

PRIDE & HUMILITY

We all intrinsically recognise that humility is a noble quality because it allows us to view our lives with balanced perspective and also enhances the quality of our relationships. Although the notion of humility is discussed frequently, it's meaning remains elusive and its practical application at times confusing.

In a fascinating Medrash, we are told that when G-d was deciding on a venue for the giving of the Torah he chose Mount Sinai because of its modest height. He did this because he felt it was an appropriate setting for consummating his covenant with the Jewish people, as it illustrated the vital importance of humility in G-d's eyes.

You may well ask if G-d was looking for an appropriate setting to convey to his people that humility is an integral part of Jewish life, why he chose a mountain. A valley or even flat land would certainly have been more suitable? It is through the careful choice of this setting that G-d is conveying to us precisely how necessary strength and vigour (which is reflected in a mountain) are in order for us to manifest our potential as Jews.

As a prerequisite to fulfilling our role as emissaries of G-d in this world, Strength and vigour are required in order for us to be able to resist negative forces preventing us from achieving our mission in this world.

As the chosen nation, we first and foremost need strength of character, the conviction in our beliefs and a healthy pride for the great contribution that Jews have made to society through the ages so that we may continue to be a bastion of light unto the nations.

Simultaneously, we must remember that all our achievements both on the micro and macro level are only made possible by G-d. Yes, we put in a good effort, but we need to always need to be conscious of the fact that the settings and circumstances that surround us are ultimately beyond our control and therefore G-d's involvement in the equation bears the most weight in the grand scheme of things.

It is the fusion of these two seemingly conflicting character traits that are the factors that comprise the hallmark of the ideal Jew: True strength and genuine pride which flow from a profound humility are the two qualities which should work in tandem with one another in order for us to succeed as Jews so that we may each make our contribution to G-d's world.

When we bring G-d into our lives and we recognise how imperative his intervention is in order for us to be successful, it is then that humility can begin to govern our egos as we turn our eyes heavenward so that G-d may shine his countenance on us.

Warm Regards,

Rabbi Yosef Vogel

9th May – Behar

Shabbat Begins: 8:22pm

Shabbat Ends: 9:34pm