

GENDER

These 5 passages are used to reinforce the gender binary and to condemn those who are not cisgender.

GENESIS 1:27

"So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." NRSV

- It is an ancient *poem* about the duality of creation, not a history textbook.
- Talks about the *rules*, but doesn't speak for the *exceptions*.
- God creates binary spaces -land, sky, & water - yet we have *dawn, dusk, tidal zones* that are a combination of these binaries.
- God exults in biodiversity - we are meant to be *unique*

DEUTERONOMY 22:5

"A woman shall not wear a man's apparel, nor shall a man put on a woman's garment; for whoever does such things is abhorrent to the Lord your God." NRSV

- The focus is the aversion to blending things - Same chapter: "Don't sow one field with 2 kinds of seed" & "Don't wear clothes of wool and linen woven together."
- Clothing changes with culture
- Created to prevent cross-dressing for cult prostitution, or to prevent people from sneaking into gender segregated spaces

GENESIS 2:7 & 2:22

"Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being." / "And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man." NRSV

- Ancient Jewish scholars believed that Adam (aw-dawm' = ground creature) had two sides, a male and female side.
- When God creates Eve, God splits Adam in two because God took one of Adams sides (which is often mistranslated as "rib")
- Gender distinction doesn't occur until the splitting of Adam - Ish (Male) and Ishah (female)

DEUTERONOMY 23:1

"No one whose testicles are crushed or whose penis is cut off shall be admitted to the assembly of the Lord." NRSV

- Castration would have cut them off from having descendants which goes against the blessing of being fruitful & multiply.
- Castrated people (called Eunuchs) were considered a 3rd non-procreative gender
- Isaiah 56:3-5: God breaks his own rules by allowing Eunuchs back into the temple
- Acts 8: Philip baptizes the Ethiopian Eunuch (the first Christian convert)

ALTERNATIVE QUEER INTERPRETATIONS

This resource contains alternative interpretations of the clobber passages used against LGBTQ2S+ People



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GENESIS 19:5

"They called to Lot, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, so that we may know them." NRSV

- Usually interpreted as God's judgment on same-gender relationships, yet the only form of same-gender behaviour described is a threatened gang rape
- Gang rape was a common war tactic used by men to bring upon violence and humiliation to the receiver
- Ezekiel 16:49 says that the sin of Sodom was arrogance, gluttony, and unconcerned for the poor and needy.

LEVITICUS 18:22 & 20:13

"You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination." & "If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death; their blood is upon them." NRSV

- God wanted to set Israel apart from other nations, which were worshiping other Gods (Molek & Baal) by killing babies, having public sex, getting tattoos etc.
- The laws were created to make Israel different – this law was referencing types of worship, lust and power dynamics, NOT same-gender relationships
- With the coming of Jesus, we are made holy with his death and resurrection, and as Christians, we are no longer obligated to follow the Torah in order to be saved.

SEXUALITY

These 6 passages are used to reinforce heteronormativity and to condemn those who are not straight.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9 & 1 TIMOTHY 1:10

"Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites" & "Fornicators, sodomites, slave traders, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to the sound teaching" NRSV

- In Biblical times, same-gender behaviour was primarily seen as happening between adult men and adolescent boys (masters and servants), via prostitution, and by men who were already married to women.
- Paul condemned the practices of Malakoi and Arsenokoitai which have been incorrectly translated as "homosexuality" since Malakoi means "soft" or "weakness" and Arsenokoitai describes some kind of sexual/economic exploitation
- These incorrect translations are a result of 20th century stereotyping.

ROMANS 1:26-27

"For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameful acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error." NRSV

- Paul was not condemning the expression of a same-gender orientation, here he was condemning excess as opposed to moderation.
- Paul's use of natural/unnatural meant that men and women had certain sexual roles (Men had an active role and women had a passive role)
- Switching these roles would have been considered "unnatural" because then a man would be do a "womans role" and vice versa.
- During the time, this would be considered the worse violation of their own moral character and completely degrade them.
- Paul is referring to social customs rather than biological ones.
- Arsenokoitai: means "Men and Bed". Paul invented this word and was only used in the context of abusive power, prostitution or non- relational same-gender behaviour