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No Crossdressing 22: 5

A reversal of the natural order, and the distinction between men and women, is viewed as detestable to ADONAI. Therefore, there should be no crossdressing.

While several of the mitzvot grouped in **22:1-12** refer to mankind's relationships with our neighbors, there are also mitzvot about the care of animals and birds. The impression remains that **the Second Address: The Specific Stipulations of the Covenant (12:1 to 26:19)**, covers a wide range of topics. The present group of **eleven mitzvot** in **22:1-12** make it clear that the scope of **ADONAI's** concern for proper treatment in the covenant community was just as wide. There was to be a wholehearted application of the Torah. In these next **twelve verses**, much of them are concerned with the love that should be shown to other members of the covenant community (**Deuteronomy 15:1-18; Leviticus 19:1-37**). While the brief statement: **Love your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39)**, does not occur in **Deuteronomy**, it is implied here, and in many parts of the book. The covenant mitzvot was comprehensive in its demand for love. The love of **YHVH**, and the love for one's **neighbors**.

We live in a sex-saturated society today. Sins that used to be kept in the dark are now flaunted in public. Our sense of shame has been replaced with brazen defiance. Norms that used to be accepted are now being challenged; people living abnormal lifestyles now want to be accepted as normal. Sex sells everything today. It is in every industry, all the time, year after year, day after day, every minute, every second. We cannot escape it. Like Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah, we are swimming in an ocean of sexual excess and perversion while trying to stay clean. Sex crimes are at all-time highs, while infidelity, divorce, and perversion are now commonplace. We are obsessed with sex to a degree perhaps never seen before in the world.



5. Moses, however, was way ahead of **his** time when, under the inspiration of **the Ruach ha’Kodesh**, he declared: **A woman must not wear men’s clothing, and a man is not to put on women’s clothing, for whoever does these things is detestable to ADONAI your God (22:5).** There is reason to believe that the commandment was made not merely to preserve decency, but because the pagans were in the habit of following homosexual practices (see the commentary on **Leviticus**, **to see link click Ae - The Bible and Homosexual Practice**) in their idol worship. **Maimonides, or Rambam (the most prolific and influential Torah scholar in the Middle Ages)** said that **“in the books of the idolaters it is commanded that when a man presents himself before the Star of Venus, he shall wear the colored dress of a woman; and when a woman adores the Stars of Mars, she shall appear in the armor of a man.”** Pagan idols were frequently represented with the features of one sex and the dress of the other, and their worshipers endeavored to be like them. Consequently, it seems that this practice of crossdressing was as old as the Torah itself.⁴⁷⁴

The adoption of clothing of the opposite sex was forbidden because it obscured the distinction of the sexes and therefore violated an essential part of the created order. **So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them (Genesis 1:27).** It was also subtly warned against anything that promoted homosexuality. The word translated **detestable** (Hebrew: *toebah* meaning *something disgusting morally*) is used to describe **Ha’Shem’s** view of homosexuality in **Leviticus 18:22, “Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable (toebah),”** and in **Leviticus 20:13, “If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable (toebah).”** And to show how serious this offense is, **the Ruach Ha’Kodesh** adds, **“They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.”** Also, some evidence exists that transvestism may have been connected with the worship of pagan deities.⁴⁷⁵

These commandments were given in the Dispensation of Torah (see the commentary on

Exodus Da - The Dispensation of Torah), and we are now living in the Dispensation of Grace (see the commentary on **Hebrews Bp - The Dispensation of Grace**) and therefore no longer live under the yoke of the Torah. However, like the Ten Words (see **Bk - The Ten Words**), this mitzvah reveals the heart of **God** and can be thought of as a “blueprint for living.” Since the mitzvah was related to the divine order of Creation and since **whoever does these things is detestable to God**, believers today should also obey this command.

But does this forbid women from wearing pants? No, it doesn't. In fact, clothing “that pertains to a man” at the time the verse was written would not have been understood to mean pants. Men in the Middle East through the history of the TaNaKh and the B'rit Chadashah did not ordinarily wear pants, trousers or slacks; they wore robe-like garments. And in many cultures such as in China, women have commonly worn pants. The scripture more specifically addresses and forbids transvestism and cross-dressing.

The underlying principle certainly applies to today. Men should dress in an appropriately masculine manner and women should dress in an appropriately feminine manner. Clothing manufacturers make pants designed for men, and pants, slacks and pants suits designed for women. The Bible emphasizes modesty, and for women, slacks are often more modest than a short skirt. **God** does not intend for this scripture to be understood in an extreme or unreasonable way. For example, it's perfectly fine for a woman to wear her husband's old shirt when she's painting or to put on her male friend's jacket when she's cold.

But there should be no crossdressing.

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** for being so very loving and wise that you keep us from things that will hurt us. Just as a young child may not understand why he is told not to play with fire, even though it seems fun – so you keep us from hurting ourselves when we obey you. **For ADONAI Elohim is a sun and a shield. ADONAI gives grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly (Psalms 84:12).** Thank **You** for being such a wonderful, loving **Father** when you say, “Yes,” and when you say, “No.” In **Yeshua's** holy name and **His** power of resurrection. Amen*