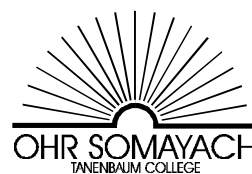




Ask The Rabbi...

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Issue #56

This issue is sponsored in loving memory of Joseph Intract Z"l by his son Joel Walter & family

לעיני ר' יוסף ב"ר יצחק הלוי אינטרקט ז"ל

This edition contains:

1. Earrings for Men; Pants for Women; Problems for Modern Times
2. Answer to Last Week's Riddle

Jonathan from Johannesburg writes:

Dear Rabbi,

Is wearing an earring forbidden for men because of the prohibition of "Lo Yilbash" (A man must not wear a woman's garment)?

Dear Jonathan and Susie,

The Torah says "Male clothing shall not be on a woman and a man shall not wear a feminine garment." The halachic authorities explain that this prohibition is designed to prevent members of the opposite sex from dressing alike in order to mingle without being recognized; all this for the purpose of improper sexual behavior.

As for earrings, though, this reason doesn't seem to apply. A man wearing all men's clothing will be easily recognized as male even *with* an earring. The poskim rule, however, that it would be forbidden to wear an article exclusively associated with the opposite sex even if it doesn't disguise the wearer.

The real question is: Are earrings "exclusively" associated with the opposite sex? Aren't there men who also wear earrings? The definition of what constitutes a male or female garment becomes blurred when clothing is generally worn by one gender, but is also worn by some members of the opposite gender. I asked Rav Chaim Pinchas Scheinberg, *shlita*, about this issue. Although he doesn't recommend that men wear earrings, he said that it would be halachically permitted to do so, since some men do wear them.

As for women wearing pants, the same would seem to apply, provided the pants were not designed exclusively for men. But there is another problem -- that the design of pants might be considered immodest for women. Wearing a skirt over the pants, however, would seem to

Susie of America-On-Line writes:

Dear Rabbi,

I'm a jogging enthusiast and I find it almost impossible to wear a skirt when I run. Would it be permissible for me to wear pants with a skirt over them when I run?

take care of this problem. Rabbi Scheinberg, *shlita*, said that it is permitted for a woman to wear slacks that are designed for both men and women (i.e., sweat pants) if she wears a knee-length skirt over them.

Speaking of fashion, I'm reminded of the guy who showed up for work one morning wearing two different shoes; the right one black and the left one white. Taking a good look at him, his boss said, "Your shoes! They...they're..." "Beautiful, aren't they?" the employee said proudly. "I have another pair at home *exactly* like them."

Sources:

- Devarim 22:5.
- *Shulchan Aruch - Yoreh De'ah* 182 and commentaries.
- Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef - *Yabi' ah Omer* vol. 6.

Answer to Last Week's Riddle

Question: In Parshat Terumah, which three articles of the Tabernacle are spelled with the same letters?

Answer:

- **כַּפֹּת** - *Kapporet* (25:17, the Ark's cover)
- **כַּפְתֹּר** - *Kaphtor* (25:33, the ornamental spheres of the Menorah)
- **פָּרֹכֶת** - *Parochet* (26:31, the curtain covering the innermost part of the Sanctuary).

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Ask The Rabbi is written by **Rabbi Yehoshua Karsh, Rabbi Benzion Bamberger,** and various other Rabbis at Ohr Somayach Institutions / Tanenbaum College, Jerusalem, Israel.

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