mehadrin min hamehadrin. Mehadrin from the root Hoder – 'go back' to Hashem. Stay connected to Hashem. Ha neiros halolu kodesh heim, ein lanu rishus lehishtamesh bohem ela lirosom bilvad. Why are we supposed to see them? *Kdei Lehodos ulehalel* – I re-recognize the whole physical world as just ruchnius. I turn it into spirituality into light and energy by allowing it to point our focus towards Hashem.

In our own homes and around the streets on Chanuka, we see the menorahs and the beautiful lights as they increase from day to day. But why are they beautiful? It's not just a candle – an oil lamp with a warm flame...it's a lantern illuminating the way to the Ribbono Shel Olam, Hakodosh Baruch Hu. It's what it represents that is the beauty. A Yid defines their beauty in how they connect us to Shomaim, and to Torah to the Ratson Hashem. It's because they speak and say; "because of the nissim and the purkan and the gevuros and the teshuos and the wars that You did for our fathers in those days in this period..."

Not the here and now of Greece, but always of Shomaim and Hashem – the reality and the need of the spiritual beyond the physical.

Ester is described as particularly beautiful, as יפת תאר וטובת מראה.

Yet, Esther was described as having a greenish complexion¹. Clearly, the Torah has a different view of what real beauty is; it is not simply a fine complexion or physical attractiveness. The Sages state that when Sarah was twenty years old she had the beauty of a seven year old. The very fact that the Sages should think of a seven year old as being more beautiful than a twenty year old should give us an hint that there is a different idea of beauty involved here. Clearly, the Sages did not mean that Sarah did not mature physically. It would also not be fitting for the Sages to comment on Esther's physical beauty. Did Shlomo HaMelech not declare, *Sheker HaChen VeHevel HaYofi*? The מהר"ל explains that we are comprised of a body and a soul. Sarah, at twenty, had reached perfection of the sort where there were no inconsistencies between her body and her soul. Her body therefore radiated a spiritual beauty² and was so pure that it simply acted as a prism which reflected her inner spirituality³.

Therefore, it is clear that there is a strong correlation between a woman's spirituality and her "beauty". In Megillah 15, the Sages pick out four women who were outstanding in their beauty: Sarah, Avigail, Rachav and Esther⁴. We have already shown what is meant by beauty in the case of Esther above. Clearly, all these women achieved a level of holiness whereby they literally shone with spirituality, with inner beauty.

Therefore:

ג מרחיבין דעתו של אדם ... ואשה נאה (ברכות נו:)

In addition to women's beauty is women's sexuality. This has to do with physical, external attributes. Women, who have a greater capacity for צניעות, generally are not physically attracted to men unless there is a prior emotional attachment. Men, whose capacity for צניעות is weaker, are attracted to strange women even at a distance. So sensitive is this attraction that women who have been condemned to be stoned are not stoned naked, unlike men (סנהדרין מה; סוטה פ"ג משי ז).

יפה = יפה, i.e. real beauty is when the י, which is other-worldly spirituality, is seen to be expressed in this world (the י is פה). This is precisely the woman's role in the world. She is the ה of this world which takes abstract קדושה and makes it manifest.⁵

¹ מגילה יג.

אסתר ירקרוקת היתה וחוט של חסד משוך עליה

² קול אליהו (גר"א) (ויצא ס' ל; בראשית כט יז):

ורחל היתה יפת תואר ויפת מראה - ... (ואע"פ שכתוב) שקר החן והבל היופי היינו כשהן בלתי יראת ד' ... אבל אשה יראת השם היא תתהלל ר"ל דגם החן והיופי תתהלל ...

³ גור אריה ריש פר' חיי שרה

בת עשרים כבת שבע ליופי וכו' ואם תאמר למה משבח אותה הכתוב ביופי והלא כתיב שקר החן וגו' ונראה לומר דקרא לא איירי ביופי רק מפני שהאדם הוא מחובר מב' חלקים מגוף ונפש והגיד לך הכתוב ששרה היתה שלימה בכל אלו הב' חלקים ולא היה בה חסרון אם שלימות הגוף ואם שלימות הנפש היתה שלימה בכל אלו השני חלקים ולא היה בה חסרון אם שלימות הגוף דהא בת כ' היתה כבת ז' ליופי והיופי הזה שהוא אינו לפי הטבע ולפי המנהג יורה על שהגוף הוא נקי והוא בהיר מבלי סיג וכמו שתמצא אצל משה רבינו לא כהתה עינו ולא נס ליחה שגם זה מורה בהירות הגוף ומה שהיתה בת כ' כבת כ' יורה על מעלת הנפש והנה היתה שלימה בכל

⁴ מגילה טו.

ד נשים יפיפיות היו בעולם שרה ואביגיל רחב ואסתר

⁵ Rabbi B. Gershenfeld



CHAPTER H: MODESTY AND SEXUALITY

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In A Return to Modesty - Discovering the Lost Virtue, Wendy Shalit makes the following points:

- i- The lack of modesty in Western Society is very directly linked to the sexual revolution;¹
- ii- Children are brainwashed to be sexually uninhibited from a very early age;
- iii- This destroys their ability to have happy, wholesome relationships later on. Even at a physical level, the sexual revolution has led to sexual unhappiness.

Here are some excerpts from the book (from the introduction and the first chapter):

"I did come to college and discover that in fact the feminists were not exaggerating. All around me, at the gym and in my classes, I saw stick-like women suffering from anorexia. Who could not feel for them? Or I would hop out to get a bagel at night and see a student I knew -- who must have weighed all of 70 pounds -- walk into our corner campus hangout, Colonial Pizza. Oh, good, I would think, she's finally going to eat. I would smile and try to give off see-isn't-eating-fun vibes. No, in fact she hadn't come to eat. Instead she mumbled weakly, looking like she was about to faint: 'Do you have any Diet Mountain Dew, please? I'm so tired...I have a paper, and I can't stay up because I'm so, so *tired*...I have a paper...and it's due tomorrow...any Diet Mountain Dew?' Then in the dining halls I would observe women eating sometimes ten times as much as I and then suddenly cutting off our conversation. Suddenly, um, they had to go, suddenly, um, they couldn't talk anymore. Until that moment I hadn't actually realized that some women really did make themselves throw up after bingeing.

"The bursting of my ideological bubble was complete when I began hearing stories of women raped, stories filled with much too much detail and sadness to be invented. The feminists were not exaggerating. The feminists were right. But what was going to happen to young women if the feminists were right? Was there a way out of this morass? I really couldn't see any.

"Then I started to hear about the mysterious *modestyniks*.

"A modestynik is my word for a modern single young woman raised in a secular home, who had hitherto seemed perfectly normal but who, inexplicably and without any prior notice, starts wearing very long skirts and issuing spontaneous announcements that she is now *shomer negiah*, which means that she isn't going to have physical contact with men before marriage, and that she is now dressing according to the standards of Jewish modesty. She is the type of woman who, when you hear about how she is living her life, might cause you to exclaim: 'Yikes! What's her problem?!' Hence, among those who do not know her, she is usually known as an *abusenik*, a woman you know has been abused, even though she insists she hasn't been. Otherwise, you figure, why would she be so weird?

"I first heard about these modestyniks from grandparents' pictures and hushed voices in the backseats of cars. In my freshman year I became friends with an elderly couple who had retired in our college town. It turned out that they knew my grandpa and grandma from way back, so I saw a lot of them between classes, when I would hear many funny stories about my grandparents. One night after dinner they brought out some pictures of one of their

¹Allan Bloom states: "young men were always supposed to be eager for immediate gratification, whereas young women, inspired by modesty, were supposed to resist it. It was modification or phasing out of female modesty that made the new arrangements possible." (The Closing of the American Mind, pg. 98)

granddaughters, and this turned out to be my formal introduction to the modestyniks. She and her husband were Orthodox Jews, they explained. Then they offered me the first picture -- of the granddaughter with her then-fiancé.

"What a curious picture. Although the blissfully betrothed were grinning very widely, unlike most engaged couples they didn't have their arms around each other. Here were a young, beautiful brunette and a tall and handsome man standing extremely close together, but they weren't touching each other at all. Indeed, if you looked at the picture closely, you could trace a thin blue line of sky between the two of them. How strange, I thought: If they didn't really *like* each other, then why in the world did they get married?

"Fortunately my friends spoke up. 'See,' said the grandfather, pointing at the photo, 'they observe the laws of *tzniut*.' I said, 'God bless you!' He said, 'No, I didn't sneeze: *tzniut* means modesty, they observe the Jewish laws of sexual modesty.'

"'Oh,' I said, a bit offended. For I was Jewish and I certainly didn't know about there being any Jewish modesty laws. I was a bit of a know-it-all, but about Judaism, I figured my parents were Jewish, I was Jewish, and I could recite a few blessings, if pressed. I even insisted on becoming a *Bat-Mitzvah* (subject to the commandments), in a ceremony at the Reform temple my parents belonged to, so there were official people who had actually *seen* me be Jewish once, and they had already given me their seal of authenticity. But no one had ever told me about any modesty laws.

"The second picture was of the wedding. This time the young couple wasn't looking at the camera but at each other. Specifically, he was gazing down at her and she up at him. Now they were embracing each other *very* tightly. Upon seeing this particular picture, I felt tears float up to my eyes. I hoped the next photo would arrive soon enough to distract me, but unfortunately it didn't quite, and I was left blubbing for an excruciating eight seconds. 'I don't know why I'm crying, I'm so embarrassed! I don't even *know* your granddaughter!' Somebody handed me a tissue, and then I was ready for the third and final picture.

"In this one the granddaughter was on the beach holding a little baby boy -- only now her modestynik smile was twinkling under the brim of a black straw hat. 'That's for the head covering' her grandma piped up proudly over my shoulder. 'A married woman cannot leave her hair uncovered.'

"That's how I learned that there are different stages in the life cycle of a modestynik. No Touching, Touching, then Hat. Okay, I figured, I could remember that. I made a mental picture, like that second-grade diagram which helps you remember how a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, and then I knew that I would never forget it. No Touching, Touching, Hat. Got it.

"Once I learned how to identify one modestynik, I started to see them all over the place. It seemed every Jewish family had one. And even if a person didn't happen to have a modestynik in his or her family, then at least they knew of one -- and more often than not, two or three.

"I picked up *New York* magazine, and they were writing about the modestyniks, too:

'A teacher of mine told me that if you touch before you're married, a curse is put on your children. But a blessing is given if you're careful,' says Chavie Moskowitz, a 20-year-old Touro College student from Borough Park, who with her straight red hair, chocolate-brown suit, and matching brown suede pumps looks more like a young Wall Street executive than like a God fearing bride-to-be. But on this moonlit Saturday night, standing on the outdoor esplanade of the Winter Garden, Chaim Singer, a 24-year-old yeshiva student from Kew Gardens Hills, proposes to Moskowitz, who, bouncing on her toes, gleefully accepts. Instead of embracing her fiancé, she blows him a kiss.

"All around me I started to hear, and read, about young women who were observing Jewish modesty law, not touching their boyfriends and suddenly sporting hats. And all with the same blue line of sky between them and their fiancés. All with the same modestynik twinkle at the end. It was like an epidemic.

"I was fascinated. First, because although I had certainly been touching my boyfriends, I wasn't -- how I wish there were a more elusive way of putting this -- having sexual intercourse with them.

"Though boyfriends would occasionally grumble about my 'hang-ups,' I never gave much thought to what I would come to know as my *sexual repression*. I just assumed it was my peculiar problem, something to be sorted through privately, something of which one is ashamed. When I began to hear about these women, though, I started to think that maybe my 'problem,' such as it was, was not a problem at all but about something else entirely, something that could even be valued. Could I have been a modestynik all along and not known it?

"Alas, I had to conclude that no, I couldn't be. I certainly wasn't shy or quiet, and that's what modesty really means, right? The whole women-should-be-seen-and-not-heard philosophy? That's what I associated it with. Furthermore, I didn't have any hats back in my dorm room. There were only two non-weather-related hats I had ever owned: a purple cone hat, from when I went trick-or-treating as a purple crayon, and a black cap with horns from when I sang the part of a little devil in a Lukas Foss opera. Somehow I didn't think those hats would count with whoever was in charge of the modestyniks.

"Nevertheless I was still fascinated, particularly with the way others would react to them. People around me were saying that these modestyniks were really abuseniks: this one was 'obviously very troubled,' and that one seemed to have a 'creepy' relationship with her father. Or the more poetic version, whispered in a sorrowful tone: 'She is turning herself into the kind of woman her father could never touch.' Or 'Maybe she just had a *Bad Experience*.' Either way, whatever her problem is, 'why doesn't the poor girl just get some counseling already, and then she won't take it all so seriously?'

"Now that I knew what was really going on with these modestyniks, I started to worry about them. All these women, and all sexually abused by their fathers! But that's also when I began to get suspicious. If all modestyniks were really abuseniks, I asked myself, then why were they so twinkly? Why did they seem so contented? Why were their wedding pictures so viscerally and mysteriously moving?

"I really became intrigued when I offhandedly mentioned my interest in the modestyniks to a middle-aged man at a cocktail party, and he screamed at me, turning almost blue: 'They're *sick*, I'm telling you! I've heard of them with their *not-touching*, and they're sick, *sick, sick*!' Someone later informed me that this man had been divorced three times.

"I began to perceive a direct relationship between how much one was floundering, sex-wise, and how irritated one was by the modestyniks. After all, if the modestynik is just one more abusenik, she is less threatening, clearly, and isn't that rather convenient, if the poor thing can only be pitied? There is a certain note of wistfulness in the resentment directed against the modestyniks.

"By now I have met many women, Jewish and non-Jewish, who grew up in fairly secular homes and have come to find modesty a compelling female ideal. Surely not *all* of them have been abused? They're all such different women. Some are daughters of divorce, others daughters of loving and stable families; some are liberal, others conservative; some are shy and clever, others not so shy or not so clever.

"So does the fact that such different personalities are drawn to one idea prove some common childhood trauma, or reflect the truth of the idea? I suppose it could be a childhood

trauma, but why do these women then have that undeniable glow about them that is absent, for instance, in our modern anorexic? Fundamentally, they do not seem to be missing anything for not having had a series of miserable romances under their belts. They seem happy. Is this, perhaps, what annoys people most?

"In her book Last Night in Paradise, Katie Roiphe devotes her final chapter to Beverly LaHaye, founder of the Christian group, Concerned Women for America. After interviewing Beverly LaHaye's press secretary, a young woman who has sworn off sex until marriage, Roiphe allows that she 'does have a certain glow,' one that 'resembles happiness,' but she concludes that *really* it owes to 'something more like delusion.' As for herself, she writes, she is 'infuriated' by this woman: 'I suddenly want to convert her more desperately than she wants to convert me.'

"Why? If one may freely cohabit these days, why can't one postpone sex? Why is sexual modesty so threatening to some that they can only respond to it with charges of abuse or delusion?

"After hearing hundreds of stories of self-mutilation from her adolescent-girl clients, psychologist Mary Pipher concludes that 'girls are having more trouble now than they had thirty years ago, when I was a girl, and more trouble than even ten years ago.' Indeed, 'Girls today are much more oppressed. They are coming of age in a more dangerous, sexualized and media-saturated culture.' And 'as they navigate a more dangerous world, girls are less protected.' She is a staunch feminist, but cannot help noticing that 'the sexual license of the 1990's inhibits some girls from having the appropriate sexual experiences they want and need.'

"Mary Pipher's only clients who have escaped the standard litany of self-mutilation and eating disorders are the girls who are not sexually active -- usually the ones who come from strict families with "paternalistic" fathers. 'Jody,' for instance, who is 16, comes from a tight-knit, fundamentalist family. Her mother stays home, and her father even insisted that Jody stop dating her boyfriend, Jeff, in tenth grade, fearing that she would have sex before marriage. Yet in spite of these restrictions which 'psychologists would condemn,' as Dr. Pipher puts it, Jody seems mysteriously happy. In fact, Jody is the happiest and most well adjusted of all her patients. Since Mary Pipher customarily assumes that paternalism is always oppressive, this observation causes her considerable cognitive dissonance:

I struggled with the questions this interview raised for me. Why would a girl raised in such an authoritarian, even sexist, family be so well liked, outgoing and self-confident? Why did she have less anger and more respect for adults? Why was she so relaxed when many girls are so angst-filled and angry?

"Maybe it's not so terrible, after all, to have someone feel he has a stake in your upbringing. A young woman is lucky, I think, if she has a "paternalistic" father -- it can only make her more self-confident. To me the truly abusive fathers are the neglectful ones who seem to feel no emotional stake in how their daughters live their lives. More than half of my friends have parents who are divorced, and some of them hardly see their fathers at all.

"But divorce is the least of the problems that have beset most young women of my age and generation. I was born in 1975, and from anorexia to date-rape, from our utter inability to feel safe on the streets to stories about stalking and stalkers, from teenage girls finding themselves miserably pregnant to women in their late 30s and early 40s finding procreation miserably difficult, this culture has not been kind to women. And it has not been kind to women at the very moment that it has directed an immense amount of social and political energy to 'curing' their problems.

"Why? Naomi Wolf writes in her most recent book that 'there are no good girls; we are all bad girls,' and that we all should just admit it and 'explore the shadow slut who walks

alongside us.' But for some of us, this is actually still an open question. We certainly feel the pressure and get the message that we are supposed to be bad -- we, after all, started our sex education in elementary school -- but when everyone is saying the same thing, it makes us wonder: isn't there anything more to life, to love? *No More 'Nice Girl,'* as Rosemary Agonito put it in 1993. But don't I have anything higher to be proud of as a woman other than my ability to be 'bad'?

"I thought again of the modestyniks, and about why they might be twinkling. Why would so many young women be adopting modesty as the new sexual virtue? I soon became inspired by the idea -- not as some old-fashioned ideal that could hypothetically solve some of the problems of women, but as one that could really help me understand *my* life. It explained, among other things, why I never cared for the advice given in most women's magazines and why I was uncomfortable with the coed bathrooms I encountered at college.

"As for the feminists, I want to invite them to consider whether the cause of all this unhappiness might be something other than the patriarchy. For here is the paradox: at Williams, as on so many other modern college campuses, where there was such a concentration of unhappy women, everything was as nonsexist as could be. We had 'Women's Pride Week,' we had 'Bisexual Visibility Week,' we were all living in coed dorms, and many of us even used coed bathrooms. We were as far from patriarchal rules as we could get. So if we were supposed to be living in nonsexist paradise, then why were many of us this miserable?

"Perhaps there is a difference between patriarchy and misogyny. Now that we have wiped our society clean of all traces of patriarchal rules and codes of conduct, we are finding that the hatred of women may be all the more in evidence. But why, exactly? I think we might have forgotten an important idea, lost our respect for a specific virtue.

"I propose that the woes besetting the modern young woman -- sexual harassment, stalking, rape, even 'whirlpooling' (when a group of guys surround a girl who is swimming and then sexually assault her) -- are all expressions of a society which has lost its respect for female modesty.

"We can no longer talk in terms of someone, say, defiling a virgin, so instead we punish the virgin for having any feelings at all. Nevertheless, although our ideology can expunge words from our vocabulary, the feelings remain and still cry out for someone to make sense of them. It is to restore this lost moral vocabulary of sex that I am writing this book. And then everyone can come out of the closet about how closeted he or she always wanted to be.

"Today modesty is commonly associated with sexual repression, with pretending that you don't want sex though you really do. But this is a misunderstanding, a cultural myth spun by a society which vastly underrates sexual sublimation. If you stop and think about it, you realize that without sublimation, we would have very few footnotes and probably none of the greatest works of Western art. Moreover, leaving aside the whole question of utility, when you haven't yet learned to separate your physical desires from your hopes and natural wonder at everything, the world is, in a very real sense, enchanted. Every conversation, every mundane act is imbued with potential because everything is colored with erotic meaning. Today, this stage in one's life -- when everything seems significant and you want to get it all 'exactly right' -- is thought to be childish, but is it really? Maybe instead of learning to overcome repression, we should be prolonging it.

"Many children these days know far too much too soon, and as a result they end up, in some fundamental way, not knowing -- stunted and cut off from all they could be. If you are not taught that you 'really' want just sex, you end up seeking much more. The peculiar way our culture tries to prevent young women from seeking more than 'just sex,' the way it

attempts to rid us of our romantic hopes or, variously, our embarrassment and our 'hang-ups,' is a very misguided effort. It is, I will argue, no less than an attempt to cure womanhood itself, and in many cases it has actually put us in danger.

"In 1993 more than 4,200 school-age girls reported to Seventeen magazine that 'they have been pinched, fondled or subjected to sexually suggestive remarks at school, most of them...both frequently and publicly.' Researchers from Wellesley College, following up on the magazine's survey, found 'that nearly two-fifths of the girls reported being sexually harassed daily and another 29 percent said they were harassed weekly. More than two-thirds said the harassment occurred in view of other people. Almost 90 percent were the target of unwanted sexual comments or gestures.' School officials do very little about this, the study also found. One 13-year-old girl from Pennsylvania told them: 'I have told teachers about this a number of times; each time nothing was done about it.'

"More recently, psychologist Mary Pipher reports in *Reviving Ophelia* that she is seeing an increasing number of girls who are 'school refusers,' girls who 'tell me they simply cannot face what happens to them at school.' One client, Pipher says, 'complained that boys slapped her behind and grabbed her breasts when she walked to her locker.' Then 'another wouldn't ride the school bus because boys teased her about oral sex.' Pipher concludes that the harassment that girls experience in the 1990s is 'much different in both quality and intensity' from the teasing she received as a girl in the late fifties.

"When I was in college, a mother who owned the local deli persistently brought up in conversation how much her daughter was being sexually taunted by the boys at her school. The girl couldn't even concentrate on her homework when she was at home: all she did was dread returning to school. The mother was visibly distraught. She grew up in the fifties, she told me, and 'this kind of thing never happened to us. Sure, the boys would flirt and tease us, but they were shy and nervous about it. They never ganged up on the girls like this. I'd never heard of a bunch of guys assaulting a girl verbally and physically.'

"For some reason, no one connects this kind of harassment and early sex education. But to me the connection was obvious from the start, because the boys never teased me -- they assumed I didn't know what they were referring to. Whenever they would start to tease me, they always stopped when I gave them a confused look and said, 'I have no idea what you guys are talking about. I was in the library.' Even though I usually did know what they were talking about, the line still worked, and they would be almost apologetic: 'Oh, right -- you're the weirdo who always goes to the library.' And they would pass me by and begin to torture the next girl, who they knew had been in class with them and could appreciate all the new put-downs they had learned.

"All across North America, sex educators are doling out such ammunition under the banner of enlightenment. Sex education instructors in Massachusetts, New York, and Toronto teach the kids 'Condom Line-Up,' where boys and girls are given pieces of cardboard to describe sex ... and then all the kids have to arrange themselves in the proper sequence. New Jersey's Family Life program begins its instruction about birth control, masturbation, abortion, and puberty in kindergarten. Ten years ago, when the program was first instituted, there was some discomfort because according to the coordinator of the program, Claire Scholz, 'some of our kindergarten teachers were shy -- they didn't like talking about scrotums and vulvas.' But in time, she reports, 'they tell me it's no different from talking about an elbow.' In another sex-ed class in Colorado, all the girls were told to pick a boy in the class and practice putting a condom on his finger. Schools in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, get a head start on AIDS instruction, teaching it in second grade, four years earlier than state requirements. In Orange County, Florida, second graders are taught about birth, death and drug abuse, and sixth graders role-play appropriate ways of showing affection. 'I think that's

too young,' said one parent, Steve Smith. He would prefer his kids to 'be learning about reading and writing.' New York City Board of Education guidelines instruct that kindergartners are to be taught 'the difference between transmissible and non-transmissible diseases; the terms HIV and AIDS; [and] that AIDS is hard to get.' This, we are informed, fulfills 'New York State Learner Outcomes: 1,2.'

"And yet, as they confidently promote all this early sex education, our school officials are at a loss when it comes to dealing with the new problem of sodomy-on-the-playground. It's hard to keep up with all the sexual assault cases that plague our public schools in any given month. Take just one reported in the New York Daily News in 1997:

'Four Bronx boys -- the oldest only 9 -- ganged up on a 9-year-old classmate and sexually assaulted her in a schoolyard, police charged yesterday...[The girl's mother] said she is furious with Principal Anthony Padilla, who yesterday told parents the attack never happened....The girl's parents and sisters are also outraged that when the traumatized third-grader told a teacher, she was merely advised to wash out her mouth and was given a towel wipe.'

"The associative link between the disenchanting of sex and increased sexual brutality among children works like this: if our children are raised to believe, in the words of that New Jersey kindergarten teacher, that talking about the most private things is 'no different from talking about an elbow,' then they are that much more likely to see nothing wrong in certain kinds of sexual violence. What's really so terrible, after all, in making someone touch or kiss your elbow?

"[In] my old elementary school ... [sex education] started in kindergarten as part of the personal hygiene unit, but in fourth grade someone is brought in from the outside.

"At my school sex education was given in kindergarten to ninth grade, but I was excused from fourth grade on. The first time I was conscious of any real sexual desire was the summer after ninth grade, about age fourteen or so. One shouldn't extrapolate from my own case, which may be abnormal, but generally speaking I'm struck by the way my generation's sex education ended around the time that natural desire usually begins. I guess the theory is that this way we know everything before we start, and can do it properly, but I think what happens instead is that we end up starting before we feel, because we think it's expected of us. Usually when adults start shoving condoms in our faces, we would much prefer to giggle.

"A 23-year-old friend of mine recently reported the following story about his younger sister:

'My 13-year-old sister went to the family doctor for a checkup. He's been our doctor for a good eight years. Not particularly bright, but good for a referral. At the end of the examination he says, "If you're sexually active, you should be using condoms." And he offers her some. Upon hearing the word "sexually," my sister burst out laughing. This annoyed the physician, who felt she wasn't taking her reproductive health seriously. He began chastising her, at which point my grandmother came in -- at which point all hell broke loose.' "

Becoming Embarrassed

"Even though we live in an age that prides itself on being beyond gender role stereotyping, young girls are still the experts on embarrassment. Everyone tells us not to be self-conscious, but we always are. It's as if the world's embarrassment passed through us, from generation to generation. It's as if girls had some special responsibility to keep

embarrassment alive and also to teach others how to diffuse it. There's also a blush for a million other things. *American Girl* magazine was fielding so many questions about embarrassment in 1997 that it eventually had to come out with a whole book (Oops!) on the subject, to advise girls on how to deal with it. ...

"Today, embarrassment is something to 'overcome,' but maybe if so many girls are still embarrassed, even in an age when we're not supposed to be, maybe we have our embarrassment for a reason. ...

"Children now are urged to overcome their 'inhibitions' before they have a clue what an inhibition means. Yet embarrassment is actually a wonderful thing, signaling that something very strange or very significant is going on, that some boundary is being threatened -- either by you or by others. Without embarrassment, kids are weaker: more vulnerable to pregnancy, disease, and heartbreak."

Failing to take responsibility for your sexuality

"If 'overcoming your embarrassment' is the first mantra of sex education, 'taking responsibility for your sexuality' is the second. The health guidelines for the ninth grade in the Newton, Massachusetts, public schools, printed in the *Student Workbook for Sexuality and Health*, inform us that not only do 'Sexually Healthy Adolescents...decide what is personally 'right' and act on these values,' but also they 'take responsibility for their own behavior.' Grown-ups get the same advice. 'What does undermine feminism is women...refusing to take responsibility for their sexuality,' says Karen Lehrman. 'Every woman must take personal responsibility for her sexuality,' warns Camille Paglia.

"Fine, but if you're a child, you're not sure what taking responsibility for your sexuality entails. I certainly didn't want *not* to be taking responsibility for something, whatever it was. I thought I knew what they meant. It's like when you steal a cookie from the cookie jar, and then you've got to face up to it, take responsibility for it. I got the impression that somehow I had done something wrong, that the reckoning was going to come soon and so I would have to know what to apologize for.

"In 1997 Alexander Sanger, president of Planned Parenthood of New York City, penned an Op-Ed in the *New York Daily News*, 'Sex Ed Is More Than Just Saying No: Teens Need All the Facts.' Contends Sanger, 'In a perfect world, teenagers would wait until they're older and wiser to have sex. But the fact is, 75% of American teens have sex before high school graduation. In New York, more than 54,000 teens, ages 15 to 19, become pregnant each year. 'Therefore,' he concludes, 'teens need all the facts.'

"Where does he think all this high school sex and all these pregnancies are suddenly coming from? Doesn't he find it even a *bit* curious that the more we do what he prescribes the more such behavior goes on? Most studies find that knowledge about AIDS or HIV does not decrease risky behavior. A 1988 study in the *American Journal of Public Health*, which examined exactly the year when public health information about AIDS grew, found that no increased condom use among San Francisco's sexually active adolescents resulted. A 1992 study in *Pediatrics* conducted a broader investigation and ended up warning, 'It is time to stop kidding ourselves into thinking that our information-based preventative actions are enough or are effective.' This shouldn't be so surprising. The few studies that show that instruction on condom use changes the behavior of students conclude it is only likely to make them more sexually active. This cult of taking responsibility for your sexuality is essentially a call to action.

"But beyond this, how does Alexander Sanger imagine he was born if his parents were never given 'the facts'? I am sure he intends no harm, but the ground in dispute was

never *whether* we would get the facts -- the question is how and when. Do we get the opportunity to seek out the facts when we are ready? Furtively? Or do we have them forced upon us when we're not ready, when we're inclined to yawn about the whole thing and conclude it's no big deal? It's really not very complicated why so many kids are getting pregnant these days, now that we have so much sex education on top of a wholly sexualized culture. It's because sex is not a big deal to them and because they think this is what they are expected to do. They are just trying to be normal kids, to please people like Alexander Sanger and prove that they are 'sexually healthy.'

"Anyone who's been through the mill of my generation's sex education has trouble understanding why I'm concerned about the things I'm concerned with -- indeed, to have my kind of concerns, I'm told, is 'unhealthy' -- and I for my part cannot understand how they can be so *unconcerned*, so cavalier. When I hear the words that they use, 'hang-ups,' 'hook-ups,' 'check-ups,' for example, it's as if we lived in different worlds."

WOMEN'S ISSUES -APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: WESTERN REALITIES AND VIEWS OF FAMILY

i- Relationships: Pre-Modern era

ii- Women and work

APPENDIX A: WESTERN REALITIES AND VIEWS OF FAMILY

i- Relationships: Pre-Modern era

Louis Stevenson: In the late 19th century, college students met the opposite sex most often in settings governed by convention. Male-initiated dating had not yet taken hold, and among the middle class relationships still developed under the watchful eyes of relatives in parlor settings. Then at college the informal and regular contact of men and women in classes and campus activities called forth new codes of behavior and visions of the opposite sex." Relationships became much more short-lived, casual and permissive. (Reviewing Lynn D. Gordon's *Gender in the Higher Education in the Progressive Era* in *Science*, May 17, 1991)

ii- Women and work

A CBS News survey Sep. 1997:

For the first time since the early 80's more women say they would rather work outside the home than inside, and more than half the women felt they were pursuing careers rather than jobs. Most women felt that working women made worse mothers (while most men felt that it made no difference).

Adapted from an article by PAUL STARR in the NY Times, February, 11, 2001 (book review of *The Price of Motherhood* by Ann Crittenden):

As Ann Crittenden argues in her powerful and important new book, the choice to become a mother in America today imposes enormous costs on most women, including lower incomes and higher risks of poverty than men or childless women face.

The failure of our institutions to make systematic provision for bearing and raising children means that not only do women's incomes fall just when their family's costs increase; the interruptions to their careers also reduce their lifetime earnings and savings. Even more than sex discrimination, this "mommy tax," as Crittenden calls it, exposes women to higher risks of poverty in old age or in the event of divorce.

Those risks are aggravated by the built-in bias of law and policy toward paid employment.

Unpaid work in the home does not count toward Social Security pensions, nor does it qualify for disability or survivor benefits. In a marriage, whoever earns the paycheck has the right to it. Astonishingly, now that alimony has nearly disappeared, a woman who faces divorce after raising children rarely gets consideration in the settlement for the loss to her earning capacity.

Despite all the customary praise of mothers, the devaluation of their work is deeply entrenched in our thought and institutions. It's not just a matter of casual remarks implying that women who stay home with the kids aren't working. When our official economic statistics add up the goods and services in the economy, they leave out the unpaid services performed inside the household. Mothers at home are, by definition, unproductive, even though by educating and socializing their children they contribute to the human capital that is critical to economic growth. And because their work isn't quantified, they disappear from pictures of the economy that are drawn with the data.

Unlike their mothers, who typically had children first and took paid jobs later if at all, women who came of age in the 1960's and afterward have generally established their careers first and then had babies. This sequence raises the perceived "mommy tax," and it highlights the failure of employers and government to accommodate the demands of child-rearing. Compared with the European societies that offer paid maternity leave of up to a year (with benefits based on prior earnings) as well as child benefits (cash payments per child not contingent on poverty), America has not done much to spread the costs of motherhood. Nor have we made systematic provision for part-time work and career paths that allow taking time out for motherhood.

No major group any longer seriously contests the right of women to pursue higher education and careers. Many argue, however, that if women then decide to have children, they do so voluntarily, and if they have to give something up, that is their own choice. But raising children is not just another form of personal satisfaction; the flourishing of the entire society depends upon the willingness to undertake it. And for that choice women should not have to pay the price of social marginalization and diminished economic security.

APPENDIX B: FEMINIST MOVEMENT

i- Radical Earlier Views (60's & 70's)

ii- Causes

iii- Later, milder views (mid to late 80's)

iv- 3rd wave, pro-women views (90's)

APPENDIX B: FEMINIST MOVEMENT

Introduction

The idea that women band together in order to fill needs or to achieve things for women is in and of itself a noble and worthy thing. Every religious neighborhood has its *Neshe*. The idea of doing this on a broader scale, creating a women's movement, is testimony to the leadership and togetherness of these women. Of course, any movement has to be measured against the worthiness of its goals. When it comes to the broader women's movement agenda (as opposed to the Orthodox women's movement), these too have, in the main, been issues, which Judaism was in total agreement of, especially in more recent decades.

In fact, there have been similar attempts to establish men's movements based on similar lines. Nor is the movement concerned with the quotidian lives of men in relation to their lovers and families. It is not about taking paternity leave, taking out the garbage or letting one's partner come first. The movement looks inward. It seeks to resolve the spiritual crisis of the American man, a sex that paradoxically dominates the prison population as overwhelmingly as it does the United States Senate. "The women's movement has made tremendous strides in providing a place for the women in the world," says Eric McCollum, who teaches family therapy at Purdue. "The men's movement is going to provide a place for men in the heart."

Lima was a fairly representative men's movement man: white collar, in his 30s and divorced. He had few male friends with whom he shared anything deeper than a beer. Elaborate rituals have been devised to help men overcome the cultural taboo against revealing emotions. Men's groups typically set aside a special time for members to talk about their feelings. Many have found it necessary to outlaw diversionary topics such as sports, politics and cars.

Courter says his work "is directed toward helping us become better human beings instead of better human doings." For many informal men's groups communication is the end in itself, communication not only with each other but also with family members. The average father, according to statistics from the Family Research Council, spends just under eight minutes a day in direct conversation with his children, and roughly half of that if his wife also works outside the home.

Some men have rebelled against the idea of becoming "Success objects" valued only for their salaries—a complementary form of oppression to that which values women only as "sex objects."

So, men are victimized by nothing less than industrial civilization, which has stolen the father from the home, alienated man from nature, and forced him into a suit and tie so that he can run the country. Not to speak of all the men who also have to wear suits and ties and never get to run anything more important than a county sales-tax office. No wonder men are rebelling. No wonder one form the rebellion takes is the "Wild Man" retreat, in which men who ordinarily might not know which end of an ax to grasp live out a fantasy of aboriginal frolic, confined to a weekend and purged of any practices that might offend contemporary sensibilities, such as ritual mutilation or chemical intoxicants.

So too, women's movements can be positive. It is the radicalization of some of these attempts which render them unhelpful at best and potentially very distorting.

At the recent annual conference in Boston of the Association for Jewish Studies, 34 papers, or approximately one-fifth of the total, were on women's feminist issues. There were

14 on Bible; 10 on Zionism and Israel. Despite the obvious significance of women in Jewish history and culture, this almost comical tipping of the balance shows how powerfully and quickly ideological feminism has taken hold of the relatively new field of Jewish studies.

...Reflecting the ideological emphasis on victimization in modern feminism as a whole.¹

i-Radical Earlier Views (60's & 70's)²

The family prevents women from attaining autonomy.

It prevents the individual from expressing his/her individuality and clashes with the American ideology of individualism. Betty Freidan stated that women should turn from being other-directed to being self-directed and self-reliant. Self love became the psychotherapists' norm for defining someone emotionally well-balanced.

The focus turns to rights rather than duties. A plethora of books on self-fulfillment. The consumer generation of instant self-gratification.

The peer group should replace the family as the nexus of relations (Robert Ardrey - The Social Contract).

Simone de Beauvoir (The Second Sex) - Marriage is a form of enslavement. "We don't believe that any woman should have this choice (of staying at home and bringing up children). No woman should be authorized to stay at home to raise her children. Society should be totally different. Women should not have that choice, precisely because if there is such a choice, too many women will make that one." She regarded the woman's body as burdensome and repugnant. (Dialogue with Betty Freidan in Saturday Review, June 14, 75)

¹The Jerusalem Report, Jan. 9, 1992, The Feminist Mystery, by Ruth R. Wisse

²In Our Time Memoir of a Revolution (Dial Books, 1999), Susan Brown Miller described the birth of the women's liberation movement as follows:

Of the thousand or so white volunteers who joined the southern civil rights struggle during the mid-sixties, at least half, including myself, were women. Many of us went on to found—or to play a major role in—the Women's Liberation Movement a few years later. History seldom offers parallels this tidy, but as it happened, many of the female abolitionists of the nineteenth century had gone on to organize for women's suffrage. These two vivid epochs were separated by more than a century, yet nearly identical forces applied. After fighting alongside men in a radical movement to correct a grievous wrong, the women then woke up and wondered, "What about us?"

Political organizers understand that the important thing about action is reaction. There you are, taking a stand, struggling to express a new idea, and the response is so powerful—positive or negative—that it reverberates into new responses and reactions, especially in you.

Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were part of the American delegation that traveled to London in 1840 for a World Anti-Slavery Convention. As the high-minded congress got under way, the male abolitionists voted not to accredit and seat the women. For ten days Mott and Stanton watched the proceedings from the visitors' gallery, where in mortification and anger they hatched the idea for a women's rights congress that became the historic Seneca Falls Convention of 1848.

White women in the civil rights movement during the 1960s were also consumed by a vision of equality, one that seemed important enough to risk our lives for. (And one white woman, Viola Liuzzo, did in fact lose her life to a sniper on the Selma-to-Montgomery March.) [The Women's Liberation Movement was born in part by the continuous expressions of second-class status which many of the males expressed towards us during those historical years.]

Shulamit Firestone: The biological structure of father, mother and child was the root of all oppression and created a "power psychology" which threatened all of humanity. Marriage only reinforced male hegemony. Firestone desired the negation of woman's biology and of the child-bearing and child-rearing roles to end the suffering inflicted upon women by a biologically based tyranny. Babies should be manufactured artificially and tended by the state. Raising a child is tantamount to retarding its development.

Similar statements were made by Betty Freidan (the Feminine Mystique), Juliet Mitchell and Phyllis Chesler who, in *Women and Madness*, called for artificial wombs.

The freedom that these women wanted was freedom from being a woman, from their oppressive biological reality. To be free, woman had to become as man-like as possible.

(All quotes except Robert Ardrey are quoted by Michael Kaufman in an unpublished manuscript on Feminism and Judaism.)

ii- Causes

The feminist movement made self-fulfillment the goal instead of the product. Judaism, on the other hands, holds that עולם חסד יבנה, if I give to others as an end in and of itself, the result will be that I will feel satisfied. This is the basis for marriage. In contrast, Germaine Greer urged women to abandon their homes, husbands, and children in order to pursue their own needs and desires.

Laurel Limpus: The American family was the root of all evil.

Other causes:

(Quoted from Allan Carlson, *On Parents, Children and the Nation-State*, in *Whose Values*, edited by Carl Horn)

The New Left:

The family based on male supremacy and property rights is a tool of capitalism. Motherhood is simply reproduction of the future commodity of labor.

"The institution of the family, is inherently reactionary, and helps to maintain the capitalist system. The family...is oppressive to its members...Each nuclear family...weakens the class consciousness of the workers."

Pushed an agenda of collective child-rearing.

The Sexual Liberation

Development and free availability of oral contraception.

Stress by Alfred Kinsey, Masters and Johnson and others not on physical relationship as part of broader relationship. Rather, stress on physiological release and physical health separation of emotional maturity from physiological readiness.

Drastic change in values projected by and acceptable limits of entertainment industry.

Minorities and Gays

Both saw attacking the "white, middle class" family as a way of furthering their own agendas.

Fears of Over-Population

John D. Rockefeller III (Presidents Panel on Population, 1965): Population stabilization, a necessary means to the enhancement and enrichment of human life.

Similar committee in 1968 urged government to get more involved in population control.

1969- Pres. Richard Nixon called on all Americans to respond rapidly to the population crisis.

1972- Congress appointed commission- Suggested a comprehensive program of fertility and population control; abortion, sterilization and contraceptive services to be made available to all Americans, including minors without the consent of parents. Federal money supports campaigns showing the horrors of too many children and the beauties of child-free relationships; Roe vs. Wade.

Taxation: Between 1960 -1984, single persons and married, childless couples faced essentially the same taxation rate.

With 2 children - 43% increase; 4 children -223%

Scholarship

Sociologists, psychologists, family experts, social workers and family counselors overwhelmingly supported the idea of legitimacy of varying forms of relationships (not the breakup of the family, rather diversity and pluralism): nuclear families, single parent, communal, group marriage, homosexual (e.g. Forum 14 of White House Conference on Children and Youth, 1970; Groves Conference on Marriage and the Family 1970, 1971; 1976 White House Conference on Families, relabeled from on the American Family; 1980, White House Research Forum)

iii- Later, milder views (mid-to-late 80's)

Many who had deferred childhood and now wanted a baby found that they were too old (Ann Taylor Fleming, Motherhood Deferred, 1994).

Time tells of a 39-year-old highly successful professional woman who confronted Gloria Steinem, "Why didn't you tell us it was going to be like this?" Steinem replied, "Well, we didn't know."

Betty Freidan, in The Second Stage, began to backtrack.

(All quoted in Michael Kaufman's unpublished manuscript.)

iv- 3rd wave, pro-women views (90's)

Stress again on uniqueness and often the superiority of women. Stress the legitimacy of motherhood and that pursuing a career can conflict with that.

Emma Goldman (The Tragedy of Women's Emancipation) - The women's movement violated the original aims of liberating women because it robbed her of the fountain springs of that happiness which was so essential to her: love, children and family.

Women are group-oriented and caring, men are individualistic and selfish. Women are superior in nurturance, beauty, interdependence, tenderness.

(Quoted in Michael Kaufman's unpublished manuscript)

Betty Freidan in Newsweek, Sep. 4 '95: Recognized 'angry White backlash' - requires new vision of community that includes men and women. Cannot counter hatred of women with hatred of men.

Issues of inequality in the marketplace were not so much of overall representation and equal pay for equal work. Now the focus became on representation in the upper echelons of management as well as in the political arena. This was especially true in Europe¹.

¹France Looks for More Women in Politics

Modified from a NY Times headline, February, 4th, 2001 By SUZANNE DALEY:

Until now women across France had remained at the fringe of politics, believing that they were not really welcome in an overwhelmingly male club. But a law was passed last year in France that appears to go further than any other in the world in attempting to share representation more evenly between men and women.

Starting with municipal elections scheduled in March, the new law obliges all political parties to field an equal number of male and female candidates in almost all elections.

"I know one woman who was asked by three different parties to be on their list," said Valerie Pau.

Right now, 7 percent of France's mayors and almost 9 percent of its national legislators are women. That is roughly comparable with the United States, where 13 percent of senators are women, but far behind the 45 percent of Sweden's legislators who are women.

It is not proving easy to level the political playing field. Parties say they have had to scour the countryside to find women willing to be candidates; few have come forward on their own. And even when asked to serve, many women demur, questioning whether they have the time and the competence to enter a field they regard as a male battleground.

Some also question the sincerity of the process.

"Everyone is being asked," said Ms. Pau, a 42-year-old secretary and union worker who is planning to make her first foray into politics running for office in the nearby town of Brest. "But in a lot of cases," she added, "they don't really know us. They don't want us to say anything. Really, they just want us to be quiet and sit on their lists."

Even as the parties struggle to find thousands of women to be candidates, and to smooth the ruffled feathers of the men who must step aside, the debate rages about whether France's new parity law amounts to too much, too fast.

Some fear that the women swept into office will be mere figureheads or the wives of former officials, taking up space but offering little value.

But others say that the law will not only bring justice but also the fresh faces that French politics desperately needs. For decades here, politics has been dominated by the same men, almost all of whom are graduates of the same college.

Most everyone agrees that the speed of the transition is jolting.

"There is no question that this is a brutal arrival for women," said Jean-Claude Kaufmann, a sociologist at the National Center for Scientific Research based in Rennes. "In one fell swoop, the numbers will be huge," he said. "And they will really have to prove themselves because people will be watching."

The birth of the parity law was not easy. First seriously discussed in the early 1990's, it engendered fierce opposition, even from some feminists who said that quotas of any kind were demeaning to women.

But since the passage of the law — championed by the Socialist prime minister, Lionel Jospin, and his wife, Sylviane Agacinski, a professor — the idea has steadily grown in popularity. These days a majority of French citizens believe it to be a good thing. In one recent poll, 63 percent of those surveyed said that the parity law meant that French voters would get a better choice of candidates, and that the law would bring about better governance.

Sixty-five percent said they wanted a woman elected mayor in their town in 2001.

Most European countries have made substantial efforts in the last decade to raise awareness on the issue and many have moved much faster than France, which only gave women the right to vote in 1944. On average the percentage of women in European legislatures is about 20 percent. But there are considerable differences among the countries.

Several European countries have flirted with the concept of quotas for women in elected office but most have given up the idea, usually for constitutional reasons.

In addition to France, only Belgium currently has a quota for the candidate list; political parties there are required to fill one-third of their lists with women. In several countries including Spain, Austria and Germany, however, political parties have put quotas on themselves.

Other countries have developed an array of incentives such as financing to promote women's participation and watchdog groups to make sure women do enter politics. The impact women might have once in office is also widely discussed. More than 80 percent of people responding expected

In Sep. 1997, a CBS News poll of 1051 recorded that fewer and fewer women were willing to call themselves feminists (slightly more than 20%). The number of women who consider feminist to be an insult has increased since 1992, while the number of those who think it is a compliment has been cut by half.

In the year 2000, a poll polling matters of concern to women showed that they were most concerned about inequities in pay between men and women, workplace discrimination, the amount of resources being committed to the fight against breast cancer, the availability of reliable child-care options, violence against women, paid medical leave for new parents and the effort to shore up Social Security and the cost and availability of health coverage.

John Leo wrote in U.S. News & World Report, July 17, 2000, *Will Boys be Boys?*:

Teachers know that girls are better suited to schooling. So if you want to teach boys, allowances must be made. One of the tragedies of the last 20 years or so is that school systems are increasingly unwilling to make those allowances. Instead, in the wake of the feminist movement, they have absorbed anti-male attitudes almost without controversy. They are now more likely to see ordinary boy behavior as something dangerous that must be reined in. Or they may tighten the screws on boys by drafting extraordinarily broad zero-tolerance and sexual-harassment policies. Worse, they may simply decide that the most active boys are suffering from attention deficit disorder and dope them up with Ritalin.

Two straws in the wind: four kindergarten boys in New Jersey were suspended from school for playing cops and robbers at recess with “guns” (their hands, with one finger pointed out). Teasing, ridicule, and making unflattering remarks are now listed as sexual harassment violations for 4-year-olds and up in public schools in Manhattan’s Chelsea neighborhood.

Boys are good. “It’s a bad time to be a boy in America,” Christina Hoff Sommers says in her important new book, *The War Against Boys*. “We are turning against boys,” she writes. “Boys need discipline, respect, and moral guidance...They do not need to be pathologized.” Sommers’ book is packed with examples of the anti-male attitudes that pervade the public schools. At University High School in Pacific Heights, Calif., boys must sit quietly through a “Women’s Assembly,” in which women are celebrated and men are blamed. Boys in one San Francisco class are regularly put through feminist paces—made to enjoy quilting and forced to listen as girls vent their anger at males. When Barbara Wilder-Smith, a teacher and researcher in the Boston Area, made “Boys Are Good” T-shirts for her class, all 10 female teachers under her supervision all strongly objected to the message. One of the 10 was wearing a button saying “So many men, so little intelligence.” Some schools use the Bem Androgyny Scale—named for feminist psychologist Sandra Bem—to measure success in getting rid of those pesky masculine traits in boys.

In his book *The Decline of Males*, anthropologist Lionel Tiger says women have taken charge of the public dialogue on gender and decisively bent it to their advantage. That

improvement in education for young children, social services and health issues. Nearly 60 percent thought women would bring improvement to the running of the economy, transportation systems and sports.

On the whole, it is France's left that has done the most to promote women's participation in civic life in the last few years. Even before it was law, the Socialists devised their own quotas for women during the most recent European and legislative elections.

The socialist government brought in several new laws, including one allowing morning-after pills to be distributed in schools as well as the creation of the *pacte civil de solidarit*, a new form of legal union for heterosexual or homosexual partners

is certainly true of dialogue about the schools. We spent most of the 1990s fretting about bogus research claiming that the schools were shortchanging and damaging girls when the truth is that boys are the ones in trouble.

Boys are much more likely than girls to have problems with schoolwork, repeat a grade, get suspended, and develop learning difficulties. In some schools, boys account for up to three fourths of the special education classes. They are five times more likely than girls to commit suicide and four to nine times more likely to be drugged with Ritalin. Student polls show that both girls and boys say their teachers like the girls more and punish the boys more often.

Girls get better grades than boys, take more rigorous courses, and now attend college in much greater numbers. While the traditional advantage of boys over girls in math and science has narrowed (girls take at least as many upper-level math courses as boys and more biology and chemistry), the advantage of girls over boys in reading and writing is large and stable. In writing achievement, 11th-grade boys score at the level of eighth-grade girls. The Department of Education reported this year: “There is evidence that the female advantage in school performance is real and persistent.”

The school failure of so many boys, magnified and fanned by anti-male hostility, is a severe social problem. Women now account for 56 percent of American college students and the male-female gap is still widening. It is 60-40 in Canada and 63-37 among American blacks. These numbers, always overlooked in media laments about “under-representation,” have several ominous implications. One is for much more fatherless-ness. College women who can’t find college-educated mates won’t marry down—they will likely just have their babies alone.

It’s time to discuss some remedies, including vouchers, single-sex schools, and programs targeted at specific problems of boys. Save the males.

v-Women & Work

Executive Women and the Myth of Having It All, By Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Harvard Business Review April 2002:

...Successful career women in the United States do not have children. 33% of such women (business executives, doctors, lawyers, academics, and the like) in the 41-55 age bracket are childless – and that figure rises to 42% in corporate America. These women have not chosen to remain childless. The vast majority, in fact, yearn for children. Indeed, some have gone to extraordinary lengths to bring a baby into their lives. They subject themselves to complex medical procedures, shell out tens of thousand of dollars, and derail their careers – mostly to no avail, because these efforts come too late. In the words of one senior manager, the typical high-achieving woman childless at midlife has not made a choice but a “creeping non-choice.”

...High achievers (...\$55,000 in the younger group, \$65,000 in the older one) and ultra-achievers (those who are earning more than \$100,000).

...79% of the men ... wanting children – and 75% have them. ...Generally speaking, the more successful the man, the more likely he will find a spouse and become a father. The opposite holds true for women, and the disparity is particularly striking among corporate ultra-achievers. In fact, 49% of these women are childless. But a mere 19% of their male colleagues are.

...Only 60% of high-achieving women in the older age group are married, and this figure falls to 57% in corporate America. By contrast, 76% of older men are married, and this figure rises to 83% among ultra-achievers.

...Most successful men are not interested in acquiring an ambitious peer as a partner.

...Only 39% of high-achieving men are married to women who are employed full time, and 40% of these spouses earn less than \$35,000 a year. Meanwhile, nine out of ten married women in the high-achieving category have husbands who are employed full time or self-employed, and a quarter are married to men who earn more than \$100,000 a year. Clearly, successful women professionals have slim pickings in the marriage department,¹ particularly as they age. Professional men seeking to marry typically reach into a large pool of younger women, while professional women are limited to a shrinking pool of eligible peers. According to U.S. Census Bureau data, at age 28 there are four college-educated, single men for every three college-educated, single women. A decade later, the situation is radically changed. At age 38, there is one man for every three women.

...Now add to that scarcity of marriage candidates a scarcity of time to spend nurturing those relationships. ...Twenty-nine percent of high achievers and 34% of ultra-achievers work more than 50 hours a week .. the percentage of women working at least 50 hours a week is now higher in the United States than in any other country.

Think of what a 55-hour week means in terms of work-life balance. If you assume an hour lunch and a 45 minute round-trip commute (the national average), the workday stretches to almost 13 hours. Even without “extras” (out-of-town trips, client dinners, work functions), this kind of schedule makes it extremely difficult for any professional to maintain a relationship.

...In France, women earn 81% of the male wage, in Sweden 84%, and in Australia 88%, while in the United States, women continue to earn a mere 78% of the male wage. ...Only a small portion of this wage gap can be attributed to discrimination. ...An increasingly large part of the wage gap can now be explained by childbearing and child rearing,² which interrupt women’s – but not men’s – careers, permanently depressing their

¹John Schwartz of The New York Times made the trend official in 2004 when he reported: "Men would rather marry their secretaries than their bosses, and evolution may be to blame." A study by psychology researchers at the University of Michigan, using college undergraduates, suggested that men going for long-term relationships would rather marry women in subordinate jobs than women who are supervisors. Men think that women with important jobs are more likely to cheat on them. There it is, right in the DNA: women get penalized by insecure men for being too independent. Hewlett quantified, yet again, that men have an unfair advantage. "Nowadays," she said, "the rule of thumb seems to be that the more successful the woman, the less likely it is she will find a husband or bear a child. For men, the reverse is true."

²John Leo, *Of Men, Women, and Money*. U.S. News & World Report, March 21, 2005: ...A new book, *Why Men Earn More* by Warren Farrell... examining a broad array of wage statistics. His conclusion: When reasonable adjustments are made, women earn just as much as men, and sometimes more. ... Never-married, college-educated males who work full time make only 85 percent of what comparable women earn. Female pay exceeds male pay in more than 80 different fields, 39 of them large fields that offer good jobs, like financial analyst, engineering manager, sales engineer, statistician, surveying and mapping technicians, agricultural and food scientists, and aerospace engineer. A female investment banker's starting salary is 116 percent of a male's. Part-time female workers make \$1.10 for every \$1 earned by part-time males. Surprisingly, Farrell argues that comparable males and females have been earning similar salaries for decades, though the press has yet to notice. As long ago as the early 1980s, he writes, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found that companies paid men and women equal money when their titles and responsibilities were the same... Citing Internal Revenue statistics, Farrell notes that women who own their own businesses net only 49 percent of what male counterparts make. Since it can't be that male bosses are holding them back here, women seem to be seeking certain lifestyle trade-offs – forgoing the highest possible

earning power. ...This country ... has failed to develop policies – in the workplace and in society as a whole – that support working mothers.

Ironically, this policy failure is to some extent the fault of the women's movement in the United States. Going back to the mid-nineteenth century, feminists in this country have channeled much of their energy into the struggle to win formal equality with men. More recently, the National Organization for Women has spent 35 years fighting for a wide array of equal rights ranging from educational and job opportunities to equal pay and access to credit. The idea is that once all the legislation that discriminates against women is dismantled, the playing field becomes level and women can assume a free and equal place in society by simply cloning the male competitive model.

In Europe, various groups of social feminists have viewed the problem for women quite differently. For them, it is not woman's lack of legal rights that constitutes her main handicap, or even her lack of reproductive freedom. Rather, it is her dual burden – taking care of a home and family as well as holding down a job – that leads to her second-class status.

...Even high-achieving women who are married continue to carry the lion's share of domestic responsibilities.¹ Only 9% of their husbands assume primary responsibility for meal preparation, 10% for the laundry, and 5% for cleaning the house. When it comes to the children, husbands don't do much better. Only 9% of them take time off from work when a child is sick, 9% take the lead in helping children with homework, and 3% organize activities such as play dates and summer camp.

...43% of the older, high-achieving women and 37% of the younger, high-achieving women feel that their husbands actually create more household work for them than they contribute. (39% of ultra-achieving women also feel this way despite the fact that half of them are married to men who earn less than they do.)

"...Young women are told that a serious person needs to commit to her career in her 20s and devote all her energies to her job for at least ten years if she is to be successful." But the fact is, if you take this advice you might well be on the wrong side of 35 before you have time to draw breath and contemplate having a child – exactly the point in life when infertility can – and overwhelmingly does – become an issue.

...89% of young, high-achieving women believe that they will be able to get pregnant deep into their 40s. But sadly, new reproductive technologies have not solved fertility problems for older women. The research shows that only 3%-5% of women who attempt in vitro fertilization in their 40s actually succeed in bearing a child.

...Waldfoegel finds ... one child produces a "penalty" of 6% of earnings, while two children produce a wage penalty of 13%.

income for more free time and flexible hours. They also seem to be avoiding some high-paying jobs. Female engineering managers make on average \$83,000, but only 10 percent of the managers are female, indicating that many women are bypassing careers that could pay them more.

¹Edmund L. Andrews, *Survey Confirms It: Women Out-juggle Men* September 2004: It may fall into the category of Things You Knew but Could Never Prove, but a new survey by the Department of Labor shows that the average working woman spends about twice as much time as the average working man on household chores and the care of children.

The average working woman also gets about an hour's less sleep each night than the average stay-at-home mom. And men spend more time than women both at their jobs and on leisure and sports.

Almost as many women as men hold jobs, the Labor Department said: about 78 percent of women, compared with 85 percent of men. But two-thirds of all women said they prepared meals and did housework on an average day, compared with only 19 percent of men who said they did housework and 34 percent who said they helped with meals or cleanup.

... Given such a huge disincentive, why do women persist in trying to “have it all”? Because, as a large body of research demonstrates, women are happier when they have both career and family. In a series of books and articles that span more than a decade, University of Michigan sociologist Lois Hoffmann has examined the value of children to parents and finds that, across cultures, parents see children as enormously important in providing love and companionship and in warding off loneliness. Children also help parents deal with the questions of human existence: how do I find purpose beyond the self? How do I cope with mortality?

...In 2000 ... fully 22% of all women with professional degrees (MBAs, MDs, PhDs, and so on) were not in the labor market at all.

...These women need reduced-hour jobs and careers that can be interrupted.

...According to my survey, some employers take family needs into account: 12% offer paid parenting leave and 31% job sharing. Many more, however, provide only time flexibility: 69% allow staggered hours and 48% have work-at-home options. These less ambitious policies seem to be of limited use to time-pressured, high-achieving women.

...The high-achieving career women who participated in my survey were asked to consider a list of policy options that would help them achieve balance in their lives over the long haul. They endorsed the following cluster of work-life policies that would make it much easier to get off conventional career ladders and eventually get back on:

A Time Bank of Paid Parenting Leave. This would allow for three months of paid leave, which could be taken as needed, until the child turned 18.

Restructured Retirement Plans. In particular, survey respondents want to see the elimination of penalties for career interruptions.

Career Breaks. Such a leave of absence might span three years – unpaid, of course, but with the assurance of a job when the time came to return to work.

Reduced-Hour Careers. High-level jobs should be created that permit reduced hours and workloads on an ongoing basis but still offer the possibility of promotion.

Alumni Status for Former Employees. Analogous to active retirement, alumni standing would help women who have left or are not active in their careers stay in the loop. They might be tapped for advice and guidance, and the company would continue to pay their dues and certification fees so they could maintain professional standing.

... companies must guard against the perception that by taking advantage of such policies, a woman will tarnish her professional image.

... Lisa Polsky, who joined Morgan Stanley in 1995 as a managing director, ... when we met in 1999, ... Polsky was 44 then, and her childbearing days were over. She said, “What gnaws at me is that I always assumed I would have children. Somehow I imagined that having a child was something I would get to in a year or so, after the next promotion, when I was more established.

Kate, 52, a member of the medical faculty at the University of Washington, felt the same way. “Looking back, I can’t think why I allowed my career to obliterate my 30s,” she told me. “I just didn’t pay attention. I’m only just absorbing the consequences.”

And there is Stella Parsons, 45, who had just been offered a chairmanship at Ohio State University the day I interviewed her. But she waved my congratulations away. “I wish some of this career success had spilled over to my private life. I just didn’t get it together in time.” Then she whispered, “I’m almost ashamed to admit it, but I still ache for a child.”

...The choices younger women must make are more difficult than ever. Let’s start with the fact that they are marrying even later. My data shows that the high-achieving women

of the older generation tended to marry young: 75% of them were married by 25, but only 54% of the younger generation are married by that age.

...Only 45% of the younger women have had a child by 35, while 62% of the older women had a child by that age. (Indeed, among ultra-achievers, no one in the older group had her first child after 36.)

...women are delaying childbirth because they don't feel a sense of biological urgency.

... the chances of Amy's getting pregnant in her 40s are tiny – in the range of 3%-5%.

Changing trends seen in contemporary times. The Times recently ran a front-page article about young women attending Ivy League colleges, women who are being groomed to take their places in the professional and political elite, who are planning to reject careers in favor of playing traditional roles, staying home and raising children.¹ "My mother always told me you can't be the best career woman and the best mother at the same time," the brainy, accomplished Cynthia Liu told Louise Story, explaining why she hoped to be a stay-at-home mom a few years after she goes to law school. "You always have to choose one over the other." Kate White, the editor of Cosmopolitan, told me that she sees a distinct shift in what her readers want these days. "Women now don't want to be in the grind," she said. "The baby boomers made the grind seem unappealing." Cynthia Russett, a professor of American history at Yale, told Story that women today are simply more "realistic," having seen the dashed utopia of those who assumed it wouldn't be so hard to combine full-time work and child rearing.

NYT Liberties June 2002, Maureen Dowd: Five years ago, you would often hear high-powered women fantasize that they would love a Wife, somebody to do the shopping, cooking, carpooling, so they could focus on work. Now the fantasy is more retro: They just want to be that Wife.

Newsweek (October 2005: When Women Lead, Barbara Kantrowitz): Without question, there has been a huge transformation in the past few decades. Women's earning power continues to rise along with their educational accomplishments. They are now more than half of all college students and about half of all medical and law students. It is no longer a big deal to see a woman at the helm of the nation's most prestigious universities, even at a technological powerhouse like MIT... But there are other, more troubling developments as well. Recent stories about women at elite colleges who want to ditch it all to stay home with their kids have prompted a furious debate among professional women. There is a fear that all those glass ceilings have been broken for naught and younger women who grew up with working mothers struggling to have it all have decided that the struggle just isn't worth it. Whether younger women stick with that choice is, of course, still unclear. Their future undoubtedly holds many surprises, at work and at home, just as it did for the groundbreaking generation that preceded them.

The following article appeared in much lengthier form in the NY Times News Magazine on October, 26, 2003, by Lisa Belkin:

In the last decade many highly qualified women have been heading out of the work force.

¹The New York Times: Maureen Dowd "Are Men Necessary: When Sexes Collide."

Today, the barriers of 40 years ago are down. Over fifty percent of college students are now female, and this include Ivy League Universities¹ and many post graduate programs in law, medicine and business². Yet, women comprise only 16 percent of partners in law firms and the same percent of corporate officers. Only eight companies in the Fortune 500 have female C.E.O.'s. Of 435 members of the House of Representatives, 62 are women; there are 14 women in the 100-member Senate.

During the 90's, the talk was about the glass ceiling, about women who were turned away at the threshold of power simply because they were women. The talk of this new decade is less about the obstacles faced by women than it is about the obstacles faced by mothers. The United States Census shows that the number of children being cared for by stay-at-home moms has increased nearly 13 percent in less than a decade. At the same time, the percentage of new mothers who go back to work fell from 59 percent in 1998 to 55 percent in 2000.

Many did leave the work force completely but scaled down or redefined their roles in the crucial career-building years (25 to 44). Two-thirds of mothers between the ages of 24 - 44 work fewer than 40 hours a week -- in other words, part time. Of white men with M.B.A.'s, 95 percent are working full time, but for white women with M.B.A.'s, that number drops to 67 percent.

For the moment, this is true mostly of elite, successful women who can afford real choice -- who have partners with substantial salaries and health insurance -- making it easy to dismiss them as exceptions. Many women who are poised to take over positions right top, are increasingly deciding that they don't want to do what it takes to get there. Instead, women are redefining success. And in doing so, they are redefining work.

Time was when a woman's definition of success was said to be her apple-pie recipe. Or her husband's promotion. Or her well-turned-out children. Next, being successful required becoming a man. Success was about the male definition of money and power. Lately when women talk about success they use words like satisfaction, balance and sanity. A recent survey by the research firm Catalyst found that 26 percent of women at the cusp of the most senior levels of management don't want the promotion. Fortune magazine found that of the 108 women who have appeared on its list of the top 50 most powerful women over the years, at least 20 have chosen to leave their high-powered jobs, most voluntarily, for lives that are less intense and more fulfilling.

It's why President Bush's adviser Karen Hughes left the White House, saying her family was homesick and wanted to go back to Austin³. It's why Brenda C. Barnes, who was

¹Fifty percent of the undergraduate class of 2003 at Yale was female for example.

²This year's graduating class at Berkeley Law School was 63 percent women; Harvard was 46 percent; Columbia was 51. Nearly 47 percent of medical students are women, as are 50 percent of undergraduate business majors (though, interestingly, about 30 percent of M.B.A. candidates).

³Karen Hughes, Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy, U.S. Department of State: One of the things I say when women ask me for advice is: make the ground rules very clear. It's hard to accept a job that requires you to be at the office 15 hours a day if you intend to really only be there 10. It's one of the things we discussed when I came to work at the White House. I picked up the phone and called the president-elect and said, "You know, I'm always going to work very hard and long hours, but I also need to spend time at home." A job is important and, for much of my life, was necessary to earn a living. But my job is not my whole life. My most important responsibility is to my family and to the child I chose to have. My job is going to have to allow me to fulfill that responsibility, or I need to look at a different job.... When I came to Washington, I thought of myself only as a member of the president's staff. But I think my decision to move home to Texas because my son was unhappy in Washington caused people to view me as a leader, particularly on the issue of work-family balance. I remember a

the president and C.E.O. of Pepsi-Cola North America, left that job to move back to Illinois with her family. And it's why Wendy Chamberlin, who was ambassador to Pakistan, resigned, because security concerns meant she never saw her two young daughters.

Why don't women run the world?

Maybe it's because they don't want to.

"Sometimes I worry that we're really just a little bit lazier," Sears says. "But in my heart of hearts, I think it's really because we're smarter. Maybe evolution has endowed us with the ability to turn back our rheostat faster, to not always charge ahead after one all-consuming thing. To prefer a life not with one pot boiling but with a lot of pots simmering; to prefer the patchwork quilt, not the down comforter. Oh, God, would you listen to these domestic analogies? Are they really coming out of my mouth?"

Sarah Blaffer Hardy, an anthropologist and author of "Mother Nature: A History of Mothers, Infants and Natural Selection" says: "It's not that women aren't competitive; it's just that they don't want to compete along the lines that are not compatible with their other goals."

Women started this conversation about life and work -- a conversation that is slowly coming to include men. Sanity, balance and a new definition of success, it seems, just might be contagious. And instead of women being forced to act like men, men are being freed to act like women. Because women are willing to leave, men are more willing to leave, too -- the number of married men who are full-time caregivers to their children has increased 18 percent. Because women are willing to leave, 46 percent of the employees taking parental leave at Ernst & Young last year were men.

Looked at that way, this is not the failure of a revolution but the start of a new one. It is about a door opened but a crack by women that could usher in a new environment for us all.

Why don't women run the world?

"In a way," Amsbary says, "we really do."

mother stopping me in Austin and introducing me to her daughter and saying, "I want my daughter to grow up and be like you." It made me feel I had an obligation to try to live up to that.

APPENDIX C: EFFECT ON JEWS

i- Secular Jews

ii- Women's Liberation Movement Within Orthodoxy

a- The desire of some women to be men

b- The movement draws on the weakest segments of Orthodoxy

APPENDIX C: EFFECT ON JEWS

i- Secular Jews

Many leading feminists were Jewish (Gloria Steinem; Blu Greenberg, on Women and Judaism; Letty Cottin Pogrebin, Deborah, Golda and Me)

In earlier decades - Jewish marriage rate, higher than national average.

'70s - 200% increase in Jewish women not marrying, 5% above general population.

Jewish divorce rate - soared

'50's, Jewish birth rate - 2.8%

'67 - 1.75%

'70 - 1.6%

'90 - 1.45%

Gloria Steinem: I either give birth to someone else or I give birth to myself.

Gail Shulman: Many Rabbis and Jewish leaders express their fear that reluctance to produce large families presents a threat to the survival of Judaism itself...This seems little more than an attempt to arouse a woman's guilt for jeopardizing the future of Judaism by daring to consider her own needs first. (A Feminist Path to Judaism in On Being a Jewish Feminist)

Blu Greenberg - mainstream feminism has attacked the basic structures and life values that Judaism has contributed to human society. (On Women and Judaism, 6)

(Quoted in Michael Kaufman's unpublished manuscript)

ii- Women's Liberation Movement Within Orthodoxy

Already expressing itself for over a century:

שרידי אש ר יחיאל ויינברג ח"ב ס"ח: בנות הדור ... יש להם רגש של כבוד עצמאי ... בארצות כמו
אשכנז וצרפת הנשים מרגישות עלבון ופגיעה בזכויותיהם אם נאסור עליה להשתתף בעונג שבת ע-י זמירות
קודש.

A few Orthodox women participated in the broader women's liberation movement which began in the 60's (e.g. Blu Greenberg).¹ By the early seventies, there were already

¹Furman, Moresheet: It did not take long for this view of feminism to trickle into Jewish society. From the outside it could seem as if men dominate every part of Judaism. It is men who count in a gathering of ten to pray and who are judges and Rabbis. Inspired by the feminist movement, Jewish women began looking inward at their own religion for ways to improve the equality of women. Blu Greenberg, a renowned Jewish Feminist was once quoted as saying: "Feminism enables women to grow as individuals, it teaches them to be not so universally dependent on the financial support of men, as women have been; and it can bring only benefit to society... Thus, our best hope for an increased Jewish population, it seems, is to help cope with the areas of conflict and tension, to blend the feminist and traditional models."¹ She believes that feminism liberates women from depending on men, and she hopes that these ideas will help Jewish women gain a greater stature in Jewish society.

complaints voiced by Orthodox women and feminists, and they were soon to find a pseudo-rabbinic voice, Rabbi Saul Berman, to support them (see his 1973 article in *Tradition* magazine). Women complained that they did not have enough expression in ritual areas like prayer, that they were disadvantaged according to Halacha in marriage and divorce arrangements and that they played second fiddle to their husbands, helping them to learn Torah without having the opportunity to do so themselves. Rabbi Berman even suggested that we add Kesuvim readings after the Haftora to be read by women in front of men (quoted in *Response*, Spring 1981)! The impression developed amongst these women that all that was holding up reform to their way of thinking was the desire of the rabbis to want it to be that way. The infamous saying, "Where there's a Rabbinic will, there's a Halachic way," was coined.

However, it was only in the last twenty years that Orthodox women began a formal Orthodox women's movement.¹ This has recently been supported by "rabbis" such as Avi

"However, it is not so easy to take a whole religion, that is seemingly male oriented, and change it to fit the feminine views. Gail Shulman, another Jewish feminist said, "The task of Jewish feminism is not as simple as it seemed ten years ago. It is not merely a matter of changing and re-interpreting *halakhah* and gaining inclusion in the *minyan*; rather, it is a much more complex process, bringing with it the hope (and threat) of profound change. Feminism challenges the patriarchal nature of Judaism and demands recognition of women as full persons rather than only in male-defined roles. It is clear that a logical extension of this recognition would be the affirmation not only of traditional families, but of many other kinds of family units and lifestyles as well. Without these fundamental changes in the patriarchal structure, many feminists who do not fit into the traditional roles will continue to feel estranged from Judaism. My own examination of my life as a feminist has resulted in the positive discovery that one source of my feminism is my identity as a Jew. But the irony here is that I affirm my Jewishness in a way Judaism seems unable and unwilling to accept or return." Gail Shulman hopes that the "patriarchal structure" of Judaism will be changed by feminism so women could do the things they want to do based on their own views, not how men view them or think they should be.

"Feminists feel that while Judaism always marks the special milestones in the male's life, it over looks the milestones in the woman's life. For example, when a male is born everyone makes a big tumult over it. The ceremonies begin with a Shalom Zachar, the welcoming party for the male child that takes place the first Friday night after its birth. We continue the celebrations with the *Brit Milah*, which takes place eight days after he is born. If the male is a first-born child he gets a *Pidyon Haben*, which is a special ceremony when the boy is "redeemed" by a *kohain*. Later on, at the age of thirteen, all boys have a bar mitzvah. It could be easy to understand why women feel overlooked. The *Brit* represents the official entry of the child into the Jewish people. It appears that girls have no affirmation like this. A professor of Literature, Ann Shapiro, expresses her feelings about this. She explained that a male professor "Kept insisting that the circumcision was the universal symbol for a Jew," she said, "I kept trying to convince him that that it's only universal for half the Jewish people-that the Jewish women could only relate to circumcision vicariously. And he acted like he thought I was crazy."¹ A far better known celebration in a girl's life is her Bat Mitzvah. It was the Conservative movement which formalized the celebration of a girl's Bat Mitzvah, allowing girls to lead the services Friday nights when the Torah is not read. By the late 1980's, girls were being called to the Torah in celebration of their momentous occasion, identical to boys. Older women felt that they missed out on not having a proper Bat Mitzvah. It was decided that they could celebrate their *Bat Mitzvah* during a later stage in their life. They claim that having Bat Mitzvah celebrations, even if it is well after their twelfth or thirteenth birthday, "provides the opportunity for both a renewed commitment to Judaism and a feminist assertion of personhood." All of the reactions above to women's roles in Judaism share a point in common, which is the feministic view of inequality. If we cannot do the same actions as men it means we are less, not equal. This is the secular feminists view, but in Judaism it is not so. What makes feminists think that male *mitzvot* are more spiritually elevating than their own *mitzvot*?..."

¹"To Be a Jewish Woman" is the name of a two-day conference...in Jerusalem organized by Kolech, an Orthodox women's activist movement. Sessions will deal with issues ranging from Torah learning for women to *agunot*. "Unlike other feminists, Kolech is a group of women that does not want to tear down the house of Jewish tradition as was done in the past," said Dr. Aliza Lavie, a lecturer at Bar-

Weiss and Henkin. For details and critiques of all the issues surrounding this movement see back issues of the Jewish Observer which have dealt extensively, over the last few years, with this subject. Here we will only deal with two issues:

- a- The movement expresses the desire of some women to be men;
- b- The movement draws on the weakest segments of Orthodoxy.

a- The desire of some women to be men

In New York, this movement has expressed itself by having women's minyanim, calling women up to the Torah, having women wear taleisim and other expressions which are technically legal but clearly express these women's desire to imitate their male fellow-Jews.¹ In addition, some women began to say Kaddish even at regular minyanim. This desire of women to feel that women's liberation means becoming men was integral to the broader women's liberation movement of the 60's. However, this movement subsequently realized that women must focus on giving expression to uniquely women's values and qualities. Therefore, the current Orthodox movement is thirty years behind the broader women's movement (and a few thousand years behind the most up-to-date document on women we have, the Torah).

b- The movement draws on the weakest segments of Orthodoxy

There is no question that the Orthodox women's movement draws from that part of Orthodoxy whose commitment is weakest. It is never those who are most observant, who would seemingly have the most reason to want to do more, who are at the forefront of these movements. Thus women's issues were featured recently at a conference in Israel on Modern Orthodoxy which was sponsored by Beit Morasha, a radically anti-Chareidi institution of higher learning (with university degree status); Kibbutz HaDati; the Israeli Alumni of Yeshiva University and the Jewish Agency. (Jerusalem Post, Nov. 19, 1998) Rivka Lubitch

Ilan University in Gender and Communications. "We just want to banish some of its murkier corners by shining a new light while maintaining our commitment to Halacha." ...Another session, that deals with Orthodox feminist art is called "When a Woman is Behind the Camera." "In an MTV generation, religious ceremonies must reflect women's experiences," says Lavie. "That means there should be, for example, more of an emphasis on the bat mitzva in the community, like there already is regarding the bar mitzva." ...Lavie said Kolech is not necessarily introducing brand new ideas to Orthodoxy. "In 16th century North Africa aggressive solutions were found to deal with intransigent husbands who refused to divorce their wives," said Lavie. "In Italy women often answered other women's questions on issue regarding the halacha of family purity." "Women have even served as ritual slaughterers and *mohels*. In many cases we are just reviving traditions that were forgotten over the centuries." (Jerusalem Post June 25, 2005)

¹Dec 2005: *Women Taking Active Role to Study Orthodox Judaism* - In prayer groups founded and led by women... Orthodox women in growing numbers are celebrating rites of passage like bat matzvahs and baby namings. They are teaching one another to read from the Torah and are making sure their daughters learn, too. Some women scholars have been appointed in recent years as advocates in Israel's religious courts and as so-called Halakhic advisers, or Jewish legal experts, on issues like ritual baths and fertility treatments. In New York, two synagogues have recruited young female scholars to teach and counsel members in the new post of congregational intern. And in an explosive development for the only branch of Judaism that does not ordain women, there is the sudden prospect of Orthodox women as rabbis. An article last week in the New York newspaper The Jewish Week confirmed a long-held suspicion that at least two Orthodox women in Israel had been secretly ordained as rabbis in private ceremonies conducted by supportive Orthodox rabbis...

of Kibbutz Ner Etzion attended the conference stating that the time had come to push the boundaries of Halacha on what is permitted and not permitted to women. "There are issues that are so important that you first make a breakthrough and then ask if it is okay. There are women I know who are orthodox in every way, and ask rabbis questions on every issue but this one [women's issues]. It is so close to their heart they are willing to pioneer a breakthrough - not only push Halacha, but actually go beyond it." Even those who argued with her showed clearly that they do not believe that the Torah is the perfect instruction for the Jewish nation: "I feel her pain," said Rabbi Jeffrey Woolf, a lecturer in Talmud at Bar-Ilan. "More can be done, but the Torah cannot satisfy everything."

Yet there can be no question that all segments of the Orthodox community have been affected, to whatever degree, by the broader emancipation of women. Many women in all circles have issues concerning their spiritual role regarding the chagim, many feel alienated on Simchas Torah and many find the contemporary role demanded, in particular of Kollel wives to be breadwinner, mother and house-keeper all in one, a task that is quite daunting. However small in number these women, their feelings has required a new alertness to connecting women to the Torah and to giving them an integrated sense of what their unique role is all about.

There are plenty of macro-issues for someone who wants to "liberate" women to fight for – issues so obvious and major that complete consensus exists about their worthiness. One such issue concerns the 100 million missing women in the world.

The NY Times (Nov. 5 1991) reported that although little girls in China no longer have their feet crushed by foot-binding and widows in India are no longer supposed to be roasted alive on the funeral pyres of their husbands, a stark statistic testifies to women's continuing unequal status: at least 60 million females in Asia are missing and feared dead, victims of nothing more than their sex. Worldwide, research suggests, the number of missing females may top 100 million. In fact, the problem seems to be getting worse in...China and India.

The tens of millions of missing include females of all ages who are aborted or killed at birth, are given less food than males and subsequently die, or because family members view a daughter with diarrhea as a nuisance but a son with diarrhea as a medical crisis requiring a doctor. ...

5 or 6 percent more boys are born than girls, but in normal circumstances males die at higher rates at every age thereafter. Typically in the West, the number of men and women evens out by the time people are in their 20s and 30s, and the elderly are disproportionately female. In relatively advanced countries like the United States, Britain and Poland, there are about 105 females for every 100 males. But in India there are ...only 92.9 females for every 100 males...and in China there are...93.8 females for every 100 males. Other countries with very low ratios of females include Afghanistan, with 94.5 for every 100 males; Bangladesh, 94.1; Nepal, 94.8; Pakistan, 92.1; Papua New Guinea, 92.8, and Turkey, 94.8.

So it is quite amazing that while some women will devote enormous time and resources to working out how a woman can get to read the Megillah, 100 million females are dying and not a word is being said by these same "women's liberators". Given these facts, the smell of egocentricity reaches a veritable stench.

APPENDIX D: MISCELLANEOUS צניעות ISSUES

i- Slacks

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מהר"ל: Pants serve a different purpose than other clothing:

מהר"ל דף קפד פרשת תצוה (כח מא) ד"ה ומכנסים כתובים
... נראה לי מה שלא כלל את המכנסים עם שאר הבגדים מפני שאין דומה מכנסים לשאר בגדים כי
מכנסים אינו מלבוש לכבוד רק הוא לכסות הערוה ושאר מלבושים כלם כבוד הגוף הם ... מפני שהלבוש
נקרא אותו שאדם לובש בהם לכבוד ולתפארת ...

(The מהר"ל goes on to say that a כהן who does עבודה without מכנסים is not חייב מיתה like other בגדים.)

Since pants are only to cover the body and not to project a person's כבוד they are poorly suited for women as they show the shape of the body. The nature of how men perceive women as opposed to how women perceive men make this a problem for women but not for men.

Although בנות תורה universally do not wear women's slacks, some say that there may be a Halachic source to tell someone that it is O.K. as an intermediate step. (Of course each שאלה must be independently asked):

בגד איש (2-8) מנחת יצחק and (11-22) ציץ אליעזר
brings many פוסקים who all forbid wearing pants.

R' Elyashiv, R' Sheinberg, R' Ovadiah Yosef – Pants are not בגד איש but are אסור because of צניעות. Therefore, pants are permitted in a gym, where no men are present, or for warmth under a skirt (קונטרס מלבושי נשים), 14).

Rav Dovid Cohen - if the slacks were clearly female and did not show the body in any way, it may, under certain circumstances, be allowed.

R. Ovadiah Yosef: Mini-skirts are worse than slacks (R. Waldenberg disagrees)
YD - 72) - Permits distinctly women's slacks, provided they are very loose-fitting.

APPENDIX E: READING LIST

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Ellinson, Elyakim; האשה והמצוות¹
Gray, John; Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus
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Kornbluth, Sarah Tikvah and Doron, (editors); Jewish Women Speak About Jewish Matters
(Targum/Feldheim)
Meiselman, Moshe; Jewish Woman in Jewish Law (Ktav)
Nissel, Menachem; Rigshei Lev – Women and Tefilah: Perspectives, Laws, and Customs
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אהל רחל
מבשר טוב (זכות נשים צדקניות - 2 כרכים); הרבי מביאלא

¹הסתדרות הפדרציה הציונית העלמים המחלקה לתרבות תורנות - 3 כרכים (Also in English)

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