

> Sha'atnez - A Glimpse into the Future

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> "Keep My decrees: ... Do not wear a garment that contains Sha'atnez" (a forbidden mixture of fabrics). [Lev. 19:19]

The decree is limited to wool & linen.

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> The Torah defines the word "sha'atnez" in parashat Ki Tetze:

> "Do not wear Sha'atnez - wool and linen together." [Deut. 22:11]

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> Questions:

> (1) Why does the Torah not allow the use of wool and linen in the same article of clothing?

> (2) The special garments of High Priest (Cohen Gadol) contained both wool and linen. Why was Sha'atnez permitted for them?

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> Linen, produced from the flax plant, and wool, shorn from sheep,

were

- > ~~are~~ the two major fibers available to ancient civilizations.
- > (Cotton only achieved commercial importance after the colonization of the New World.)

- > The Torah's prohibition of linen and wool together is a prime example of a "chok", a decree for which we do not know the reason.
- > As Rashi writes: The nations of the world and the evil inclination taunt us, saying, "What is this command?! What logic is there to it?"

Chokh-
illogical
decree
mishpat-

- > ~~According to Rav Kook, it is not that these mitzvot have no reason, or no reason which we can comprehend. Rather, they relate to a future reality different from our own. At that future time, the purpose of these decrees will become clear.~~

there

fully
comprehended
decree.

- > In other words, this type of mitzvah serves to morally prepare us for the future.

This chokh is a reminder, hint of

eschatological
application

- > An important aspect of this future world is the Cabalistic idea that as the entire universe elevates, animal life will also be on a higher level. Animals will achieve a state similar to the current level of people. This belief plays a central role in Rav Kook's writings in many areas: vegetarianism, Temple offerings, and understanding decrees such as Sha'atnez and not eating milk and meat together.

- > The use of linen from the flax plant does not raise any ethical objections. But the use of wool necessitates a mild censure from the standpoint of absolute morality:

a leading Torah scholar states:

- > "Man, in his boundless egocentricity, approaches the poor cow and sheep. From one he seizes its milk, and from the other, its fleece.

.....
.....
.....

..... There would be no impropriety in taking the wool were the sheep

> burdened by its load; but we remove the wool when its natural owner
> needs it! The intellect will recognize that this is theft,
> oppression of the weak at the hands of the strong."

> [Otzarot HaRiiah I]

GRACE

→ A result of Shet Rishon

> Of course, the moral offense applies primarily with regard to the
> sheep's future status. We are to respect their millennial position by
> obeying shatretz in this age!

> In order to distinguish between these two fibers, and prepare us
> for the sensitivity towards animal welfare which we will need in
> ~~future issues~~, the Torah decreed that linen and wool should not be
> worn together. We may not place the utilization of the flax plant
> and the manipulation of the sheep on the same moral scale.

> Preparation is the purpose of this Chook!

> All this applies when we use wool for our own personal benefit. But
> if the wool is designated for Divine service - as in the High
> Priest's clothes - then the principle of "bechol me'odecha",
> serving God with all of our possessions, takes force. Here it is
> appropriate ~~that from their own free will,~~ ^{that} the animals will
> contribute their part for the sake of ~~the universe's spiritual~~
> elevation. Serving the King!

> ~~Addendum: One of Rav Kook's students asked him why, according to~~
> this explanation, the Torah only forbids linen together with wool,
> but not other fibers (such as cotton) together with wool.

> ~~Rav Kook answered that the mitzvot are like letters or words,~~
> ~~through which we can discern the concepts of the Torah. If one word~~
> is sufficient to convey the message, there is no need for another
> word to teach the very same matter. The chook is about millennial

> However, the word chosen should be the best and most lucid. The
> message of sensitivity towards animals is one which needs to be
> ingrained in the minds of society's leaders. Therefore the Torah
> chose to express this message through linen, the fiber favored for
> respectable and elegant clothing in olden times. Fibers such as
> cotton are used for purely utilitarian purposes. Linen represents
> man's desire to clothe himself in dignity and honor, and so is the

the atid
lavoh.
Isaiah

11:4-9.
Animals
elevated
to human
status as
Human's
elevated to
angelic
status.

Immortal beings

Matt. 22:
29-33.

preparation
not
a prohibition
against all
mixed garments.
high limits
shatretz to
wool & linen.

> best medium to express the required concern for animal welfare.

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> [Igrot HaRi'ia I:104]

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> <http://ravkook.n3.net> - Rav A.I. Kook on the Weekly Parasha

> <http://parasha.n3.net> - This week's Dvar Torah

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[Close] As strange "choch" as Hab. 2:14

this may sound "animals will know
yahweh!" in the atid laoch.

Gen 2:19 - Both man & animal taken from
dust. Both man & animal created together
by Messiah in atid laoch.

Gen 2:20 - In the renewal man will remove all of
Creation. That garden broken bond will be restored.

If man desires to be dignified morally in the atid laoch, he will develop a sensitivity to

the future created

state

of the animal kingdom

by practicing sensitivity & grace now!