

PANTS ON WOMEN

Part 1: WHAT DEUTERONOMY 22:5 REALLY MEANS

“The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.”

For many years this verse has been the text for fervent sermons against women wearing pants. Various “holiness” groups use Deut. 22:5 as “proof” that women should not wear pants, arguing that pants are that which “pertaineth unto a man.”

Deuteronomy is one of the books of the LAW OF MOSES. The New Testament Church cannot rightly ignore the Old Testament. But, we must realize that not everything in the Old Testament applies to the Church today.

We will study Deut. 22:5 (1) within its proper Scriptural context (2) within its proper historical context (3) by defining the key words in the verse in the original, Hebrew language.

CONSIDERING THE CONTEXT

Numerous tracts distributed by “holiness” groups, so well as literature printed by the UPCI, quote Deut. 22:5, but never one time do they ever attempt to explain WHY this prohibition was given or to show it within its CONTEXT. It is always wise in the study of a verse to consider the *context*. To do this, we need to look at other verses in this same chapter, so well as the chapters before and after it.

Verses 6 and 7: *“If a bird’s nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones, or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young: But thou shalt in any wise let the dam go, and take the young to thee; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.”* When is the last time you heard this commandment hotly debated?

Verse 8 says that when one builds a new house, he is to make a “battlement” – a safety railing to protect someone from falling off the roof. The Hebrew people, in ancient Biblical times, built their roofs flat. People spent time on their roofs and in some cases walked on them even from house to house. This same situation DOES NOT EXIST TODAY.

Verse 9: *“Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled.”*

Verse 10: *“Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.”*

Verse 11: *“Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woolen and linen together.”*

What about wearing part polyester and part cotton shirts? What was the purpose for this commandment under Moses’ Law? Probably at that time there was a superstition that such mixing of materials had a magical effect. God’s people were not to follow this practice – mainly because of its **association with heathen worship**.ⁱ Such heathen practices do not exist today, and there is no reason for not wearing clothes that may contain several kinds of fibres.

Verse 12: *“Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest thyself.”* This verse refers to the Jewish prayer shawl, or *tallith*, the men wore over their heads in prayer. Would anyone insist that this command was intended for the New Testament Church?

Verses 13-21 give rules about handling the report of a man who claims he married a woman and found her not a virgin. A cloth – the token of virginity – was to be spread before the Elders of the city. If

the husband were not telling the truth, he had to pay a fine: but if he were telling the truth, the girl was to be stoned to death! Why not put this law over into the New Testament?

Deuteronomy, chapter 23, begins by omitting certain ones from the congregation of the Lord. A reading of the opening verses plainly shows that such does not pertain to the Gospel era. Later in this chapter, rules were given regarding **sanitation**. Since the invention of the toilet and sewer systems, practices such as those described in vv12 and 13 are NO LONGER REQUIRED.

Looking at the chapter prior to our text, chapter 21, vv1-9 give laws that were to be followed if someone was murdered and there was no suspect. The Elders of the city were to take a heifer into a rough valley where no crops were planted and strike off its head. Thus the land would be ridded of guilt. Would anyone insist that this ritual be followed today?

Deut. 21:18-21 states that if a “stubborn and rebellious” son will not obey his parents, they are to bring him to the Elders of the city and announce that he will not obey; that he is a “glutton and a drunkard.” Then “all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die.” Can we place this law over into the New Testament?

WITH THE CONTEXT of Deut. 22:5 in mind, we might ask: Since all these other things were never intended as laws for our time is it not *inconsistent* to grab this one verse OUT OF ITS SETTING and attempt to build a New Testament doctrine on it?

A person who insists on using Deut. 22:5 as a text (OUT OF CONTEXT) against pants on women had better be sure his own suit is not made of more than one kind of material, and he should make sure he is wearing fringes on his prayer shawl.ⁱⁱ

UPCI author, David K. Bernard, in *Practical Holiness a Second Look*, p179, rejects the *contextual* meaning of Deut. 22:5. He says the argument is not valid because chapter 22 contains laws against adultery (v22), rape (vv23-27) and incest (v30) and states these laws are not void! It is true that adultery, rape and incest are sins in the NT, but the Law of Moses required death for adultery to put away evil from Israel (v22); stoning in v24 and a fine in v29. Like stoning a rebellious son and bringing forth a cloth to prove a girl’s virginity NONE OF THESE LAWS are valid today. Bernard misses the point completely.

THE END OF THE LAW

The Scriptures teach that Jesus brought an END to the Law. In St. Luke 16:16 He said, “*The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.*” St. John 1:17, “*For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ.*” The Apostles taught the Law was ended. Romans 6:14, “*...ye are not under the law, but under grace.*” Galatians 2:16 “*...a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ...by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*” V21, “*...if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*” Galatians 3:10, 11 “*For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse...no man is justified by the law in the sight of God...*” Galatians 5:18, “*But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*”

The Gentile converts were not required to keep Moses’ Law. Galatians 5:3, 4: “*For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law, Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*” IF WE KEEP ONE COMMANDMENT UNDER THE LAW OF MOSES, WE ARE INDEBTED TO KEEP THE ENTIRE LAW.

Therefore, we must conclude, there is NO SALVATION for us or any RIGHTEOUSNESS in Deut. 22:5.

The UPCI tract entitled *The Scriptures Decree Modesty in Dress* insists,

“*...this verse deals with moral law and with the nature of God, which never change, not with a ceremonial ritual fulfilled by Christ.*”

Dividing the Law of Moses into 2-3 types is **Catholic theology**. The “Church Father,” JUSTIN MARTYR, maintained a distinction between moral and ceremonial laws. THOMAS AQUINAS introduced a threefold division of the law: moral, ceremonial and judicial.ⁱⁱⁱ But, neither Jesus nor the Apostle gave any hint that a portion of the Law of Moses would be carried forward into the NT, but Jesus said in Matt. 5:18, “*For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till ALL be fulfilled.*”

According to the *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia* God’s moral laws are summarized in the 10 Commandments, which are of eternal validity because they are based on the unchangeable nature of God.^{iv} This view is, in part, expressed by the UPCI. But, Jesus also fulfilled the 10 Commandments. (Matt. 22:35-40). In Romans 13:8-10 the Apostle wrote, *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath **FULFILLED** the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore **love is the FULFILLING of the law.***” God’s laws are no longer written in tables of stone but on fleshly tables of the heart. (2 Cor. 3:3)

Deut. 22:5 is placed in the middle of, and is completely surrounded by, laws that have nothing to do with the unchangeable nature of God. If it were indeed a MORAL law to be literally followed today, why would God choose to bury this verse in the middle of what are laws of a different type nature?^v

The UPCI also insists in the tract *The Scriptures Decree Modesty in Dress*,

“Moreover, when the Apostle Peter wished to instruct Christian women about proper conduct, he used Sarah, the wife of Abraham, as his example (1 Peter 3:5). Thus, we are not out of order in this instance to use a verse of Scripture from the law. We rightfully go back over the years and learn a spiritual lesson that sharply rebukes the customs and practices of our day.” [“Old-fashioned” clothing is “godly”?]

It is an erroneous teaching to put Deut. 22:5 (ONLY v5) over into the NT in combination with 1 Peter 3:5. Deut. 22:5 involves a type of cross-dressing, but 1 Peter 3:3-6 refers to the **ostentation of pagan, sacred prostitutes** and has no reference to any type of cross-dressing at all whatsoever. *Hetaerae* could not seduce men and women both at the same time. It was not the desire of Apostle Peter to point NT women Gentile converts to the Law of Moses for instruction on adornment. The Apostle’s example, Sarah, was NOT under the Law of Moses; Sarah and Abraham lived BEFORE the Law.

The UPCI book, *The Girl in the Dress*, by Lori Wagner, p99, states, “...pants are just not modest...pants accentuate body parts and reveal far more detail of a woman’s body than a skirt. Pants draw attention to a woman’s figure. Even loose fitting pants outline a woman’s feminine shape.” On one hand, a woman is condemned for wearing a man’s garment, but, on the other hand, she is condemned for wearing a garment that shows her feminine shape. How could a man’s garment do this? Pants cannot be both a man’s garment and a woman’s *seductive* garment. Wagner states on p97, “...girls in pants sit and act in more masculine ways than girls in skirts and dresses.” Why do boys in pants have *effeminate* gestures and mannerisms? How could men in Biblical times act *masculine* in skirts and tunics, i.e., dresses?

Pants were the costume of “barbarians,” the civilizations outside the Roman Empire and were not worn by the Greeks and Romans (or the Hebrews) themselves.^{vi} Women “barbarians” also wore pants. The Apostles were aware of the dress of other nationalities and would have known that both sexes of the “barbarians” wore pants. But, Peter is not referring to the pants of the “barbarians” in 1 Peter 3:3-6, but the class of women who had “that” adorning was the *hetaerae*.

In the culture of the Roman Empire pants were regarded as indecent on EITHER sex (read the next article). According to Laurence Benaim, author of *Pants A History Afoot*, “...for a long time pants led a **licentious** life...Hugging too much, they were already suspected of all evils. Never has an article of clothing been so popular, yet so tainted with taboo.”

The zippered fly in a pair of pants descended from the “codpiece,” a lewd feature in men’s tights worn in the Medieval Era. (The next article explains.) The fly draws attention to the genitals, and pants can be indecent on MEN. Pants in our culture are no more immodest on women than they are on men.

CULTIC TRANSVESTITISM

Deut. 22:5 does not refer to cross-dressing in a CULTURAL sense. The practice of a woman deliberately trying to appear as a man or a man trying to pass as a woman is a deeply rooted and psychological problem. The compulsive desire to dress like the opposite sex stems from a sexual abnormality. This is not what v5 refers to, but the exchange of apparel in this verse refers to CULTIC transvestitism. That is, men would dress as women and women as men in *worshipping heathen gods!*^{vii} **The practice involved IDOLATRY.**

“ABOMINATION”

The word, “abomination”, is commonly linked with the worship of heathen gods (Deut. 12:31; 13:14; 18:12; 27:15, etc.). The Hebrew word translated as “abomination” in this verse is *to’ebah* and is defined as, “something *disgusting* (mor.), i.e. (as noun) an *abhorrence*; espec. *IDOLATRY* or (concr.) an *IDOL*... *To’ebah* may represent (a) the pagan cultic practices themselves (Deut. 12:31), or (b) the people who perpetrate such practices.”^{viii}

According to *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*, “There are a total of 12 Hebrew and Greek words translated “abomination” or “abominable.” The Biblical languages have a variety of expressions, some close synonymms, others not, to express degrees and varieties of abhorrence. The **chief idea** represented in the 4 Hebrew nouns is revulsion at **great wrong in religious matters**. All forms of idolatry and all ceremonies and objects connected with idolatry are abhorrent to God. **The Hebrew *to’eba* is the chief word in the OT used in this connection.** The same abhorrence pertains to moral evil.” Pagan worship at times involved immorality.

From an Internet article, “The common liberal argument states that *to’ebah* is a religious term usually reserved for instances of idolatry – in other words, cross-dressing practiced by surrounding pagan nations during rituals and involving promiscuity. If a moral violation or a sin would have been intended by this verse, as the UPCI asserts, then the Hebrew word *zimah* would have been used instead of *to’ebah*. The Greek *Septuagint* translation of the Hebrew Scriptures translated *to’ebah* into Greek as *bdelygma*, which meant **ritual impurity**.^{ix} [*Strong’s Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words* defines *bdelygma* #946 as, “a *detestation*, i.e. (spec.) *idolatry*.] The conclusion here then is that cross-dressing in the context of idolatry was prohibited by Deut. 22:5. Verses dealing directly with idolatry using *to’ebah* are: 7:15-16; 13:14; 17:4; 18:9; 20:18.

THE HEBREW TEXT

The word, “man”, appears in the book of Deuteronomy about 78 times. It is usually translated from the Hebrew word *’iysh*, meaning “man, a male”^x, and a few times from *adam*, meaning “mankind”.^{xi} But, in Deut. 22:5 the word translated “man” is *geber*, meaning a **valiant man** or **warrior**.^{xii} It comes from the root word, *gabar*, meaning “to be strong.”^{xiii} It is apparent that Moses was quite intentionally not talking about a man in general but a very specific kind of man – namely, a warrior or soldier.

The word, “pertaineth”, is translated from the Hebrew word, *keliy*, which means “any apparatus as an implement, utensil, vessel or **weapon**.” Translators commonly render *keliy* as **weapon, armour** or *instrument* in the OT.^{xiv} Considering this, Deut. 22:5 would mean,

“The woman shall not put on [the weapons/armour of a warrior], neither shall a [warrior] put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.”

We have a contrast in this verse – not merely between the clothing of men and women – but between that which pertained to men of war (soldiers) and women.

Adam Clarke’s Commentary on Deut. 22:5 states,

“...keli geber, the instruments or arms of a man. As the word *geber* is here used, which properly signifies a strong man or man of war, it is very probably that armour is here intended; especially as we know that in the worship of Venus, to which that of ASTARTE or ASTAROTH among the CANAANITES bore a striking resemblance, the women were accustomed to appear in armour before her. It certainly cannot mean a simple change in dress, whereby the men might pass for women, and vice versa. This would have been impossible in those countries where the dress of the sexes had but little to distinguish it, and where every man wore a long beard.”

Astarte is the Greek form of the name Ashtart, who, along with Asherah and Anath, was one of the 3 great goddesses of the Canaanite pantheon. Astarte had associations with war, shown in several Egyptian representations in which she carries weapons of war and in descriptions in both Egyptian and Ugaritic texts that characterize her as a warrior goddess. In 1 Sam. 31:10 the armor of the dead King Saul is taken by the Philistines to the temple of Astarte, and this may further indicate the goddess’s warrior characteristics. Phoenician sources also report Astarte’s identification with Venus.^{xv}

John Gill in his *Exposition of the Entire Bible* sees a similar meaning in 22:5,

“...and the word [keliy] also signifies armour, as Onkelos [translator of the Hebrew Bible into Aramaic] renders it; and so here forbids women putting on a military habit and going with men to war, as was usual with the eastern women; and so Miamonides [one of the greatest scholars in Diaspora Jewish history and author of the Mishneh Torah] illustrates it, by putting a mitre or an helmet on her head, and clothing herself with a coat of mail; and in like manner Josephus [noted Jewish historian] explains it, ‘take heed, esp in war, that a woman do not make use of the habit of a man, or a man that of a woman’ ...” (sic)^{xvi}

In primitive cultures times of battle were special times to seek the favor of the gods – the exchanging of garments being one of the magical rites in this connection. Several ancient cults practiced TRANSVESTITE WARRIOR DRESSING in honor of their pagan god of war. Such cult worship predates the Israelite period. Women were being warned in Deut. 22:5 from entering the pagan rites of the CANAANITES who at times sought their gods by cross-dressing in battle gear, which was intended to attract the attention of the gods. Likewise, the Israelite soldier (*geber*) when entering into other lands was warned not to participate in these same pagan religions which also prescribed that men don women’s apparel to summon the gods.

This practice spanned many centuries, and we can see a clear example of it with the Greek worship of the goddess Athena, also called Minerva, by the pagan Romans. Athena/Minerva was depicted in battle array, and women worshiping her would pay homage by holding ceremonies while dressed in armor, helmets, holding spear and shield.^{xvii}

Men wore the clothing of women when they presented themselves before the Star of Venus; and women wore men's armor when presenting themselves before the Star of Mars. Idols were frequently represented with the features of one sex and the dress of the other.^{xviii}

THE JEWISH INTERPRETATION

Deut. 22:5 is part of the Jewish *Torah*. How has this passage been interpreted by the sages? Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism writes in an article entitled, *Cross Dressing and Deuteronomy 22:5*,

“Rabbi Eliezer ben Jacob quoted in the *Talmud* says, “What is the proof that a woman may not go forth with weapons to war?” He then cites our verse [Deut. 22:5], which he reads this way: “A warrior’s gear may not be put on a woman” (B. Naz. 59a). He reads *kli gever [geber]* as the homograph *kli gibbor*, meaning a “warrior’s gear.”

Rabbi Tilsen, in this same article, states that this interpretation has even been cited in the debate over exemption for women from military conscription in modern Israel.^{xix}

A STUDY INTO ANCIENT BIBLICAL DRESS

How did people in the Bible dress? Did men wear pants? What kinds of differences were there between men's and women's clothing?

A MAN'S SKIRT

The word, “skirt,” appears 12 times in the Bible and each time refers to the skirt of a MAN! We read about the skirt of him that is a Jew (Zech. 8:23); the skirt of the priest's garment (Hag. 2:12); the skirt of a father (Deut. 22:30); Saul's skirt (1 Sam. 24:4,5); the skirt of Boaz (Ruth 3:9); and figuratively, the skirt of the Lord Himself. (Ezek. 16:8)

The word, “skirts”, (plural) appears 7 times translated from various words and is used of men and women. It is evident that BOTH sexes wore robe-type garments.^{xx}

The UPCI tract entitled *The Scriptures Decree Modesty in Dress* proclaims,

“...the Scriptures teach a GREAT difference between femininity and masculinity as to dress” and cites Deut. 22:5.

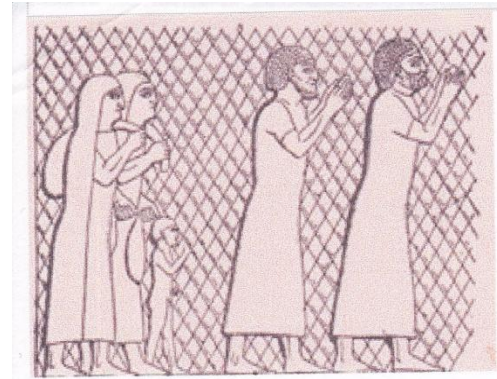
The author of this tract presents no description of ancient Biblical dress to confirm his assumption. A study into Biblical clothing reveals that there was VERY LITTLE DISTINCTION between the articles of clothing worn by men and women.

In Genesis we find the first account of clothing mentioned in the Bible. Upon recognizing their nakedness Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons. (Gen. 3:7) Gen. 3:21 records that God made “coats of skin” for BOTH of them to wear. There is no indication that God made Adam a pair of pants and Eve a skirt. The word, “coats,” in this verse is the Hebrew word *kethoneth* and means “a long shirt-like garment.”^{xxi} Later, throughout the Old and New Testaments, the first part of Jewish dress was still the *kethoneth* such as was worn by Adam and Eve. In the NT this garment is called *chiton* in the Greek and is often translated as *coat* in the KJV.^{xxii}

The *International Bible Encyclopedia* has this to say about the *kethoneth/chiton*:

“The “coat” (Hebrew *kethoneth* – Greek *chiton*) was the ordinary “inner garment” worn by the Jew of the day, in which he did the work of the day. It resembled the Roman “tunic”, corresponding most nearly to our “long shirt,” reaching below the knees always, and in case it was designed for dress occasions, reaching almost to the ground.

The well known piece of **Assyrian sculpture**, (pictured on right) representing the siege and capture of Lachish by Sennacherib, shows the Jewish captives, **male and female**, dressed in a moderately tight garment, fitting close to the neck and reaching almost to the ankles; which must represent the *kethoneth* of the period. The **Lachish tunics** have short sleeves, reaching half-way to the elbows. This probably represents the prevailing type of sleeve among the Hebrews of the earlier period.”



This probably represents the prevailing type of sleeve among the Hebrews of the earlier period.”

From *Easton's Bible Dictionary* we find this basic garment was worn by BOTH men and women:

“The “coat” (*kethoneth*) was worn by BOTH sexes. It was a closely-fitted garment, resembling in use and form our shirt. The robes of men and women were not much different in FORM from each other.”

Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia states:

“...the usual articles of clothing were common to BOTH men and women. ...the inner garment...(Heb. *Ketonet*; Gr. *Chiton*) was the principal ordinary garment worn by men and women. It was worn next to the skin and was actually a long, rather tight-fitting shirt. It was probably made in two pieces and sewn together at the sides. The inner garment was worn by women as well as men...”

The dress of women was distinguished, not so much by kind, as by detail and quality of materials. They wore **longer tunics** and **larger mantles** than the men. The outer garment differed in elaboration, making it a distinctive robe.”

Smith's Bible Dictionary has this to say concerning the “outer garment”:

“The dress of the women differed from that of the men in regard to the outer garment, the inner garment being worn equally by both sexes. The garments of females were terminated by an ample border of fringe which concealed the feet.”

The Greco-Roman World of the New Testament Era, by James S. Jeffers states:

“Men and women wore the same basic articles of clothing in Palestine. The distinction between the two was more in the color and other details. The tunic...similar to that of the Romans and Greeks, was the principal ordinary garment worn by men and women (Lk. 3:11; 6:29; 9:3; Acts 9:39). It was worn next to the skin and was essentially a long, tight-fitting shirt made of two pieces of cloth sewn together. The simplest kind was sleeveless. Members of the lower classes often wore nothing more than the tunic in warm weather.”

The Bible Almanac, by J.I. Parker, Merrill C. Tenney and William White, Jr., states,

“Women wore clothing that was very similar to that of men. However, the law strictly forbade a woman to wear anything that was thought to belong particularly to a man, such as the signet ring and other ornaments. According to the Jewish historian, Josephus, women were also forbidden to use the

weapons of a man. By the same token, men were forbidden to wear the outer robe of a woman. The Hebrew woman's outer garment differed from that of the man. It was longer with enough border and fringe to cover the feet."

Handbook of Life in Bible Times, by J.A. Thompson, states,

"During the whole of Bible history...men and women dressed similarly. People throughout Bible times would have worn some kind of tunic, usually from shoulder to knee or ankle. **Trousers**, socks and sweaters **were unknown to them**.

Most of the evidence for clothing comes from paintings, mosaics, statues and bas-reliefs. Some wall-sculptures from Assyria provide important evidence of what clothes looked like in the latter periods of the OT. Reliefs left by 3 Assyrian rulers, Shalmaneser III (859-852 B.C.), Sargon II (721-705 B.C.) and Sennacherib (704-681 B.C.) show Israelites of that time mostly wearing the traditional long tunic.

One of the best portrayals of everyday Jewish dress was found on the Sennacherib sculpture which depicted the Assyrian king's defeat of Lachish. The surrendering people stand or kneel before him, and they wear ankle-length tunics. The women in the group also wear a long cape which covers their heads and reaches to their ankles."

So, we see a GREAT distinction between men's and women's clothing did NOT exist in Biblical times. A feminine distinction was made in the **outer garment** involving the addition of trim. We can find the differences between men's and women's garments were in color, size, trim, material, etc. – not in the actual FORM or SHAPE of the clothing.

AARON'S "BREECHES"

Exodus 20:26 "Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon."

28:42 "And thou shalt make them **linen breeches to cover their nakedness**; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach:"

Psalms 133:2 "It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the **skirts** of his garments;"

The linen *breeches* worn by the Jewish priesthood are sometimes used as an argument that God made pants for men and not for women. UPCI author, Bernard, in *Practical Holiness a Second Look*, p173, asserts that "Priests in the OT wore breeches or trousers (Lev. 6:10; 16:4), indicating that this has been distinctively masculine attire in Judeo-Christian culture from the earliest times."

- (1) The origin of pants is neither Jewish nor Christian, but HEATHEN, originating in the cold climates of central Asia and taken over by the Persian Empire in the 5th - 4th cen. B.C. so far back as the 6th.^{xxiii}
- (2) Pants were not invented as a distinctively masculine garment but were worn by BOTH sexes.^{xxiv} Pants did not become associated with men until 1340 and only in European cultures.^{xxv} We see in Exodus 28:40 Aaron's sons were to wear coats, girdles and bonnets. Should the men also wear coats, girdles and bonnets, but not the women?^{xxvi}
- (3) **The linen breeches were not pants** but thigh-length **UNDERWEAR**. The Hebrew word is *miknac*, #4370 in *Strong's Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words*. It is derived from the root word *kamac*, #3647, in the sense of *hiding*; (only in dual) *drawers* (from concealing the private parts)...^{xxvii} The definition for the English word, "drawers," is, "an undergarment, long or short, for the lower part of the body, with a separate opening for each leg; underpants."^{xxviii} The outer garments worn by the priests were **SKIRTS**. (Picture of priests is from the *Jewish Encyclopedia*.) *The Bible Almanac*, p484, states, "This undergarment covered the priest's body from the waist to the knees. Rather than being trousers, "breeches" were probably a double apron."

- (4) While the other “holy garments” were for glory and for beauty (Ex. 28:40), the *breeches* were worn for modesty – to “hide their nakedness” **while ascending steps wearing skirts.**
- (5) The *breeches* were worn ONLY by the priests; they were not general masculine attire. There is no record that Israelites in general, either men or women, wore linen underpants.
- (6) They were worn ONLY while executing the duties of the priest. The priests were forbidden to wear the “holy garments” among the general populace – they were worn ONLY at the altar or in the holy area of the tabernacle. (Lev. 6:10-11; 16:23-24)



The UPCI book entitled, *The Girl in the Dress*, states on p95, “The Bible calls pants “breeches,” and these were worn only by men for close to six thousand years of human existence.” Both clauses of this statement are completely FALSE, and the author cites NO source for proof of such an assertion. *The Bible Almanac* lists men’s clothing and priests’ clothing in separate columns. It is stated, “Priestly dress was much different from that of the common Jew. Among the Hebrews, breeches were worn ONLY by the priests.” The undergarment of ordinary Jewish men AND women was the **loincloth** or a small waist slip.^{xxix}

It is a mistake to attempt to interpret modern, American/European CULTURAL views regarding clothing styles into the Bible, but *masculine* and *feminine* in clothing styles must be seen within the correct historical period and culture of a nationality. In our historical era and culture of our country a skirt is regarded as *feminine* attire, but not in ancient Hebrew culture for BOTH sexes wore skirts. In Bernard’s thinking, **if the priests’ underwear were distinctively masculine, their outer garments were feminine!**

According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, historians often explain that if any portion of a garment passed between the legs, it was an **ancestor** of pants.^{xxx} According to *prehistory*, the first garment for the lower half of the body was the **loincloth**. The ancient Egyptians took the loincloth and passed it through the legs to produce an early pant-like garment.^{xxxi} The Egyptian **breechcloth** or **loincloth** was worn by BOTH men and women as underwear, the men beneath their kilt-like *schenti*.^{xxxii} The female version was cut fuller in the hips. The workmanship associated with the Tabernacle, esp the high priest’s breastplate, was probably **Egyptian** in style and character.^{xxxiii} It is quite possible the *breeches* worn by the priests were a refinement of the Egyptian breechcloth. ALL underwear today, WOMEN’S panties and pantyhose, are BREECHED.

Concerning loincloths Croom states, “There is evidence both for and against men wearing any form of briefs under their tunics. The reason for doing so seems to have been modesty. It seems likely that people wearing short tunics, such as soldiers, wore underwear, while those in less danger of exposing themselves did not bother.



Loincloths were certainly known as outer-wear, but these were usually the preserve of rural workers such as farmhands and fishermen, or other low-ranking slaves.” There was more than one form of loincloth. The one pictured, worn by a fisherman, a mosaic from Lepcis Magna, Tripoli Museum, was “simply a long length of cloth passed between the legs, wrapped round the waist a number of times and the two loose ends either tucked in or tied in a number of different ways, the front end often hanging down as a form of apron.”

“GIRDING UP THE LOINS”

The UPCI book, *the Girl in the Dress*, p95, states, “In Bible days men and women wore long robes and men sometimes wore shorter ones over breeches that went down to the knees. Whenever a man’s robe got in the way of his work, he pulled up the edge and tucked it into his breeches. This is what the Bible calls, “girding up your loins” and it is something only men did (Job 38:3). Absolutely NO sources for any such information is cited by the author, and all of this is, in fact, proven FALSE.

Cruden’s Complete Concordance says,

“With the long loose robes which were commonly worn in the East a **girdle** was very necessary when a man wished to do any active work. When men were at ease the robes fell loosely around them, but the first thing in preparing for walking or for work was to tighten the **girdle** and **tuck up** the long skirts of the robe. (1 Kings 18: 46 – Elijah girded up his loins and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.) The girdle was sometimes of leather, but more usually a long piece of soft cloth, or silk that could be easily wrapped around the body and tied tightly.”



Men AND women needed a belt to tuck their tunics in or to prevent the tunics from billowing when they were working, or walking in rough, open countryside.^{xxxiv} The tunic was held to the waist by a girdle made of leather or coarse cloth. Sometimes the girdle was slit to make a pocket for money or other personal possessions (Mark 6:8). The girdle was also handy for the insertion of weapons or tools (1 Sam. 25:13). When men needed freedom to work or for running, they lifted the hem of the tunic and **TUCKED IT INTO THE GIRDLE** to gain greater freedom of movement. The WOMEN lifted the hem of their tunics too – in their case to carry things from one place to another.^{xxxv} Proverbs 31:17 says, “SHE girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.” Eph. 6:14 instructs BOTH sexes to “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth...” “Girding up the loins” became a metaphor for preparedness.

Underwear worn by men and women was the loincloth; *breeches* were underwear worn ONLY by the priests, and men did NOT wear pants underneath their tunics!

CONCLUSION

Now you can see how far OUT OF CONTEXT preachers have taken Deut. 22:5. There is nothing in Deuteronomy, chapter 22, that can be applied to the NT Church, and Jesus Christ totally fulfilled the Law of Moses. The Jewish interpretation of Deut. 22:5 was not that of modern day “cross-dressing”.

The practice of transvestitism in a cultural sense is associated with an abnormal desire to attract a person of the same sex. Most women today do not wear pants for perverted sexual reasons, but for comfort, warmth and practicality, and they are more modest than skirts or dresses for many activities women engage in.

The question is sometimes raised, “If a woman can wear pants, why can’t a man wear a dress?” A dress on a man in our country is counter-cultural, but women’s pants are not counter-cultural.

There are many articles of clothing both women and men wear that are of the same FORM but in masculine and feminine versions, T- shirts being an important example.

The “hosen” worn by the 3 Hebrew children in Daniel 3:21 is taken up in the next article.

- ⁱ “Women’s Adornment”, by Ralph Woodrow; pp3-4
- ⁱⁱ “Women’s Adornment”, by Ralph Woodrow; pp4-6, 10
- ⁱⁱⁱ “Wycliffe Encyclopedia” Vol. 2, p1681
- ^{iv} “Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia,” Vol. 2, p1015
- ^v “Does the Bible Say it’s a Sin for Women to Wear Pants?”, by Jason Young;
<http://www.actseigheten.com/articles/women-pants.htm>
- ^{vi} “Roman Clothing and Fashion,” by Alexandra Croom; p61
- ^{vii} “Women’s Adornment,” by Ralph Woodrow; p1
- ^{viii} “Strong’s Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words” #8441
- ^{ix} “What is an “Abomination”?” http://www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Village/8295/cd_abom.html?200718
- ^x “Strong’s Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words” #376
- ^{xi} “Strong’s Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words” #120
- ^{xii} “Strong’s Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words” #1397
- ^{xiii} “Strong’s Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words” #1396
- ^{xiv} “Strong’s Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words” #3627
- ^{xv} “Jewish Women Encyclopedia”; <http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/astarte-bible>
- ^{xvi} Josephus, Book 4, 8:43; “Does the Bible Say it’s a Sin For Women to Wear Pants?”, by Jason Young;
<http://www.actseigheten.com/articles/women-pants.htm>
- ^{xvii} “Pants on Women—What the Bible Says”; <http://www.solarsabbath.org/pants.htm>
- ^{xviii} “Hasting’s Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,” Vol. 5, p40
- ^{xix} “Cross Dressing and Deuteronomy 22:5”, by Rabbi Tilsen; <http://www.beki.org/crossdress.html>
- ^{xx} “Women’s Adornment”, by Ralph Woodrow, p6
- ^{xxi} Brown, Driver, Briggs and Gesenius. “Hebrew Lexicon entry for Kethoneth” (Strong’s #3801). “The KJV Old Testament Hebrew Lexicon.”
- ^{xxii} “Does the Bible Say it’s a Sin for Women to Wear Pants?”, by Jason Young,
<http://www.actseigheten.com/articles/women-pants.htm>
- ^{xxiii} “Pants a History Afoot”, by Laurence Benaim, p259; Ellen Battelle Dietrick, “Male and Female Attire in Various Nations and Ages,” ARENA (Aug. 1894), 354, ; “The History of Pants and Women Wearing Them”, by Carol Parris Krauss, http://www.associatedcontent.com/pop_print.shtml?content_type=article&content_type_id... British Museum
- ^{xxiv} CLOTHING, “History of Clothing Around the World”;
http://encarta.msn.com/text_761569657_10/Clothing.html
- ^{xxv} “Pants a History Afoot”, by Laurence Benaim, p17
- ^{xxvi} “That Women Arrange Themselves with Well-Arranged Clothing”, by Bernie Parsons;
<http://www.christianuniverse.com/doctrine/docdisc/dresspants.htm>
- ^{xxvii} “Strong’s Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words” #4370
<http://www.yourdictionary.com/drawers>
- ^{xxix} “The New Manners & Customs of Bible Times,” by Ralph Gower; p12
- ^{xxx} <http://www.britannica.com/search?query=pants>
- ^{xxxi} “A Fashionable History of Coats & Pants”, by Helen Reynolds, p30
- ^{xxxii} “Loincloth”, Wikipedia Encyclopedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loincloth>
- ^{xxxiii} “Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia” under “jewels, jewelry”, p926
- ^{xxxiv} “Handbook of Life in Bible Times,” by J.A. Thompson; p103
- ^{xxxv} “The New Manners & Customs of Bible Times,” by Ralph Gower; p14