

PaRDeS

Bijbelstudies

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**You are not to wear clothing
woven with two kinds of thread,
wool and linen together.**

Deut. 22:11

A lesson to think the Hebrew way

The prohibition to wear clothing made of wool and linen together has made to raise the hair of many Bible teachers, including myself. Only when we approach such commands from the point of view of the Hebrew, Jewish hermeneutics, the significance of these will reveal itself. Within the hermeneutics of the Christian Church, usually one tries to assign an allegorical meaning to 'wool' and 'linen'. In this explanation stands 'wool' for instance for a carnal lifestyle, while 'linen' represents a spiritual lifestyle.

This conclusion is drawn based on what is written about the priests in Ez. 44:17-18:

“Once they enter the gates of the inner courtyard, they are to wear linen clothing; they are not to wear any wool while serving at the gates of the inner courtyard or inside it. They are to wear linen turbans on their heads and linen underclothes on their bodies, and they are not to wear anything that makes them sweat. “

However, the point of interest here is not necessarily the ‘wool’, but rather that the clothes would not cause him to sweat, and for the same reason he was not allowed to let his hair grow long, but the priest should cut his hair short, as said in verse 20:

“They are not to shave their heads or let their hair grow long, but must keep their hair carefully trimmed.”

Neither wool, nor linen has an intrinsic negative meaning in the Bible.

Wool

- *‘Even if your sins are like scarlet, they will be white as snow; even if they are red as crimson, they will be like wool.’ (Isaiah 1:18)*
- The Ancient One in Daniel 7:9 is described as: *‘His clothing was white as snow, the hair on his head was like pure wool.’*

- In Rev 1:14, John sees Yeshua, while *'His head and hair were as white as snow-white wool'* (Rev 1:14)
- In Hosea 2:8-9, God describes his unfaithful spouse with these words:
'For she doesn't know it was I who gave her the grain, the wine and the oil; I who increased her silver and gold, which they used for Ba'al. So I will take back my grain at harvest-time and my wine in its season; I will snatch away my wool and flax, given to cover her naked body.'

Linen

- The curtain in the tabernacle was made of linen (Ex. 36:35)
- Also the screen of the gateway to the courtyard of the tabernacle was linen (Ex 38:18)
- The priests had to wear linen clothing, when they were to work in the temple (Lev.6:10)
- The Bride of Christ was given to be dressed in *'fine linen, bright and clean has been given her to wear.'* (*'Fine linen' means the righteous deeds of God's people.*) (Rev 19:8).

Hence, Scripture teaches us that the allegorical meanings of WOOL and LINEN stand for CLEANNESS and JUSTICE.

But then, how should we deal with this command in Deut. 22:11, where it explicitly is forbidden to wear WOOL and LINEN simultaneously?

To find out, we have to consult and turn to the Hebrew thought and the Jewish hermeneutics. Behold that in Hebrew thought not all things are as static as in the Greek thinking that has become dominant in the theology of the (western) church. Not everything is always as if it were a mathematical equation.

Evidently, this command does not concern the qualities of WOOL and LINEN in the sense of CLEANNESS and JUSTICE. This is corroborated, when we refer to Lev. 19:19, where basically the same command is repeated, but without the specific reference to WOOL and LINEN.

Deut. 22:11: *'You are not to wear clothing woven with two kinds of thread, wool and linen together.'*

Lev. 19:19: *'Observe my regulations. "Don't let your livestock mate with those of another kind, don't sow your field with two different kinds of grain, and don't wear a garment of cloth made with two different kinds of thread.'*

In the original text the Hebrew word **kil'ayim** (כִּלְאִים) is used, which means 'mixing of two types', a word that is used only in these two places in the Bible.

Therefore, the essence of this command is that one must *not* combine TWO THINGS of DIFFERENT KIND.

The Hebrew way of thinking is 'thinking in images'. The principle of not combining TWO THINGS OF DIFFERENT KIND, is made visible in this command, to make sure that one is reminded here off in the practical daily life. In the same way - and a somewhat more commonly known - reminds God, his people to consider daily His commandments by wearing the **tzitzit (צִיצִית)** (memorial tassels) at the corners of their robes, and by attaching the **Mezuzah (מְזוּזָה)** (a small container with the texts of Deut.6:4-9 and 11:13-21) to the posts of the door of their houses.

With the prohibition of wearing clothing, in which both WOOL and LINEN are woven together, demands God from his People to pay attention to an important aspect of His Commandments.

When the people of Israel had settled in the promised land, six tribes were made to stand on the mount GERIZIM, and six tribes on the mount EBAL. On the mount Gerizim the blessings were proclaimed, while on the mount Ebal the curses were presented, that will come unto you depending on whether you obey God and adhere to his commandments, or not.

'Speak to the people of Isra'el, instructing them to make, through all their generations, tzitziyot on the corners of their garments, and to put with the tzitzit on each corner a blue thread. It is to be a tzitzit for you to look at and thereby remember all of ADONAI's mitzvot and obey them, so that you won't go around wherever your own heart and eyes lead you to prostitute yourselves; but it will help you remember and obey all my mitzvot and be holy for your God.' (Num 15:38-40)

Let us now view the context of Deut. 22:11 in a broader sense, and analyze the text using the method of the Jewish hermeneutics (PaRDeS), which distinguishes four levels of meaning.

'You are not to sow two kinds of seed between your rows of vines; if you do, both the two harvested crops and the yield from the vines must be forfeited. You are not to plow with an ox and a donkey together. You are not to wear clothing woven with two kinds of thread, wool and linen together. You are to make for yourself twisted cords on the four corners of the garment you wrap around yourself.' (Deut. 22:9-12)

Here we see our text extended with the prohibition to plow with an **ox** and a **donkey** together.

Let us now look at the first level of meaning (PESHAT) and the third level (DERASH).

The first level addresses the literal meaning of the texts in common linguistic understanding.

The third level reveals the message, that originates from comparing this text with related or similar texts.

All presented commands have a literal meaning and a practical value (PESHAT). If you would have your plow pulled by an ox and a donkey,

then you can expect the plow to skew (because of the unequal power of the animals), and everything goes wrong.

If you weave wool and linen together in a gown, that gown will tear apart by washing, because of the difference in shrinkage of the materials, when exposed to water and detergents.

Through the 'language of images' in the practical daily life, the people of God were continually reminded that they should keep the Commandments of God and at the same time were warned that all would go wrong if they didn't.

Two oxen pulling the plow is as the mount Gerizim; an ox and a donkey would be as Ebal. A gown made up of wool and linen shows after the first washing that it is a curse and a bad idea; the snit will be lost and if you wear it in public you would be like a fool.

This is in Hebrew thought Gods Language.

The prohibition about WOOL and LINEN in the same cloth, reminded the people of the fact that God hates mixing of incompatible things (or ideas).

'ADONAI your God is going to bring you into the land you will enter in order to take possession of it, and he will expel many nations ahead of you -the Hitti, Girgashi, Emori, Kena'ani, P'rizi, Hivi and Y'vusi, seven nations bigger and stronger than you. When he does this, when ADONAI your God hands them over ahead of you, and you defeat them, you are to destroy them completely! Do not make any

covenant with them. Show them no mercy. Don't intermarry with them -don't give your daughter to his son, and don't take his daughter for your son.' (Deut. 7:1-3)

'Do not yoke yourselves together in a team with unbelievers. For how can righteousness and lawlessness be partners? What fellowship does light have with darkness? What harmony can there be between the Messiah and B'liya'al? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement can there be between the temple of God and idols?' (2Cor 6:14-16a)

The essence of God's inhibition of **mixing is** the command to not commit idolatry!

When, at the time of King Ahab, the people subjected to idolatry, the prophet Elija was instructed to cry:

Eliyahu stepped forward before all the people and said, 'How long are you going to jump back and forth between two positions? If ADONAI is God, follow him; but if it's Ba'al, follow him!' (1Kings18:21)

And Yeshua says in the Sermon on the Mount:

'No one can be slave to two masters; for he will either hate the first and love the second, or scorn the second and be loyal to the first. You can't be a slave to both God and money.' (Math. 6:24)

Our current world has become poor in thinking in images.

It is good that we contemplate a new such commandment of the God, and try to develop for ourselves examples of representation. A visual image is easier to remember, and is sometimes reflected in your dreams. Thinking in images can serve as a resistance to subjection to modern forms of idolatry, that can sneak into your life unintentionally. How many Christians participate in lotteries, because 50% goes to charity. Still, this is 'mixing'; it is 50% idolatry. Satanists today know better than believers how to take advantage of using images.

Still, it should not be so!

How many Christians walk around in clothes adorned with the almost universally accepted PENTAGRAM? Yet, it is an occult symbol. It is a violation of the Biblical command not to mix wool and linen in the same dress; even if the entire piece of cloth with the PENTAGRAM on it, is made of linen (or cotton, or artificial fiber)!

Dear friend, let us walk the narrow road, not dodging to the left, nor to the right.

Whoever can grasp this, please grab it.

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