

# MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

508(c)(1)(a) Free Church • Sole Tanakh Authority  
A Study for Judaism • Christianity • Islam

## DOCUMENT 287

### ON THE FOUR CORNERS

A Covenant Deep Dive into Deuteronomy 22:12 — *gedilim* (twisted cords) on the Four Corners of the Covering

*What Does the Verse Command, Is It the Same Law as Numbers 15:37–41, Why the Four Corners and the Covering, Why Does It Stand Between the Mixtures and the Marriage Laws, Who Is Commanded, and How Is It Kept Today? — A Three-Religion Covenant Response*

October 2026

Elder Kepha Arcemont, Founder

miqdashbethel.ai • miqdashbethel@gmail.com

*The Message is Sent to the World*

### REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

| ✡ JUDAISM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | ✝ CHRISTIANITY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | ☪ ISLAM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Rabbinic tradition reads this verse and <b>Numbers 15:37–41</b> as one commandment, <i>tzitzit</i> (tassels), counted once by Maimonides (Sefer HaMitzvot, Positive 14). From the words “ <i>the four corners of your covering</i> ” it limits the duty to a garment of four corners (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Fringes 3:1), and from the verse before it, it permits a wool cord on a linen garment (Talmud Yevamot 4a). The cords are worn today on the <i>tallit</i> (prayer shawl) and on a small four-cornered garment worn through the day (Tur, Orach Chayim 24). | The Gospels speak of “ <i>the fringe of his garment</i> ” (Matthew 9:20; 14:36; Luke 8:44) and rebuke those who “ <i>make their fringes long</i> ” to be seen (Matthew 23:5). The Greek Septuagint renders the twisted cords of this verse <i>strepta</i> (twisted things). Most churches class the law as ceremonial and do not keep it. Some Messianic and Sacred Name assemblies wear tassels, often hung from the belt. The Tanakh speaks first: what the verse commands, and where it puts the cords. | The Qur'an has no command of tassels. It says of clothing: “ <i>Children of Adam, We have sent down to you clothing to cover your nakedness, and adornment; but the clothing of reverence, that is best</i> ” (Q. 7:26), and it commands, “ <i>And your garments purify</i> ” (Q. 74:4). The hadith guards the hem from pride: Allah will not look on the one who trails his garment out of conceit (Sahih al-Bukhari 5784). Islam legislates the garment, and places no sign at its corners. |

## DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY — STANDING RULE OF MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

The sole binding authority of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is the *Tanakh* — the written covenant of **Yahweh**. No Talmudic tractate, Church council decree, papal encyclical, hadith collection, or extra-biblical tradition carries doctrinal weight equal to or greater than the written Torah. Where any tradition conflicts with the written covenant, the written covenant governs without exception. The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an are cited as historical reference and comparative witness — never as superseding authority. Miqdash Bethel uses the Written Tanakh as its sole source for four reasons: it is the only text Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all recognize as originally given by **Yahweh**; it predates and underlies the Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an, so testing those traditions against it follows the evidentiary direction of **Deuteronomy 19:15** — the earlier witness governs the later commentary; every later tradition that departs from the Tanakh does so by addition or reinterpretation, never by overturning the text itself, so the text remains the fixed standard; and **Yahweh's** own words declare the covenant unchanging (Malachi 3:6; Psalms 119:89), making the written covenant — not evolving institutional interpretation — the only stable ground for doctrine. All three great covenant traditions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — are addressed simultaneously and equally in every Miqdash Bethel document, because **Yahweh's** covenant belongs to every nation that will receive it. The **Deuteronomy 19:15** two-or-three-witness evidentiary standard governs all textual claims in this document.

## HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This document applies the sole authority of the written *Tanakh* to one verse, **Deuteronomy 22:12**, and to six questions about it: what it commands, whether it is the same law as **Numbers 15:37–41**, why the four corners and the covering, why the verse stands where it stands, who is commanded and for how long, and how it is kept today. **Yahweh** (יהוה) and **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים) appear in bold throughout. Tanakh books and personal names are given in English. Hebrew transliterations appear in ***bold italic*** with their English meaning, also bold italic, in parentheses. Scripture references are bold. Verse numbers follow the English versions; where the Hebrew numbering differs, it is given in brackets. Scripture is rendered in a literal working translation from the Hebrew. Hebrew lexicons are used as tools for the meaning of words. Each finding is graded under the two-or-three-witness standard as **Corroborated** (two or more independent Tanakh witnesses), **Single witness**, or **Not in the text**. Three audiences are addressed simultaneously: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Rabbinic literature, the New Testament, the Septuagint, the Qur'an and hadith, and the archaeological record appear only in the opening table, the Comparative Texts table, and the Three-Religion Audit, as historical and comparative reference — not as binding authority. The Written Tanakh governs all conclusions.

## TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

| DIVISION                  | BOOKS CITED                                                                           | PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Torah</b>              | Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy                                      | The first coverings; Judah's cord; the high priest's cord of blue; the poor man's covering; the forbidden mixtures; the tassel and the cord of blue; the twisted cords and the chapter around them                                          |
| <b>Nevi'im (Prophets)</b> | 1 Samuel, 1 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Micah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi | The corner torn and the corner cut; the twisted cords of the Temple pillars; the four corners of the earth; blood on the corners; the corner spread in covenant; holiness that a corner cannot pass on; the corner the nations take hold of |
| <b>Ketuvim (Writings)</b> | Psalms, Job, Ruth, Esther                                                             | The wings of <b>Yahweh</b> ; the poor without covering; the corner of the redeemer; the blue of royal dress                                                                                                                                 |

## COMPARATIVE TEXTS CITED — HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE REFERENCE ONLY

| CATEGORY                   | TEXTS CITED                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Rabbinic literature</b> | Mishnah Berakhot 2:2; Mishnah Menachot 4:1; Talmud Menachot 43a–43b, 44a; Talmud Yevamot 4a; Sifrei Devarim 234; Maimonides, Sefer HaMitzvot, Positive 14, and Mishneh Torah, Laws of Fringes 3:1, 9, 11–12; Tur, Orach Chayim 24 | How the two passages were read as one commandment; the four-cornered garment; the exemption of women; thread counts; wool on linen; the lapse of the blue; the small <i>tallit</i> ( <i>prayer shawl</i> ) |
| <b>Karaite teaching</b>    | Karaite Korner, “ <i>Karaite FAQ</i> ” (N. Gordon)                                                                                                                                                                                | A Jewish reading of the law without the rabbinic thread and knot rules                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>New Testament</b>       | Matthew 9:20; 14:36; 23:5; Mark 6:56; Luke 8:44                                                                                                                                                                                   | The fringe as ordinary dress in the first century, and the rebuke of display                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Septuagint (Greek)</b>  | Greek <b>Deuteronomy 22:12</b> ; Greek <b>Numbers 15:38</b>                                                                                                                                                                       | How the oldest translation rendered the twisted cords and the tassel                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Qur'an and hadith</b>   | Q. 5:44; 7:26; 74:4; Sahih al-Bukhari 5784                                                                                                                                                                                        | Clothing as covering; the garment of reverence; the hem and pride                                                                                                                                          |

| CATEGORY                 | TEXTS CITED                                                                                                     | PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY                               |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Historical record</b> | Israel Antiquities Authority report on dyed wool textiles from Wadi Murabba'at (N. Sukenik; reported 2013–2014) | What is and is not known about the ancient blue dye |
| <b>Lexicons</b>          | Brown-Driver-Briggs; Strong's                                                                                   | The meaning and roots of the Hebrew words           |

## I. FRAMING THE QUESTION — ONE VERSE, SIX QUESTIONS

### I-A. The Questions as They Are Asked

**Deuteronomy 22:12** is one sentence of ten Hebrew words. It gives no reason and names no penalty. It is half of a law that most people know from **Numbers 15:37–41**, and it is usually quoted only as a footnote to that passage. Six questions are put to it here.

**First:** what exactly does the verse command?

**Second:** is it the same law as **Numbers 15:37–41**, or a second law?

**Third:** why the four corners, and why *“the covering with which you cover yourself”*?

**Fourth:** why does the verse stand where it stands, after the forbidden mixtures and before the marriage laws?

**Fifth:** who is commanded, and does the command still stand?

**Sixth:** how is the verse kept today, and what has been added to it that the text does not say?

This study builds on earlier work in the Library and does not repeat it. **Doc 141** (*The Tzitzit Covenant*) studied **Numbers 15:37–41** word by word. **Doc 142** (*Fringes at the Corners of the Earth*) set the tassel beside the fringed garments of other peoples. **Doc 204** (*Kisui Rosh and the Tallit*) traced the tassel into the prayer shawl and set it apart from the head covering. The June 2026 study *The Covenant Thread and the Covenant Garment* compared the two passages. All four are built on **Numbers 15** and treat **Deuteronomy 22:12** as the parallel. The present document is the first in the Library given wholly to **Deuteronomy 22:12**. It reads the verse word by word, reads the chapter around it, tests what is commonly taught from it, and corrects points in the earlier studies (Section XI).

## I-B. The Verse in Its Setting

Deuteronomy is Moses speaking in the fortieth year, across the Jordan in the land of Moab (**Deuteronomy 1:3, 5**). Chapters 12 through 26 are the statutes and judgments. Chapter 22 is a chapter of ordinary life: what a person does with a neighbor's lost animal, with a bird's nest, with a new roof, with a vineyard, a plow team, and a garment, and then with marriage.

| VERSES              | SUBJECT                                                                        | THE GARMENT IN IT                                                  |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 22:1–4              | Returning a brother's lost ox, sheep, and donkey, and his garment              | <i>simlah (cloak)</i> (22:3)                                       |
| 22:5                | A man's gear shall not be on a woman, and a man shall not wear a woman's cloak | <i>simlah (cloak)</i>                                              |
| 22:6–7              | The mother bird and her young                                                  | —                                                                  |
| 22:8                | A parapet for the new roof                                                     | —                                                                  |
| 22:9–11             | Three mixtures forbidden: in the vineyard, in the plow team, in cloth          | <i>sha'atnez (mixed cloth)</i> (22:11)                             |
| 22:12               | Twisted cords on the four corners                                              | <i>kesut (covering)</i> and <i>kanaph (wing / corner)</i>          |
| 22:13–29            | Marriage, accusation, adultery, and violation                                  | The cloak spread before the elders (22:17)                         |
| 22:30 [Hebrew 23:1] | A man shall not take his father's wife                                         | <i>“his father's corner”</i> : <i>kanaph (wing / corner)</i> again |

A garment appears in six of the chapter's thirty verses. The verse of this study is the fourth of the six, and it is the only one that commands something to be made.

## I-C. The Text

**גְּדִלִים תַּעֲשֶׂה לָךְ עַל אַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת כְּסוּתֶךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּכְסֶּה בָּהּ**

*gedilim ta'aseh lakh, al arba kanfot kesutekha asher tekhasseh bah*

*“Twisted cords you shall make for yourself, on the four corners of your covering with which you cover yourself” (Deuteronomy 22:12).*

Four things stand out before any word is studied. The sentence has ten words in Hebrew. Its first word is the thing to be made; the verb comes second. It is addressed to one person, *“you”* in the singular. And it says *“cover”* twice: your covering, with which you cover yourself.

## I-D. How the Findings Are Graded

Every finding below is graded. A finding is **Corroborated** when two or more independent Tanakh witnesses carry it (**Deuteronomy 19:15**). It is a **Single witness** when only one text carries it. It is **Not in the text** when it is taught but the Tanakh does not say it.

## II. THE WORD STUDY — WHAT THE HEBREW SAYS

Ten words carry the verse, and the passage in Numbers adds its own. The table sets out the vocabulary this study relies on.

| HEBREW TERM                                           | STRONG'S | CORE MEANING                                                                                                         | KEY TEXT                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>gedilim</i> ( <i>twisted cords</i> ),<br>גְּדִלִים | H1434    | Cords made by twisting or plaiting. Found twice: tassels on a garment, and chain-like festoons on the Temple pillars | <b>Deuteronomy 22:12;</b><br><b>1 Kings 7:17</b>                                    |
| <i>asah</i> ( <i>to make</i> ), עָשָׂה                | H6213    | To make, to do. <i>ta'aseh lakh</i> ( <i>you shall make for yourself</i> ): the cords are made, not found            | <b>Deuteronomy 22:12;</b><br><b>Numbers 15:38</b>                                   |
| <i>arba</i> ( <i>four</i> ), אַרְבַּע                 | H702     | The number four. Only Deuteronomy gives the number of the corners                                                    | <b>Deuteronomy 22:12</b>                                                            |
| <i>kanaph</i> ( <i>wing / corner</i> ),<br>כַּנָּף    | H3671    | The wing of a bird; the loose corner or skirt of a garment; the ends of the earth                                    | <b>Deuteronomy 22:12;</b><br><b>Numbers 15:38;</b><br><b>Ruth 3:9; Isaiah 11:12</b> |
| <i>kesut</i> ( <i>covering</i> ), כֶּסוּת             | H3682    | A covering; the outer wrap that served the poor as a blanket. Eight times in the Tanakh                              | <b>Deuteronomy 22:12;</b><br><b>Exodus 21:10; 22:27</b>                             |
| <i>kasah</i> ( <i>to cover</i> ), here<br>תָּכַסָּה   | H3680    | To cover, to clothe, to conceal. The verb behind <i>kesut</i> ( <i>covering</i> )                                    | <b>Deuteronomy 22:12;</b><br><b>Genesis 9:23; Ezekiel 16:8</b>                      |
| <i>tzitzit</i> ( <i>tassel</i> ), צִיצִית             | H6734    | A tassel; a lock of hair. Something that hangs free and can be taken hold of. Four times                             | <b>Numbers 15:38–39;</b><br><b>Ezekiel 8:3</b>                                      |

| HEBREW TERM                                     | STRONG'S | CORE MEANING                                                                                             | KEY TEXT                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>petil (cord)</i> , פֶּתִיל                   | H6616    | A cord or thread. Eleven times: Judah's cord, the high priest's cord of blue, and the cord on the tassel | <b>Numbers 15:38;</b><br><b>Genesis 38:18;</b><br><b>Exodus 28:37</b> |
| <i>tekhelet (blue)</i> , תְּכֵלֶת               | H8504    | Blue dyed yarn or cloth. Forty-nine times, most of them of the tabernacle and the priestly garments      | <b>Numbers 15:38;</b><br><b>Exodus 26:1; 28:31</b>                    |
| <i>sha'atnez (mixed cloth)</i> , שַׁעֲטָנֶז     | H8162    | Cloth of wool and linen together. Twice only                                                             | <b>Deuteronomy 22:11;</b><br><b>Leviticus 19:19</b>                   |
| <i>tur (to scout / explore)</i> , here תִּתְרוּ | H8446    | To spy out, to go about exploring. The verb of the twelve spies                                          | <b>Numbers 13:2; 15:39</b>                                            |
| <i>zakhar (to remember)</i> , זָכַר             | H2142    | To remember so as to act                                                                                 | <b>Numbers 15:39–40</b>                                               |

Five lexical observations govern what follows.

First, *gedilim (twisted cords)* occur twice in the Tanakh, and the second place explains the first. On the capitals of the two bronze pillars before Solomon's Temple there were

*“nets of network, twisted cords of chain-work, for the capitals that were on the top of the pillars” (1 Kings 7:17).*

The Hebrew is *gedilim ma'aseh sharsherot (twisted cords, the work of chains)*, גְּדִלִים מַעֲשֵׂה שַׁרְשְׁרוֹת. The *gedilim (twisted cords)*, then, are cords plaited or twisted until they look like chains. Strong's derives the word from *gadal (to grow great)* “*in the sense of twisting.*” The Brown-Driver-Briggs lexicon enters it under a separate root meaning to twist, beside Aramaic and Babylonian words for a cord, and apart from the verb that means to be great. This study therefore builds nothing on greatness. What the two texts establish is the make of the thing: twisted cord.

**Finding:** that the cords of this verse are twisted, plaited work is **Corroborated (Deuteronomy 22:12; 1 Kings 7:17).**

**Second**, the cords stand first in the sentence. Hebrew normally puts the verb first; here the thing to be made comes before the command to make it. Numbers names the same object by another word, *tzitzit (tassel)*, which the Tanakh uses once more, of a lock of hair:

*“And He put forth the form of a hand and took me by a lock of my head” (Ezekiel 8:3).*

A *tzitzit* (*tassel*) is something that hangs free and can be taken hold of. One word tells what the thing looks like. The other tells how it is made.

**Third, *ta'aseh lakh* (you shall make for yourself), תַּעֲשֶׂה לָךְ.** The form *lakh* (*for yourself*) is the masculine *lekha* (*for you*) as it is written at the main pause of a verse. It is not a feminine form. The verb and the word “*your covering*” are masculine singular, as throughout Deuteronomy, where Moses addresses all Israel as one “*you*” (**Deuteronomy 6:4–5**). The grammar therefore does not settle whether women are included; Section VIII takes that question from other texts. Numbers has the same construction in the plural: *ve-asu lahem* (*and they shall make for themselves*), וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם (**Numbers 15:38**).

**Fourth, *kanaph* (wing / corner)** is first of all a wing: of the birds (**Genesis 1:21**), of the cherubim over the ark (**Exodus 25:20**), of the eagle that carries its young (**Deuteronomy 32:11**). The corner of a wrapped garment hangs loose like a wing and takes the same name. The phrase *arba kanfot* (*four corners*), אַרְבַּע כַּנְפוֹת, occurs three times in the Tanakh: here, of a garment, and twice of the earth (**Isaiah 11:12**; **Ezekiel 7:2**). Section IV follows the word through the Tanakh.

**Fifth,** the verse names the garment by what it does. *kesut* (*covering*) comes from *kasah* (*to cover*), and the verse uses both: *kesutekha asher tekhasseh bah* (*your covering with which you cover yourself*), כְּסוּתְךָ אֲשֶׁר תִּכְסֶּה בָּהּ. Numbers says “*their garments*,” with the general word *begeg* (*garment*), H899. Deuteronomy chooses the word for the wrap a person pulls around himself. Section V follows that word.

### III. ONE LAW, TWO WITNESSES — DEUTERONOMY 22:12 BESIDE NUMBERS 15:37–41

The law is stated twice, by two speakers, a generation apart. The first statement is **Yahweh's**, given through Moses in the wilderness:

*“Speak to the children of Israel and say to them that they shall make for themselves a tassel on the corners of their garments, throughout their generations, and they shall put on the tassel of the corner a cord of blue”* (**Numbers 15:38**).

*“And it shall be a tassel for you, and you shall see it and remember all the commandments of Yahweh and do them, and you shall not go scouting after your heart and after your eyes, after which you go whoring; so that you remember and do all My commandments, and be holy to your Elohim”* (**Numbers 15:39–40**).

*“I am Yahweh your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your Elohim. I am Yahweh your Elohim”* (**Numbers 15:41**).

The second statement is the verse of this study. The table sets the two side by side.

| ELEMENT            | NUMBERS 15:37–41                                                      | DEUTERONOMY 22:12                                                   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Speaker and time   | Yahweh to Moses, in the wilderness, after the spies (Numbers 13–14)   | Moses to Israel, in the fortieth year, in Moab (Deuteronomy 1:3, 5) |
| Address            | Plural: <i>“they shall make for themselves”</i>                       | Singular: <i>“you shall make for yourself”</i>                      |
| Name of the object | <i>tzitzit (tassel)</i> : what it looks like, a thing that hangs      | <i>gedilim (twisted cords)</i> : how it is made                     |
| Where              | <i>“On the corners of their garments,”</i><br>כַּנְפֵי בְגָדֵיהֶם     | <i>“On the four corners of your covering”</i>                       |
| Number of corners  | Not stated                                                            | Four                                                                |
| The garment        | <i>beqed (garment)</i> : clothing in general                          | <i>kesut (covering)</i> : the wrap one covers oneself with          |
| The cord of blue   | Commanded, on the tassel of each corner                               | Not mentioned                                                       |
| Purpose            | Stated: see, remember, do; do not scout after heart and eyes; be holy | Not stated                                                          |
| Duration           | <i>“Throughout their generations,”</i><br>לְדֹרֹתָם                   | Not stated                                                          |
| Signature          | <i>“I am Yahweh your Elohim,”</i> twice                               | None in the verse                                                   |

### III-A. Are They One Law?

Three marks join them. Both put the cords in the same place: the *kanaph (wing / corner)* of what a person wears. Both use the same construction: make, and for yourself. Both describe the same kind of thing: cords that hang at the edge of a garment. And Deuteronomy says of itself what it is. It is Moses speaking *“according to all that Yahweh had commanded him”* (Deuteronomy 1:3), setting out to *“explain this Torah”* (Deuteronomy 1:5). It restates what was given; it does not find a second law beside it.

Tanakh's own rule of evidence fits the case: *“on the mouth of two witnesses, or on the mouth of three witnesses, shall a matter stand”* (Deuteronomy 19:15). The two passages are the two witnesses. Each supplies what the other leaves unsaid.

**Finding:** that **Deuteronomy 22:12** and **Numbers 15:37–41** state one law is **Corroborated** by the shared place, the shared construction, and the shared object.

### III-B. What Deuteronomy Adds

**Deuteronomy adds four things.**

1. It gives the number I: four corners.
2. It names the garment by its use: the covering.
3. It tells how the cords are made: twisted.
4. And it puts the command in the singular, on each person: *“for yourself.”* Numbers speaks to the nation about its generations. Deuteronomy speaks to one person about his own cloak.

### III-C. What Deuteronomy Leaves to Numbers

Deuteronomy does not mention the cord of blue, the purpose, or the generations. Silence in the restatement is not a repeal of the statement. The rule is given in the same book:

*“You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of Yahweh your Elohim which I command you”* (Deuteronomy 4:2).

A reader who keeps the twisted cords of Deuteronomy without the cord of blue takes away from Numbers. A reader who keeps the cord of blue and ignores the four corners of the covering takes away from Deuteronomy. **The law is what the two texts say together.**

**Finding:** the cord of blue is commanded once, in **Numbers 15:38**. It is a **Single witness**, and no Tanakh text removes it.

## IV. THE FOUR CORNERS — THE CORNER OF A GARMENT IN THE TANAKH

The verse places the cords on the *kanaph (wing / corner)*. The Tanakh uses that word of a garment in a small number of places, and they explain why the corner is the place.

### IV-A. The Wing That Shelters

Before it is a corner, the *kanaph (wing / corner)* is a wing, and the wing is the Tanakh's picture of shelter. **Yahweh** says to Israel at Sinai, *“I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself”* (Exodus 19:4). The psalmist says, *“under His wings you shall take refuge”* (Psalms 91:4). Boaz blesses Ruth by *“Yahweh, the Elohim of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge”* (Ruth 2:12). When the same word is used of a cloak, it carries that picture with it.

#### IV-B. The Corner Stands for the Person

Twice in the life of Saul the corner of a robe stands for a man's standing. The first time, a kingdom is torn with it:

*“And Samuel turned to go, and he seized the corner of his robe, and it tore. And Samuel said to him: Yahweh has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today, and has given it to your neighbor who is better than you”* (1 Samuel 15:27–28).

The second time, David has Saul in his power in the cave and takes only the corner:

*“And David arose and cut off the corner of the robe that was Saul's, in secret. And it came to pass afterward that David's heart struck him, because he had cut off the corner that was Saul's”* (1 Samuel 24:4–5 [Hebrew 24:5–6]).

David then holds it up as his proof: *“See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand”* (1 Samuel 24:11 [Hebrew 24:12]). To lay a hand on the corner was to lay a hand on the man. David's heart struck him for a piece of cloth because of whose cloth it was.

#### IV-C. The Corner Spread in Covenant

On the threshing floor Ruth asks Boaz for more than warmth:

*“I am Ruth your handmaid. Spread your corner over your handmaid, for you are a redeemer”* (Ruth 3:9).

The prophet uses the same act for what **Yahweh** did for Jerusalem:

*“And I spread My corner over you and covered your nakedness, and I swore to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares Adonai Yahweh, and you became Mine”* (Ezekiel 16:8).

The two key words of **Deuteronomy 22:12** stand together in that verse: *kenafi* (*My corner*), כְּנָפִי, and *va-akhasseh* (*and I covered*), וְאָכַסְתִּי. To spread the corner is to take a person under one's covering by covenant. The written covenant states the reverse in the same terms. A man who takes his father's wife has “uncovered his father's corner” (Deuteronomy 22:30 [Hebrew 23:1]; Deuteronomy 27:20).

#### IV-D. What the Corner Can and Cannot Carry

Two prophets guard the corner from being made into more than it is. Jeremiah finds guilt on it:

*“Also on your corners is found the blood of the lives of the innocent poor”* (Jeremiah 2:34).

Haggai puts a question of law to the priests:

*“If a man carries holy flesh in the corner of his garment, and with his corner touches bread, or stew, or wine, or oil, or any food, shall it become holy? And the priests answered and said: No”* (Haggai 2:12).

A corner can carry the stain of what its wearer has done. It cannot pass holiness on by touch, even when holy flesh is folded inside it. Both rulings bear on Section VII.

#### IV-E. The Corner the Nations Take Hold Of

*“Thus says Yabweh of hosts: In those days ten men from all the languages of the nations shall take hold, they shall take hold of the corner of a man, a Jew, saying: Let us go with you, for we have heard that Elohim is with you”* (Zechariah 8:23).

The Hebrew is *bi-khnaf ish Yebudi* (*the corner of a man, a Jew*), בִּכְנַף אִישׁ יְהוּדִי. The prophet names the corner and does not mention the cords. By the law of this verse the corner is where the cords hang, so the place the nations reach for is the place the reminder is kept. What draws them is stated: *“we have heard that Elohim is with you.”*

#### IV-F. The Four Corners of the Earth

The phrase of this verse, *arba kanfot* (*four corners*), is used in only two other places, both of the earth:

*“And He shall raise a banner for the nations, and gather the outcasts of Israel, and the scattered of Judah He shall assemble from the four corners of the earth”* (Isaiah 11:12).

Ezekiel uses it of judgment: *“An end! The end has come upon the four corners of the land”* (Ezekiel 7:2). The shared words are a fact of the text. That the four cords were given as a picture of the gathering from the four corners of the earth is often taught, and it is **Not in the text**. The Tanakh gives no reason for the number four. It gives the number.

**Finding — the corner:** in the Tanakh the corner of a garment stands for a person's standing (1 Samuel 15:27–28; 24:4–5) and for covenant covering (Ruth 3:9; Ezekiel 16:8). It can bear guilt (Jeremiah 2:34) and it cannot pass on holiness (Haggai 2:12). **Corroborated.** The verse puts the cords at the place where a person's standing and a person's covering meet.

## V. THE COVERING — THE GARMENT THE LAW IS LAID ON

#### V-A. The Garment of the Poor

*kesut* (*covering*) occurs eight times in the Tanakh. The text that shows most plainly what it was is a law about debt:

*“If you take your neighbor’s cloak in pledge at all, you shall return it to him by the going down of the sun. For it is his only covering; it is his cloak for his skin. In what shall he lie down? And it shall be, when he cries to Me, that I will hear, for I am gracious”* (Exodus 22:26–27 [Hebrew 22:25–26]).

The covering is the wrap a man wears by day and sleeps in by night. Deuteronomy repeats the law (**Deuteronomy 24:12–13**). Job describes the destitute by the lack of it: *“They lodge naked, without clothing, and there is no covering in the cold”* (Job 24:7; compare Job 31:19). It is also one of the three things a husband may not withhold from a wife: *“her food, her covering, and her marital right he shall not diminish”* (Exodus 21:10).

The law of the twisted cords is laid on that garment. It is the plainest and most necessary thing a person owns. No one is too poor to be addressed by this verse, because the poorest man in Israel is defined by having this and nothing else.

### V-B. Covering in the Tanakh

To be covered is the first kindness shown after the first sin: *“And Yabweh Elohim made for Adam and for his wife tunics of skin, and clothed them”* (Genesis 3:21). The sons of Noah honor their father by it: they *“covered the nakedness of their father”* (Genesis 9:23), with the verb of this verse. The covering a person wears is a daily remnant of that care. The verse sets the reminder of the commandments on it.

### V-C. No Special Garment Is Commanded

The verse does not create a garment. It says *“your covering with which you cover yourself”*: the one already in use. Numbers says *“their garments.”* The written covenant commands cords. It does not command a prayer garment, a ritual shawl, or an undergarment. Those are later means of carrying the cords, and they are weighed in Section IX.

**Finding:** that the law is laid on ordinary dress, and not on a garment reserved for worship, is **Corroborated** (Numbers 15:38; Deuteronomy 22:12).

### V-D. If the Garment Has No Four Corners

Most clothing today is cut and sewn and has no corners. The text does not address that case, and two things should be said plainly. The verse does not say, *“if your garment has four corners.”* It takes the four-cornered wrap for granted, because that is what was worn. And the verse does not move the cords anywhere else. An exemption for the person whose clothes have no corners is **Not in the text**. A transfer of the cords to some other part of the clothing is also **Not in the text**. The person who wants to do what the ten words say needs a covering with four corners. Section IX-C returns to this.

## VI. WHY HERE? — BETWEEN THE MIXTURES AND THE MARRIAGE LAWS

### VI-A. Three Prohibitions and One Command

The three verses before the cords forbid three mixtures:

*“You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds”* (Deuteronomy 22:9).

*“You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together”* (Deuteronomy 22:10).

*“You shall not wear mixed cloth, wool and linen together”* (Deuteronomy 22:11).

The key words are *kilayim* (*two kinds*), כְּלָאִים, and *yachdav* (*together*), יַחְדָּו. Then the form changes. After three sentences that begin *“you shall not,”* the fourth begins with the thing to be made. The garment is told what must not be in it, and then what must be on it.

Leviticus gives the three mixtures in one verse, in the chapter that opens *“You shall be holy, for I, Yabweh your Elohim, am holy”* (Leviticus 19:2):

*“My statutes you shall keep. Your cattle you shall not breed with two kinds; your field you shall not sow with two kinds; and a garment of two kinds, mixed cloth, shall not come upon you”* (Leviticus 19:19).

The prohibition on the garment is given under the heading of holiness. The command on the garment is given for the same end: *“and be holy to your Elohim”* (Numbers 15:40). What a person of the covenant wears is governed twice, by one law that keeps things apart and one law that adds a sign, and both are tied to the same word.

**Finding:** that the garment laws of the written covenant, the prohibition and the command alike, serve holiness is **Corroborated** (Leviticus 19:2, 19; Numbers 15:40).

### VI-B. The Cord of Blue and the High Priest

The Tanakh itself shows where the cord of blue comes from. The phrase *petil tekhelet* (*a cord of blue*), פֶּתִיל תְּכֵלֶת, occurs five times. Four are on the high priest. A cord of blue binds the breastpiece to the ephod (Exodus 28:28; 39:21). A cord of blue holds the gold plate on his forehead:

*“And you shall make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engravings of a signet: Holy to Yabweh. And you shall put it on a cord of blue, and it shall be on the turban”* (Exodus 28:36–37; compare Exodus 39:31).

The fifth is on the tassel of every Israelite (Numbers 15:38). The plate reads *qodesh la-Yabweh* (*holy to Yabweh*), קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה. The tassel is given so that the people may be *qedoshim* (*holy*), קְדוֹשִׁים, to

their **Elohim** (**Numbers 15:40**). The plate is called *tzitz* (*plate / blossom*), **צִיץ**, and the tassel *tzitzit* (*tassel*). Strong's treats the second word as formed from the first; Brown-Driver-Briggs treats the root as doubtful, and this study does not rest on the likeness of the words. It rests on the cord. The cord that holds "*Holy to Yahweh*" on the high priest's head is the cord placed on the corner of the common cloak. That agrees with what was said to the whole people at Sinai:

***"And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation"*** (**Exodus 19:6**).

Blue was the color of the sanctuary and of rank. It is in the tabernacle curtains (**Exodus 26:1**), the robe of the ephod is "*all of blue*" (**Exodus 28:31**), a cloth all of blue covers the ark on the march (**Numbers 4:6**), and Mordecai goes out from the king in royal dress of blue (**Esther 8:15**). A cord of it was set on the garment the poor man slept in.

**Finding:** that the cord of blue joins the ordinary Israelite's garment to the high priest's is **Corroborated** (**Exodus 28:36–37; 39:31; Numbers 15:38, 40; Exodus 19:6**).

#### VI-C. Do the Cords Set Aside the Law of Mixed Cloth?

It is widely taught that because verse 12 follows verse 11, the cords are an exception to it: that a cord of dyed wool may be hung on a linen garment, and that the common Israelite thereby wears a little of the priest's mixed cloth. The Tanakh does not say this. The two verses stand side by side with no word of exception between them. The priestly garments did combine fine twined linen with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn (**Exodus 28:6; 39:29**), but the text does not say what the dyed yarn was spun from, and Ezekiel's priests wear linen only: "*no wool shall come upon them while they minister in the gates of the inner court*" (**Ezekiel 44:17**). An exception to verse 11 inside verse 12 is **Not in the text**. Both verses can be kept at once, and nothing in either asks that one be broken to keep the other.

#### VI-D. The Corner Before the Marriage Laws

After the cords the chapter turns to marriage and stays there to its end (**Deuteronomy 22:13–30**). Its last word is the word of this verse: a man shall not uncover *kenaf aviv* (*his father's corner*), **כִּנּוֹף אָבִיו** (**Deuteronomy 22:30** [Hebrew 23:1]). The corner opens the marriage laws in verse 12 and closes them in verse 30. Inside them stands the charge against the woman who has acted "*to play the harlot in her father's house*" (**Deuteronomy 22:21**).

Numbers sets the tassel beside the same vocabulary. The purpose clause ends "*after which you go whoring*," **וְהָיָה** (**Numbers 15:39**), and the judgment on the spies' generation one chapter earlier was that their children would "*bear your whoredoms*" in the wilderness (**Numbers 14:33**). In both books the cords are placed next to the language of unfaithfulness. In Numbers the unfaithfulness is toward **Yahweh**. In Deuteronomy it is within the household. The same corner that is spread over a wife in covenant (Section IV-C) carries the reminder.

**Finding:** that both statements of the law stand beside the vocabulary of faithfulness and unfaithfulness is **Corroborated** (Numbers 15:39; Deuteronomy 22:21, 30).

## VII. WHAT THE CORDS ARE FOR — AND WHAT THEY ARE NOT

### VII-A. The Purpose in Yahweh's Own Words

Deuteronomy gives the command bare. Numbers gives the reason, and it is the only reason the Tanakh gives: *“you shall see it and remember all the commandments of Yahweh and do them”* (Numbers 15:39). The order is fixed. The eye sees. The mind remembers, and the word is *zakhar* (to remember), remembering that issues in action. The hand does. The end is that the people *“be holy to your Elohim”* (Numbers 15:40).

The same verse names what the cords are set against: *ve-lo taturu* (and you shall not go scouting), תַּתּוּרוּ, *“after your heart and after your eyes.”* The verb is *tur* (to scout / explore). It is used twelve times in the two chapters before, every time of the spies sent to scout the land (Numbers 13:2; 14:34), and then once more here. The spies went by what their eyes saw: *“we were in our own eyes as grasshoppers”* (Numbers 13:33). The cords are given to a people who had just been led by their eyes into forty years of wilderness. They put something else in front of the eyes.

**Finding:** the purpose of the cords is stated once, by Yahweh, in Numbers 15:39–40. It is a **Single witness**, and it is the only purpose the Tanakh gives.

### VII-B. One of Deuteronomy's Signs

Deuteronomy has already said where the words of the covenant are to be put:

*“And these words which I command you today shall be on your heart... And you shall bind them for a sign on your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates”* (Deuteronomy 6:6, 8–9; compare Deuteronomy 11:18).

The heart, the hand, the eyes, the house, the gate of the town. Deuteronomy 22:12 adds the garment. The covenant is not left inside a person. It is set where the person and everyone who meets him will see it.

### VII-C. Not a Charm

No text of the Tanakh gives the cords any power. They protect no one, heal no one, and carry no blessing by being worn or touched. The priests' ruling in Haggai settles the principle: holiness does not

pass through the corner of a garment by contact (**Haggai 2:12**). The cords work in one way only, the way Numbers states. They are seen, and the one who sees them remembers and does. Any teaching that the cords themselves guard or heal is **Not in the text**.

#### VII-D. Not a Covering for Injustice

The prophets refuse the outward sign where the life contradicts it. Jeremiah found the blood of the innocent poor on the very corners where the cords hang (**Jeremiah 2:34**). Amos saw worshipers who *“stretch themselves beside every altar on garments taken in pledge”* (**Amos 2:8**): the poor man’s covering of **Exodus 22:26–27**, kept overnight against the law and used as a rug for prayer. Isaiah heard a people that *“draws near with its mouth and honors Me with its lips, but its heart it has put far from Me”* (**Isaiah 29:13**). In the chapter where the corner of the robe tears, Samuel says, *“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice”* (**1 Samuel 15:22**). Micah states what is required: *“to do justice, and to love covenant-love, and to walk humbly with your Elohim”* (**Micah 6:8**).

The cords are a reminder to keep the commandments. They are not a substitute for keeping them, and they are not a mark of rank. They hang on the cloak of every Israelite, the debtor’s included.

## VIII. WHO IS COMMANDED, AND FOR HOW LONG?

#### VIII-A. Israel, Men and Women

Numbers addresses *“the children of Israel”* (**Numbers 15:38**), and Deuteronomy the singular *“you”* that stands for all Israel. Neither passage limits the command to men. The written covenant knows how to speak of men and women separately when it means to. It does so seven verses earlier, about garments: *“A man’s gear shall not be on a woman, and a man shall not wear a woman’s cloak”* (**Deuteronomy 22:5**). Verse 12 draws no such line.

Where the text says who *“the children of Israel”* are, it includes both: *“Every man and woman whose heart moved them to bring for all the work... the children of Israel brought a freewill offering to Yahweh”* (**Exodus 35:29**). And the whole of it is laid on both:

*“Assemble the people, the men and the women and the little ones, and your stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn, and fear Yahweh your Elohim, and keep to do all the words of this Torah”* (**Deuteronomy 31:12**).

**Finding:** an exemption of women from the cords is **Not in the text**. This confirms Doc 141.

#### VIII-B. The Stranger Who Joins

The chapter that gives the tassel says twice who else stands under its laws:

***“One statute for you and for the stranger who sojourns, a statute forever throughout your generations; as you are, so shall the stranger be before Yahweh. One Torah and one judgment shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you”*** (Numbers 15:15–16; compare Numbers 15:29).

The Passover law says the same (Exodus 12:49), and Isaiah speaks of ***“the foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh... and hold fast My covenant”*** (Isaiah 56:6). The command is given to Israel. The one from the nations who joins himself to **Yahweh** and to His people comes under the same Torah, and Zechariah pictures him taking hold of the corner (Zechariah 8:23).

**Finding:** that the stranger who joins Israel keeps one Torah with Israel is **Corroborated** (Numbers 15:15–16; Exodus 12:49; Isaiah 56:6). That the nations at large were given the law of the cords apart from joining Israel is **Not in the text**.

### VIII-C. Throughout Their Generations

Numbers says ***le-dorotam (throughout their generations)*** (Numbers 15:38). The same chapter ties two of its other laws to the Land. The offerings begin ***“when you come into the land of your dwellings”*** (Numbers 15:2), and the dough offering ***“when you come into the land where I bring you”*** (Numbers 15:18). The tassel has no such clause. It was given in the wilderness, to be worn in the wilderness.

This sets the law apart from the tithe studied in **Doc 250**. The tithe was built into a structure of sanctuary, Levite, storehouse, and the increase of the Land, and cannot be kept as written where those are absent. The cords need none of them. They need a garment, a few cords, and a hand to twist them. Nothing the law requires has been lost.

**Finding:** that the law stands in every generation and in every land is **Corroborated** (Numbers 15:38, with the land clauses of Numbers 15:2, 18 absent from it; Deuteronomy 4:2).

### VIII-D. No Penalty Is Written

The verse names no penalty, and neither does Numbers. No court in the Tanakh is told to inspect a cloak. The command is kept before **Yahweh**, by the one who wears the garment. That is a guard on those who keep it: the cords are for the wearer's eyes, and the Tanakh gives no one the office of policing another person's corners.

## IX. HOW IS THE VERSE KEPT TODAY?

### IX-A. What the Text Fixes and What It Leaves Open

The two passages together fix a small number of things. Everything else has been supplied by custom. The table separates the two.

| ELEMENT                 | WHAT THE TEXT SAYS                                                                                      | WHAT THE TEXT DOES NOT SAY                                                      |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>The object</b>       | Twisted cords ( <b>Deuteronomy 22:12</b> ); a tassel that hangs and is seen ( <b>Numbers 15:38–39</b> ) | The number of threads, the number of knots, the pattern of windings, the length |
| <b>The making</b>       | <i>“You shall make for yourself”</i>                                                                    | Who must do the twisting; any words to be spoken                                |
| <b>The place</b>        | The four corners of the covering                                                                        | Any other place on the body or the clothing                                     |
| <b>The garment</b>      | The covering with which you cover yourself; <i>“their garments”</i>                                     | A garment kept for prayer; an undergarment; what the garment is made of         |
| <b>The cord of blue</b> | A cord of <i>tekhelet (blue)</i> on the tassel of each corner ( <b>Numbers 15:38</b> )                  | The source of the dye; the shade; the number of blue threads                    |
| <b>The time</b>         | Throughout their generations; a thing to be seen                                                        | Day only or night as well; the hours of prayer only                             |
| <b>The persons</b>      | The children of Israel; the singular <i>“you”</i> ; one Torah for the stranger who joins                | An exemption for women; an age at which the duty begins                         |
| <b>The purpose</b>      | See, remember, do, be holy ( <b>Numbers 15:39–40</b> )                                                  | Protection, healing, or merit from the wearing itself                           |

### IX-B. Present Practices Weighed

| PRACTICE                                                                                                | WHAT THE TEXT SUPPORTS                     | GRADE               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>A four-cornered outer garment in daily use, with twisted cords and a cord of blue at each corner</b> | Every element is named in the two passages | <b>Corroborated</b> |

| PRACTICE                                                               | WHAT THE TEXT SUPPORTS                                                                                 | GRADE                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>A four-cornered shawl put on for prayer and taken off afterward</b> | The four corners and the cords. The verse speaks of the covering one wears, not of the hours of prayer | The garment: in the text.<br>The limit to prayer: <b>Not in the text</b>  |
| <b>A small four-cornered garment worn under the clothing</b>           | The four corners and the cords. The tassel is given to be seen ( <b>Numbers 15:39</b> )                | The corners: in the text.<br>Hidden cords do not serve the stated purpose |
| <b>Tassels hung from belt loops or from clothing without corners</b>   | The purpose is remembered. The place is not the one the verse gives                                    | <b>Not in the text</b>                                                    |
| <b>White cords only, with no cord of blue</b>                          | The twisted cords of Deuteronomy. The cord of <b>Numbers 15:38</b> is missing                          | Takes away from <b>Numbers 15:38</b>                                      |
| <b>Fixed numbers of threads, knots, and windings, held as binding</b>  | The twist is in the text. The counts are custom                                                        | <b>Not in the text</b>                                                    |
| <b>Cords worn or touched for protection, healing, or blessing</b>      | Nothing. <b>Haggai 2:12</b> stands against it                                                          | <b>Not in the text</b>                                                    |
| <b>An exemption for women</b>                                          | Nothing (Section VIII-A)                                                                               | <b>Not in the text</b>                                                    |

### IX-C. A Plain Way to Do What the Words Say

The verse can be kept simply, and the text gives the steps.

**First:** have a covering with four corners. A wrap, a mantle, or a shawl that is actually worn meets the words. The verse puts the cords there and nowhere else.

**Second:** make the cords, or have them made for you, and let them be twisted. *gedilim* (*twisted cords*) are plaited work, like the chain-work on the pillars (**1 Kings 7:17**). The text asks for no more skill than that.

**Third:** put on the tassel of each corner a cord of blue (**Numbers 15:38**). The text names the color and does not name the creature or the recipe. Section X-B sets out what is known of the ancient dye.

**Fourth:** wear it where it is seen, and first of all where you yourself will see it. *“You shall see it”* is the hinge of the law (**Numbers 15:39**).

**Fifth:** let it do its work. Look, remember the commandments of **Yahweh**, and do them.

### IX-D. The Standard Applied to This Institution

The findings bind Miqdash Bethel by the standard it applies to others. This Institution may not make law of a thread count, a knot, a color of garment, or a manner of tying, because the text makes none. It may not teach that the cords protect or heal. It may not judge the standing of a person before **Yahweh** by his corners; Jeremiah and Amos judged by what was done to the poor. And where its own earlier documents said more than the text says, they are corrected (Section XI).

## X. THREE-RELIGION AUDIT — HOW EACH TRADITION HANDLES THE CORDS TODAY

### X-A. The Three Traditions

The table sets the three traditions against the Tanakh's own findings. Comparative texts are cited as historical reference only, in keeping with the standing rule of this document.

| ELEMENT               | ☆ JUDAISM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | † CHRISTIANITY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | ⬢ ISLAM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Practice today</b> | <p>The two passages are one commandment (Maimonides, Sefer HaMitzvot, Positive 14). The garment must have four corners (Laws of Fringes 3:1); a person need not buy one, but should not excuse himself (3:11). Women are held exempt (3:9), and a night garment is exempt because of <b>“you shall see it”</b> (Talmud Menachot 43a). Thread counts are fixed by the schools (Sifrei Devarim 234). The blue lapsed for centuries, since <b>“the blue does not prevent the white”</b> (Mishnah Menachot 4:1); most tie white only, and some now wear a snail-dyed blue. The cords are worn on the prayer shawl and on a small garment worn all day (Tur,</p> | <p>The Gospels show the fringe as ordinary dress (Matthew 9:20; 14:36; Mark 6:56; Luke 8:44). The Septuagint has <i>strepta</i> (twisted things) on the four <i>kraspeda</i> (edges) in Greek <b>Deuteronomy 22:12</b>, and <i>kraspeda</i> for the tassel in Greek <b>Numbers 15:38</b>. The churches at large do not keep the law; it is classed as ceremonial. Some Messianic, Hebrew Roots, and Sacred Name assemblies wear tassels, commonly on belt loops, often with a blue thread.</p> | <p>There is no tassel in the Qur'an or the hadith. Clothing is given <b>“to cover your nakedness, and adornment”</b> (Q. 7:26). The believer is told, <b>“And your garments purify”</b> (Q. 74:4). The hem is legislated: Allah will not look on the one who trails his garment out of conceit (Sahih al-Bukhari 5784).</p> |

| ELEMENT                   | ☆ JUDAISM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | † CHRISTIANITY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | ✠ ISLAM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                           | Orach Chayim 24). Karaites wear the blue, hold that the Torah names no dye, and keep no rabbinic knot rules.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Covenant strength</b>  | The law has been kept without a break, on four literal corners, with twisted cords. The Mishnah is honest that the blue and the white are two parts of one command. The saying that this commandment “ <i>is equal to all the commandments</i> ” (Talmud Menachot 43b; Laws of Fringes 3:12) repeats <b>Numbers 15:39</b> . | The rebuke of those who “ <i>make their fringes long</i> ” to be seen (Matthew 23:5) is the Tanakh’s own distinction between the purpose and the display. The Gospel record shows the law in use, not set aside.                                                                                                | Q. 7:26 says what <b>Deuteronomy 22:12</b> assumes: covering is given, and the inward garment is the greater. The hadith on the trailing hem guards the edge of the garment from pride, which is <b>Micah 6:8</b> .                    |
| <b>Covenant departure</b> | Exempting women; exempting the night; binding thread and knot counts as law; letting the cord of blue lapse; reading verse 12 as leave to break verse 11 (Talmud Yevamot 4a); moving the cords from the daily covering to a garment of prayer. None of these is in the text.                                                | Setting aside a statute given “ <i>throughout their generations</i> ” with no Tanakh text that removes it; a division of the covenant law into ceremonial and moral that the Tanakh does not make; teaching the hem as a channel of healing power, against <b>Haggai 2:12</b> ; moving the cords to belt loops. | The Qur’an affirms that the Torah was sent down with guidance and light (Q. 5:44) and does not carry this statute. The remembrance that <b>Numbers 15:39</b> fastens to the eye by a cord has no counterpart at the garment’s corners. |
| <b>Covenant witness</b>   | Rabbinic and Karaite practice together show that the verse can be kept in every land and century. The Karaite reading shows it can be kept with nothing added.                                                                                                                                                              | Read from the Tanakh outward, Matthew 23:5 is not a repeal. It is <b>Isaiah 29:13</b> applied to the tassel.                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Islam bears witness that a people can be commanded about its clothing and count it worship. The Tanakh names the sign that was commanded.                                                                                              |

## X-B. The Blue Dye in the Historical Record — Comparative Reference Only

The Tanakh says that blue came by sea trade, “*from the coasts of Elishah*” (Ezekiel 27:7), and that it clothed kings and idols as well as the sanctuary (Esther 8:15; Jeremiah 10:9). It does not name what the dye was made from. Rabbinic tradition says it came from a sea creature (Talmud Menachot 44a), and the knowledge of it was later lost. In the winter of 2013–2014 the Israel Antiquities Authority reported that three pieces of wool cloth about two thousand years old, found in the caves of Wadi Murabba’at near the Dead Sea, had been dyed with the murex sea snail; two were purple and one was blue. The find shows that a snail dye was used for blue cloth in that period. The pieces were cloth, not tassels, and they do not show what was used in the days of Moses. The source of the dye is **Not in the text**. The identification with the murex snail is a well-supported proposal and not a covenant requirement. What the text requires is a cord of blue.

## XI. CORRECTIONS TO EARLIER LIBRARY MATERIAL

The Library’s rule is that its own earlier work is tested by the same standard as everyone else’s. Four earlier studies treat this law: **Doc 141**, **Doc 142**, **Doc 204**, and the June 2026 study *The Covenant Thread and the Covenant Garment*. Their central finding stands, and this study confirms it: the cords are commanded in the written covenant, throughout the generations, for remembrance and holiness, and no Tanakh text removes them. The points below needed correction. Corrections 1 through 7 have been made in the Google Docs of the documents named. The last paragraph sets out matters left for Elder Kepha’s decision.

**Correction 1 — four scripture citations in Doc 141.** Term 3 placed the words “*I have wrestled*” in **Genesis 32**, at Jacob’s wrestling. They are Rachel’s, at the naming of Naphtali: *naftulei Elohim niftalti (with wrestlings of Elohim I have wrestled)*, נַפְתּוּלֵי אֱלֹהִים נִפְתַּלְתִּי (Genesis 30:8). Jacob’s wrestling uses a different verb (**Genesis 32:24** [Hebrew 32:25]). Element 5 said the tassel law closes with the identical formula that opens the Ten Commandments. **Exodus 20:2** is in the singular; **Numbers 15:41** is in the plural. It is the same declaration in different words; the plural form is found in **Leviticus 19:36**. Element 6 cited the altar fire of **Leviticus 6:13** for the phrase “*throughout your generations*”; that verse does not contain it, and **Leviticus 23:31** has been put in its place. Element 7 said the Exodus clause appears twice in **Numbers 15:41**. It appears once. What is said twice is “*I am Yabweh your Elohim.*”

**Correction 2 — Malachi 4:2 in Doc 141.** Term 2 quoted “*healing in His wings*” and joined the verse to the hem of a garment. The Hebrew is *bi-khnafeha (in its wings)*, בִּכְנָפֶיהָ, with a feminine ending that refers to the sun (**Malachi 4:2** [Hebrew 3:20]). The wings are the rays of the rising sun. The verse says nothing of a garment, and the teaching that joins it to the tassel is **Not in the text**.

**Correction 3 — the archaeology in Doc 141.** Part Five called the blue-dyed find from Wadi Murabba'at “*a physical tzitzit-cord*” and spoke of threads “*consistent with tzitzit manufacture.*” The find was pieces of dyed wool cloth (Section X-B). No ancient tassel is claimed by the excavators. The two sentences now say so.

**Correction 4 — the Shema, a Gospel reference, and the footer in Doc 141.** Part Seven said the placing of **Numbers 15:37–41** as the third paragraph of the Shema was not a rabbinic arrangement. It is one (Mishnah Berakhot 2:2); the three passages are in the Tanakh, and their joining in one recitation is tradition. The Christian section listed Mark 6:56 as an account of the woman who touched the fringe; that account is in Matthew 9:20 and Luke 8:44, and Mark 6:56 is a separate occasion. The footer read Document 139 and now reads Document 141.

**Correction 5 — Doc 142.** Part Five and Declaration Four quoted **Zechariah 8:23** as “*the corner of a Hebrew man.*” The text has *ish Yehudi (a man, a Jew)*. The table of parallels called descent through the mother “*a distinctly Hebrew covenant pattern.*” The Tanakh reckons the tribe by the father's house (**Numbers 1:2, 18**); descent through the mother is later rabbinic practice. Both places are corrected.

**Correction 6 — Doc 204.** Section I-C said **Deuteronomy 22:9** forbids sowing a field with two kinds; the verse says a vineyard, and the field is in **Leviticus 19:19**. Section II-B gave the sea creature of the blue dye the Strong's number H2504. That number belongs to a word for the loins; the name of the creature is rabbinic and is not found in the Tanakh. Section II-C said the sages of the Talmud instituted the large and the small *tallit (prayer shawl)*. The Talmud discusses the cords on ordinary dress; the small garment worn all day is recommended in the Tur (Orach Chayim 24, fourteenth century). Section I-A and Declaration III said the tassel was the very next commandment after the sin of the spies. **Numbers 15:1–36** stands between. The link is the next chapter and the verb *tur (to scout / explore)* (Section VII-A).

**Correction 7 — \*The Covenant Thread and the Covenant Garment\*, and the 613 Laws listing.** The June study said the root of *kesut (covering)* appears in **Genesis 3:21**. That verse has other words for the tunics and the clothing; the root *kasab (to cover)* is in **Genesis 9:23**. The 613 Laws listing, No. 18, cited **Numbers 15:38** alone for the law of fringes. **Deuteronomy 22:12** has been added as its second witness.

**Set out for Elder Kepha's decision, and not changed in the Google Docs.** (1) Doc 141 (Term 4 and Declaration Five) and the June study draw meaning from *gadal (to grow great)*, speak of cords “*twisted into greatness,*” and call the wearer a walking sanctuary because the word is also used of the Temple pillars. The shared word is in the text. The lexicons separate the two roots, and the Tanakh draws no such conclusion (Section II). (2) Doc 141 (Element 3) follows a modern scholar in calling the

priestly garments a wool and linen mixture in which the tassel shares. The text does not say what the dyed yarn was, and Section VI-B and VI-C give the Tanakh's own witness for the priestly link. (3) Doc 141 says that Maimonides listed the tassel with circumcision and the Passover offering among the most foundational commandments. This study could not find that statement; what he wrote is in Laws of Fringes 3:12. (4) Doc 142 (Part Five and Declarations Three and Five) teaches that **Yahweh** set the holiness of the garment's edge in human consciousness before Sinai, and that the fringes of other peoples touch the same principle. Under the findings of Section VIII-B that is **Not in the text**. The derivation of the name Anishinaabe from Hebrew in the same document rests on one uncorroborated testimony. (5) The Google Doc titled “*Tzit Tzit*” carries the label Document 140, which the Master Library Index gives to another study, and several Hebrew words in its text tables are misspelled. The correct Hebrew of **Deuteronomy 22:12** is given in Section I-C.

## XII. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON THE TWISTED CORDS

Per the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard, no doctrine may stand on a single text. Each declaration below draws on more than one witness.

| #   | COVENANT DECLARATION                                                                                                                                                                      | BASIS                                                                                |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I   | <b>Deuteronomy 22:12</b> and <b>Numbers 15:37–41</b> are one law in two witnesses: twisted cords on the four corners of the covering, a cord of blue on each, throughout the generations. | <b>Deuteronomy 22:12; Numbers 15:38; Deuteronomy 19:15</b>                           |
| II  | The text fixes the twist, the place, and the cord of blue, and it fixes nothing more. No count of threads or knots is covenant law.                                                       | <b>Deuteronomy 22:12; 1 Kings 7:17; Numbers 15:38; Deuteronomy 4:2</b>               |
| III | The law is laid on the ordinary covering, the garment the poor man sleeps in. No special garment is commanded, and no one is too poor to keep it.                                         | <b>Deuteronomy 22:12; Exodus 22:26–27; Numbers 15:38</b>                             |
| IV  | The corner of a garment stands for the person and for covenant covering. It can bear guilt, and it cannot pass on holiness. The cords are not a charm.                                    | <b>1 Samuel 15:27–28; 24:4–5; Ruth 3:9; Ezekiel 16:8; Jeremiah 2:34; Haggai 2:12</b> |
| V   | The cords are for seeing, remembering, and doing. They are set against the scouting of the heart and the eyes, and in both books they stand beside the laws of faithfulness.              | <b>Numbers 15:39–40; Numbers 13:2; Deuteronomy 22:21, 30</b>                         |

| #   | COVENANT DECLARATION                                                                                                                                                                             | BASIS                                                                                 |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| VI  | The cord of blue joins the garment of every Israelite to the high priest's plate, Holy to <b>Yahweh</b> . The people are called a kingdom of priests.                                            | <b>Exodus 28:36–37; 39:31; Numbers 15:38, 40; Exodus 19:6</b>                         |
| VII | The command is to the children of Israel, men and women, and to the stranger who joins them, in every generation and every land. It is kept before <b>Yahweh</b> with justice, or it is refused. | <b>Numbers 15:15–16, 38; Deuteronomy 31:12; Isaiah 56:6; Jeremiah 2:34; Micah 6:8</b> |

### XIII. THE COVENANT RESPONSE — WHAT THE TANAKH SAYS TO THE ONE WHO ASKS

Behind the questions about this verse there is usually a person who wants to keep it and has been handed a great deal that is not in it.

Tanakh's answer is fivefold.

**First: know what the verse says.** Twisted cords, made for yourself, on the four corners of the covering you wear (**Deuteronomy 22:12**), with a cord of blue on each (**Numbers 15:38**).

**Second: know what it does not say.** It sets no number of threads and no knots. It commands no prayer garment. It exempts no woman. It promises no protection. Whoever lays these on you as covenant law has added to the word (**Deuteronomy 4:2**).

**Third: put the cords where the text puts them.** The corner is the place of a person's standing and of covenant covering (**1 Samuel 24:4–5; Ruth 3:9; Ezekiel 16:8**). The reminder belongs there.

**Fourth: let the cords do their work.** *“You shall see it and remember all the commandments of Yahweh and do them”* (**Numbers 15:39**). A cord that is seen and not obeyed has done nothing.

**Fifth: keep the corner clean.** The prophet found the blood of the innocent poor on the corners of a people who kept the outward forms (**Jeremiah 2:34**). The cords call a person to the commandments. They do not stand in for them (**Micah 6:8**).

The verse is ten words. It asks for a few cords, twisted by hand, on the garment a person already wears, so that the eyes that once led a generation astray will have the commandments of **Yahweh** in front of them.

## SCRIPTURE INDEX

| REFERENCE                         | SUBJECT                                                                             | SECTION             |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Genesis 1:21</b>               | The winged bird: the first sense of the word for corner                             | II                  |
| <b>Genesis 3:21</b>               | <b>Yahweh</b> clothes Adam and his wife                                             | V-B; XI             |
| <b>Genesis 9:23</b>               | Shem and Japheth cover their father                                                 | II; V-B; XI         |
| <b>Genesis 30:8</b>               | Rachel's words at the naming of Naphtali                                            | XI                  |
| <b>Genesis 32:24</b>              | Jacob's wrestling                                                                   | XI                  |
| <b>Genesis 38:18</b>              | Judah's seal, cord, and staff                                                       | II                  |
| <b>Exodus 12:49</b>               | One Torah for the native and the stranger                                           | VIII-B              |
| <b>Exodus 19:4–6</b>              | Borne on eagles' wings; a kingdom of priests and a holy nation                      | IV-A; VI-B; XII     |
| <b>Exodus 20:2</b>                | The opening declaration of the Ten Commandments                                     | XI                  |
| <b>Exodus 21:10</b>               | Food, covering, and marital right                                                   | II; V-A             |
| <b>Exodus 22:26–27</b>            | The poor man's only covering returned by sunset                                     | II; V-A; VII-D; XII |
| <b>Exodus 25:20</b>               | The wings of the cherubim                                                           | II                  |
| <b>Exodus 26:1</b>                | Blue in the tabernacle curtains                                                     | II; VI-B            |
| <b>Exodus 28:6, 28, 31, 36–37</b> | The ephod; the cord of blue; the robe all of blue; the plate, Holy to <b>Yahweh</b> | II; VI-B; VI-C; XII |
| <b>Exodus 35:29</b>               | Every man and woman: the children of Israel                                         | VIII-A              |
| <b>Exodus 39:21, 29, 31</b>       | The cord of blue made as commanded; the sash                                        | VI-B; VI-C; XII     |
| <b>Leviticus 6:13</b>             | The altar fire                                                                      | XI                  |
| <b>Leviticus 19:2, 19, 36</b>     | Be holy; the three mixtures; the Exodus declaration in the plural                   | II; VI-A; XI        |
| <b>Leviticus 23:31</b>            | A statute throughout your generations                                               | XI                  |
| <b>Numbers 1:2, 18</b>            | The tribes counted by their fathers' houses                                         | XI                  |

| REFERENCE                    | SUBJECT                                                             | SECTION                      |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Numbers 4:6</b>           | A cloth all of blue over the ark                                    | VI-B                         |
| <b>Numbers 13–14</b>         | The spies who scouted the land; the judgment on that generation     | II; III; VI-D; VII-A; XII    |
| <b>Numbers 15:1–36</b>       | The laws tied to the Land; one Torah for the stranger               | I-A; VIII-B; VIII-C; XI; XII |
| <b>Numbers 15:37–41</b>      | The tassel, the cord of blue, and the purpose                       | Throughout                   |
| <b>Deuteronomy 1:3, 5</b>    | Moses explains this Torah in the fortieth year                      | I-B; III; III-A              |
| <b>Deuteronomy 4:2</b>       | Do not add to the word nor take away from it                        | III-C; VIII-C; XII; XIII     |
| <b>Deuteronomy 6:4–9</b>     | All Israel addressed as one; the signs on hand, eyes, and doorposts | II; VII-B                    |
| <b>Deuteronomy 11:18</b>     | The signs repeated                                                  | VII-B                        |
| <b>Deuteronomy 19:15</b>     | The two-or-three-witness standard                                   | Opening; I-D; III-A; XII     |
| <b>Deuteronomy 22:5</b>      | The garments of men and of women                                    | VIII-A                       |
| <b>Deuteronomy 22:9–11</b>   | The three forbidden mixtures                                        | II; VI-A; XI                 |
| <b>Deuteronomy 22:12</b>     | Twisted cords on the four corners of the covering                   | Throughout                   |
| <b>Deuteronomy 22:13–30</b>  | The marriage laws; his father's corner                              | IV-C; VI-D; XII              |
| <b>Deuteronomy 24:12–13</b>  | The poor man's pledge returned at sunset                            | V-A                          |
| <b>Deuteronomy 27:20</b>     | The curse on uncovering a father's corner                           | IV-C                         |
| <b>Deuteronomy 31:12</b>     | Men, women, little ones, and the stranger hear the Torah            | VIII-A; XII                  |
| <b>Deuteronomy 32:11</b>     | The eagle spreads its wings                                         | II                           |
| <b>1 Samuel 15:22, 27–28</b> | To obey is better than sacrifice; the corner torn                   | IV-B; IV-F; VII-D; XII       |
| <b>1 Samuel 24:4–5, 11</b>   | David cuts the corner of Saul's robe                                | IV-B; IV-F; XII; XIII        |
| <b>1 Kings 7:17</b>          | Twisted cords of chain-work on the Temple pillars                   | II; IX-C; XII                |

| REFERENCE              | SUBJECT                                             | SECTION                           |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Isaiah 11:12</b>    | Gathered from the four corners of the earth         | II; IV-F                          |
| <b>Isaiah 29:13</b>    | Honored with the lips, the heart far off            | VII-D; X-A                        |
| <b>Isaiah 56:6</b>     | The foreigners who join themselves to <b>Yahweh</b> | VIII-B; XII                       |
| <b>Jeremiah 2:34</b>   | The blood of the innocent poor on the corners       | IV-D; IV-F; VII-D; XII; XIII      |
| <b>Jeremiah 10:9</b>   | Idols clothed in blue and purple                    | X-B                               |
| <b>Ezekiel 7:2</b>     | The end upon the four corners of the land           | II; IV-F                          |
| <b>Ezekiel 8:3</b>     | Taken by a lock of the head                         | II                                |
| <b>Ezekiel 16:8</b>    | The corner spread in covenant                       | II; IV-C; IV-F; XII; XIII         |
| <b>Ezekiel 27:7</b>    | Blue from the coasts of Elishah                     | X-B                               |
| <b>Ezekiel 44:17</b>   | The priests in linen; no wool                       | VI-C                              |
| <b>Amos 2:8</b>        | Garments taken in pledge beside the altar           | VII-D                             |
| <b>Micah 6:8</b>       | Justice, covenant-love, and a humble walk           | VII-D; X-A; XII; XIII             |
| <b>Haggai 2:12</b>     | Holiness does not pass through the corner           | IV-D; IV-F; VII-C; IX-B; X-A; XII |
| <b>Zechariah 8:23</b>  | Ten men take hold of the corner of a Jew            | IV-E; VIII-B; XI                  |
| <b>Malachi 3:6</b>     | <b>Yahweh</b> does not change                       | Opening                           |
| <b>Malachi 4:2</b>     | The sun of righteousness, healing in its wings      | XI                                |
| <b>Psalms 91:4</b>     | Refuge under His wings                              | IV-A                              |
| <b>Psalms 119:89</b>   | The word settled in heaven                          | Opening                           |
| <b>Job 24:7; 31:19</b> | The poor without covering                           | V-A                               |
| <b>Ruth 2:12</b>       | Under the wings of <b>Yahweh</b>                    | IV-A                              |
| <b>Ruth 3:9</b>        | Spread your corner over your handmaid               | II; IV-C; IV-F; XII; XIII         |
| <b>Esther 8:15</b>     | Royal dress of blue                                 | VI-B; X-B                         |

*“Twisted cords you shall make for yourself, on the four corners of your covering with which you cover yourself.”*

**Deuteronomy 22:12 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh**

---

**MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION**

**DOCUMENT 287 • ON THE FOUR CORNERS • OCTOBER 2026**

**MIQDASHBETHEL.AI • MIQDASHBETHEL@GMAIL.COM •**

**THE MESSAGE IS SENT TO THE WORLD**

**508(C)(1)(A) FREE CHURCH • SOLE TANAKH AUTHORITY • REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM**