The Clothes Maketh the Man
**THE CLOTHES MAKETH THE MAN**

ברוך אתה ה’ אלוהינו מלך העולם המלביש ערמים

Blessed are you HaShem our God, King of the world, who clothes the naked

**THE FIRST CLOTHES**

_In the beginning of Bereishis we find Adam and Chava were first in the Garden of Eden._

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Bereishis Chapter 2</th>
<th>פרשת בראשית פרק ב</th>
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<td>And they were both naked, man and his wife and they were not embarrassed</td>
<td>כה: ויינו שביהם ערמיים עד אישה ולא תבששו</td>
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**WHY WERE THEY NOT EMBARRASSED?**

*What do you see?*

_A NAKED BABY SITTING NEXT TO A NAKED DOG OR A NAKED BABY SITTING NEXT TO A DOG?_

Animals are not naked- they do not need clothes. We do not look at animals and say “That dog is walking around naked- it’s indecent!”

We would, however, say this about a human- why do humans need clothes?

**Rashi’s commentary**

<table>
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| And they were not embarrassed They did not know the way of modesty to differentiate between good and evil. And even though he was given the knowledge to give out names, he was not give the evil inclination until he ate from the tree. Then the evil inclination entered him and he knew the difference between good and evil. | כה: ולא תבששו шלא ויינו שביהם ערמיים עד אישה ולא תבששו
על פי שינתה ב’elle לקוות שמות לא תגו בו יותרhra
לע עד אציל מ使って וזכות בירא יותר וידעם בו ביני טפיב |
Little children are notorious for trying to shed their clothes and run around naked. This is done with total innocence; the two-year-old does not see any difference between his face, his knees, and the parts of his body which we adults insist that he cover. Only adults feel that certain parts of the body must be covered.

Why? Because those are connected with physical lust and passions, and should not be exposed.

Prior to their sin, Adam and Eve knew good from bad, right from wrong, but they had not internalized an evil inclination. So they could choose to do right and wrong, and were held responsible for their choices, but the urge to do evil did not come from within. This urge was represented by the serpent—the external tempter. Since the evil did not reside within them, they were "naturally" good, and their nakedness was innocent and in no way sinful. They saw no difference between a hand, whose purpose was to give charity and to do good deeds, a mouth with which one praises G-d and says kind words to others, and the parts of the body which are used to "be fruitful and multiply." With every organ they could fulfill the will of God or vice versa, so no organ was shameful, nor did anything need to be covered.

Adapted from Chabad.org

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<th>Bereishis Chapter 3</th>
<th>פרשת בראשית פרק ב</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>And He said “Who told you that you are naked? Have you eaten from the tree which I commanded you not to eat?”</td>
<td>יא: ואמר מִי הִגִּיד לְךָ כִּי עֵירָם אֲתָה הַמֶּרֶךְ עֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לְבִלְתִּי אֲכָל־מֶנּוּ אֲכָלְתָּ:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seforo</td>
<td>ספורنو</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who told you- that you know good and evil</td>
<td>מי הודה לך ידיעת הטוב והרע</td>
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<tr>
<td>That you are naked- That because of this you are naked, it is appropriate to cover up</td>
<td>כִּי עירום אתה שבשלך זה תחיה עירום, ראוי לתקוסת</td>
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Seforno explains that the only reason that Adam and Chava needed to cover up was because they now had the knowledge of good and evil internally. As a result they became aware of their own nakedness and lust, and now as a result of that knowledge it was appropriate to cover up.

CLOTHES AND EMBARRASSMENT

❖ WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU GET EMBARRASSED?

❖ WHY DO PEOPLE DO THIS?
There is a fascinating connection in the Hebrew language between the word for embarrassment and the word for clothes. What is shame? It is the feeling of falling short of what was expected. It’s the uncomfortable sensation that a scenario that wasn’t expected to be problematic turned out much worse than planned and I could have done something about it.

So you are going about your normal routine - going to work, waiting for the bus, or just walking down the street - when you suddenly realize that you are stark naked. Dreaming that you are completely or partially naked is very common. Nudity symbolizes a variety of things depending on your real life situation.

Becoming mortified at the realization that you are naked in public, reflects your vulnerability or feelings of shamefulness. You may be hiding something and are afraid that others can see right through you. Metaphorically, clothes are a means of concealment. Depending on the type of clothes you wear, you can hide your identity or be someone else. But without them, everything is hanging out for all to see. You are exposed and left without any defenses. Thus your naked dream may be telling you that you are trying to be something that you really are not.

Or you are fear of being ridiculed and disgraced. Such anxieties are elevated especially in situations where you are trying to impress others. Perhaps you are in a new work environment or in a new relationship. You may be expressing fears or apprehension in revealing your true feelings in such situations.

Nudity also symbolizes being caught off guard. Finding yourself naked at work or in a classroom, suggests that you are unprepared for a project at work or school. You may be unprepared in making a well informed decision. With all eyes on you, you fear that some flaw will be brought to public attention. You fear that people will see through your true self and you will be exposed as a fraud or a phony.

Often times, when you realize that you are naked in your dream, no one else seems to notice. Everyone else in the dream is going about their business without giving a second look at your nakedness. If this happens in your dream, then it implies that your fears are unfounded; no one will notice except you. You may be magnifying the situation and making an issue of nothing.

Source: [http://dreammoods.com/cgi-bin/nakeddreams.pl?method=exact&header=dreamid&search=nakedintro](http://dreammoods.com/cgi-bin/nakeddreams.pl?method=exact&header=dreamid&search=nakedintro)
WRONG CLOTHES OR NO CLOTHES

Sometimes there is nothing worse than feeling we are dressed wrong, it is almost as bad as showing up naked. Another aspect of this blessing is to thank God for giving us clothes and ability to appropriately dress ourselves.

HAVE YOU EVER FOUND YOURSELF WEARING THE WRONG CLOTHING? HOW DID YOU FEEL?

DUAL FUNCTION OF CLOTHES

There are obvious reasons why humans wear clothes. Clothes can serve as protection from the elements. Clothes can keep us safe when doing hazardous activities such as cooking and hiking, by providing a barrier between the skin and the environment.

Clothes also serve to identify us with a particular group, and can reflect gender, religion and social status. As well, clothes may function as an expression of personal taste or style.

As with everything else, however, the Torah goes beyond the physical dimension to reveal the essence of clothes and their spiritual purpose. So get ready for a “clothes encounter” of the Torah kind ...
And you shall make holy vestments for Ahraon your brother for glory and splendor

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<th>שמות</th>
<th>פרשת תצוה פרק כח</th>
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<tr>
<td>Shemos</td>
<td>Tetzaveh Chapter 28</td>
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וְעָּשִיתָּ בִּגְדֵי־קְדָשֶּׁךָ לְאַהֲרֹן אָחִיךָ לְכָּבוֹד וּלְתִפְאָרֶת:  

The external function is for the way others will view him, i.e. the High Priest needed to present the proper image of himself to the people, as befitting his elevated and lofty stature. He had to dress in such a way that the Jewish people would respect and honor his position, thus enabling him to influence them and inspire them to greatness. Had the High Priest walked around in garb that was inappropriate for his position, or in clothing that was ill-fitting or dirty, he would not be able to do his job properly, as no one would respect him.

The internal function is to remind him of his special stature, i.e. it was crucial that the High Priest remember at all times that he was holier than the others around him due to his elevated status. Thus, the unique vestments he wore served as a kind of ‘barrier’ between the High Priest and the others around him, never letting him forget who he was to become just like them.

This was also the greatness of the Jewish people during the 210 years that they were in Egypt, surrounded and subjugated by a perverse and lowly nation. The Midrash tells us that “they never changed their Jewish garments”, i.e. they purposely wore distinctly Jewish garb as a reminder of who they were, and as a barrier against assimilating into the culture around them.

Moshe was commanded to make special garments for the High Priest, the Torah is actually coming to praise Aaron that he didn’t need these clothing for their internal function. Aaron was so conscious of his spiritually elevated status that he never forgot even for a moment who he was and what he needed to accomplish as High Priest.

Rather, Moses was to make garments for his brother Aaron “for glory and splendor” - i.e. for their external function, so that the Jewish people should see the splendor and greatness of the High Priest and have the proper respect for the position.
WHICH FUNCTION OF CLOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT? INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL?

DO YOU THINK THE CLOTHES THAT YOU WEAR FULFILL THE INTERNAL FUNCTION OR THE EXTERNAL FUNCTION MORE?

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

- The blessing of Malbish Arumim is so much more than providing a covering for our nakedness.
- The only reason we are aware of our nakedness is because we are different to animals and have an internal awareness of good and evil. Clothing reminds us that we have the ability to choose between good and evil.
- When we thank God for clothing us, we thank Him from saving us from embarrassment and helping us to discern appropriate clothing.
- Clothing fulfills a duel role, internal and external. When we thank God for dressing us, we thank Him for both these roles.

Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence on society.

Mark Twain