

# Enhancing Relationships

Societal norms are constantly changing. Many of the ideals of the 40's and 50's, have been replaced by views that were once met with extreme disapproval. There has been a drastic shift in society in areas of modesty, and relationships, eroding values held sacred for centuries. It is therefore critical that we refocus on values and ideals that are timeless.

The פסיקתא in this week's Parsha explains the reasoning behind Hashem commanding Klal Yisroel to make, "A sanctuary - so that I may dwell among them." This can be compared to a king who had a daughter. When the daughter was young the king would speak with her publicly. However, when she reached maturity, the king said, "It is no longer respectful to my daughter to speak with her publicly. Therefore, I will make a private place where we will be able to speak privately." So it was with Klal Yisroel. Before they became a complete nation, Hashem connected with them publicly. In Egypt they saw Hashem, like it says, "And I passed through Egypt". At the sea they saw Hashem, like it says, "And Klal Yisroel saw His great hand." At Har Sinai they saw Hashem, as it says, "Face to face I spoke to them." However, once they accepted the Torah, they then became a complete nation, and it is no longer respectful to speak to them publicly. "Therefore, they should make a sanctuary, in order that I can speak to them privately."

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At first glance, this פסיקתא is difficult to understand. Imagine the honor Klal Yisroel would receive by Hashem speaking to them in front of all of the nations. Picture the elevated status and high esteem this would engender from the other nations towards Klal Yisroel. Yet the פסיקתא says that Hashem connecting to Klal Yisroel publicly would have the opposite effect; it would detract from their honor. How can we understand this?

It must be that we don't have the proper definition of honor. True honor and dignity is tarnished by public exposure. Connecting to Hashem publicly would have cheapened the relationship, not enhancing it. The ultimate show of dignity and respect in a relationship is by ensuring that the connection remains private. The Meiri shares with us a similar insight in explaining why women are not obligated to teach their sons a trade. He says that their lack of obligation is based on the Pasuk of כל כבודה בת מלך פנימה, that the ultimate honor for a daughter of a King is privacy. Imagine the pride a mother would derive from knowing her son is properly set up to earn a livelihood. However, we can't obligate her to go out in the public eye to teach her son a trade, as it would detract from her honor.

We can extrapolate from the above a powerful insight into the essence of modesty. We often view the breakdown of modesty in society as strictly a moral issue. We tend to see it as a catalyst for inappropriate behaviors. From here we see that the lack of value for privacy in our society is not only a moral issue, but it is also an issue of dignity and respect. True honor and real value can't be found on social media, but rather, can be found through non public connections.

BASED ON THE WEEKLY SHMUSS GIVEN BY HARAV SHAYA COHEN, ROSH HAYESHIVA ZICHRON ARYEH

לעילוי נשמת גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנוח  
לעילוי נשמת הרב יוסף חיים בן מאיר  
לרפואה שלמה רפאל חיים דוב בן ריסא שושנה