

Men's and Women's Apparel or Clothing

By Leon King

"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." – Deuteronomy 22:5.

Much controversy arises from this Scripture. Heated debates are stirred by those who view this from opposing sides. I have avoided this through the years, because it is one of those matters in which I had no clear understanding. Let us notice some things about this verse. Here is a quote from the *On-Line Bible* with numbers from *Strong's Concordance* keyed to the words.

Deuteronomy 22:5-AV The woman <0802> shall not wear that which pertaineth <03627> unto a man <01397>, neither shall a man <01397> put <03847> (8799) on a woman's <0802> garment <08071>: for all that do <06213> (8802) so <0428> are abomination <08441> unto the LORD <03068> thy God <0430>.

In this article, we shall examine the words in this verse that may need definition. The reason I want to look at these words is to help the reader to understand without question what is said and what is not. There are many existing pamphlets and papers on this verse which speak only to the emotions and prejudices of the writers. There is little doubt that this subject it is an emotional one for some. This topic turns into heated debate at times. I've seen it and experienced it!

The first word and number we wish to examine is *"that which pertaineth <03627>."* If we look at the verse, we can see where this phrase and number fit into the verse. Immediately below is the number and Hebrew word from which this is translated. Notice the various ways the word is

translated in the King James Version (AV). The word appears three hundred and twenty-five times, but is *never* primarily associated with men's clothing, but rather with men's things in general. The word is particularly associated with things normally used in combat or war. The very best way to ascertain the meaning of a word is to notice its use in the Holy Scriptures. Here is the word:

03627 ylk k@liy kel-ee'

As Translated in the AV: vessel 166, instrument 39, weapon 21, jewel 21, armourbearer, 05375 18, stuff 14, thing, 11, armour 10, furniture 7, carriage 3, bag 2, misc 13; 325 times in all.

Next, we notice "*unto a man <01397>*." Note that the emphasis here is on a strong man, warrior, or mighty man. This idea meshes completely with the foregoing use of the Hebrew word as armament. This word appears sixty-eight times and is translated as shown in the quote above from the On-line Bible.

"*Woman's <0802>*" is the next word in the verse which is significant to help us understand. The Hebrew word "ishshah" is shown below with its various renderings. The word is used seven hundred and eighty times in the King James Version and means the woman or female in general.

0802 hva 'ishshah ish-shaw',

AV – wife 425, woman 324, one 10, married 5, female 2, misc 14; 780.

"*Put on <03847>*" is the next term. It comes from the Hebrew "labash" or "Labesh" and simply means what it says in English – put on in the sense of clothing or other attire.

03847 vbl labash law-bash'

AV-clothe 51, put on 22, put 18, array 6, wear 4, armed 3, came 3, apparel 1, apparelled 1, clothed them 1, came upon 1, variant 1; 112.

The next time the form of woman appears in the verse, it is "woman's" and means the same as the former word. "*simlah* <08071)" is the significant word which follows. The various ways the Hebrew word "simlah" is translated follows. It is clear that it means any item of women's clothing.

08071 hlms simlah sim-law'

Perhaps by permutation for the fem. Of 05566 (through the idea of a cover assuming the shape of the object beneath):

AV – raiment 11, clothes 6, garment 6, apparel 2, cloth 2, clothing 2; 29.

"Abomination <08441> is most significant. The Hebrew word "towebah" is translated 117 times and always means abomination. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines abomination as: "The feeling or state of mind of combined disgust and hatred; abhorrence, detestation, loathing. Physical disgust, nausea."

08441 hbewt tow'ebah to-ay-baw' or hbet to'ebah to-ay-baw'

AV-abomination 113, abominable thing 2, abominable 2; 117

The 22nd chapter of Deuteronomy is part of a list of statutes and judgments which God commanded Israel by Moses to observe in the land which they would possess. Notice Deuteronomy 12:1 "*These are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which the LORD God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth.*" Applying the principles which we have been taught of Scripture study, we remember that God is speaking through Moses to the children of Israel about what they are to do when they enter the Promised Land. That

is the primary application. The primary application applies to every command that is written in the chapters and verses which follow Deuteronomy 12:1. You might answer, "Well, then that takes me off the hook." "Right! except for the phrase, '*for **all** that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.*'"

Let us summarize the verse. The woman (Female – any woman) is not to wear anything that pertains unto a man whether it be clothing, armament, or accessories. A man (male) is not to put on a woman's (female) garment or item of clothing. All that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God.

This means that it is wrong for a woman to wear anything that is traditionally and usually worn and used by men. The reverse is true. It is an abomination to God for a man to wear women's clothing and amenities.

In principle then, it follows that every woman who wears that which pertains to a man and every man who dresses in women's garments are alike abomination to the Lord, no matter what nation they are of. As believers, we need to hear this exhortation.

A FINAL OBSERVATION AND CONCLUSION:

It is abundantly clear that God ordained a distinct difference in the sexes. Clothing and articles used or worn which confound this distinction are abomination to the Lord no matter whether Israel or the Church of God – or the heathen who stand in unbelief. Destroying this distinction by hair styles is also relevant to this issue. It is the topic of another tract. The argument about women's wearing of pants is a position with too many loose ends to be true. For example, some push the women to wear culottes rather than pants. Culotte is the French word for pants. According to Wikipedia, the On-Line Encyclopedia, The word **culottes** is of French language origin, and is the diminutive form of the word "cul," which means backside," from the Latin "culus." Historically, the word "culottes" has always referred to the

knee-breeches commonly worn by gentlemen of the European upper-classes from the late Middle Ages or Renaissance through the early 19th century.

To allow ourselves to follow fads and trends of the world and ignore this Scripture is flagrant disregard for the will of God. If a woman wears pants or paraphernalia which makes her appear to be a man or man-like, it is abominable to God. Let us refrain ourselves from any practice which is not well pleasing in the sight of our Lord!