

Deuteronomy 22:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together.

Analysis

Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together—Sha'atnez (divers sorts/mixed fabrics) specifically prohibits wool-linen blend. Leviticus 19:19 gives the parallel law. Why this prohibition? It may symbolize separation from Egyptian and Canaanite practices where mixed fabrics appeared in priestly or magical contexts. More fundamentally, it taught respect for God's created boundaries—don't confuse categories God distinguished.

The high priest's garments included linen and wool (Exodus 39), suggesting this mixture was reserved for sacred service, forbidden in common use. The law constantly reminded Israel of distinctiveness and holiness in daily life. Jesus fulfills these ceremonial laws (Matthew 5:17); Christians are not bound by dietary or fabric regulations (Mark 7:19; Colossians 2:16-17), but the principle of holiness and separation from worldly compromise remains (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 John 2:15-17).

Historical Context

This law governed daily dress for ancient Israel preparing to enter Canaan. Archaeological evidence shows wool-linen mixtures in Egyptian textiles and Canaanite religious contexts. The prohibition created constant, tangible reminders of covenant distinctiveness—even getting dressed in the morning involved remembering one's identity as God's holy people. These laws made it virtually

impossible for an Israelite to forget their covenant obligations, embedding theology into everyday routines.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How can you cultivate constant awareness of your identity as God's holy people set apart from the world's values?
2. What contemporary equivalents exist to these boundary laws that remind believers of their distinct calling and separation from worldly compromise?

Interlinear Text

ל א	תִּלְבֹּשׁ	שְׂעֵטָיִךְ	צֹמֶר	וּפְשֵׁת יָם
H3808	Thou shalt not wear	a garment of divers sorts	as of woollen	and linen
	H3847	H8162	H6785	H6593

יחדוֹ:
together
H3162

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 19:19 (Parallel theme): Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed: neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee.

