

Canon 68

1. Text of Canon 68 of the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215

In some provinces a difference in dress distinguishes the Jews or Saracens from the Christians, but in certain others such a confusion has grown up that they cannot be distinguished by any difference. Thus it happens at times that through error Christians have relations with the women of Jews or Saracens, and Jews and Saracens with Christian women. Therefore, that they may not, under pretext of error of this sort, excuse themselves in the future for the excesses of such prohibited intercourse, we decree that such Jews and Saracens of both sexes in every Christian province and at all times shall be marked off in the eyes of the public from other peoples through the character of their dress. Particularly, since it may be read in the writings of Moses [Numbers 15:37-41], that this very law has been enjoined upon them.

Moreover, during the last three days before Easter and especially on Good Friday, they shall not go forth in public at all, for the reason that some of them on these very days, as we hear, do not blush to go forth better dressed and are not afraid to mock the Christians who maintain the memory of the most holy Passion by wearing signs of mourning.

Origin of the Badge

2. The Pact of Umar, 7th century (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/pact-umar.asp>)

We shall show respect toward the Muslims, and we shall rise from our seats when they wish to sit. We shall not seek to resemble the Muslims by imitating any of their garments, the qalansuwa [turban], footwear, or the parting of the hair. We shall not speak as they do, nor shall we adopt their kunyas [nicknames and honourifics]... We shall always dress in the same way wherever we may be, and we shall bind the zunar round our waists.

Progress of the Badge

3. Cecil Roth, History of the Jews of Italy, pg. 98

This was the case, above all, with the Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen (Holy Roman Emperor 1220-1250; King of Sicily, with Apulia 1197-1250). He was, as has been seen, a man of exceptional culture and breadth of outlook – so much so as to draw suspicion upon him in that generally unenlightened age... He found it absolutely necessary, therefore, to vindicate his orthodoxy in matters which were to him of minor importance; and the Jews were the victims.

4. Cecil Roth, The Jews in the Renaissance, pg. 217

Samuel Sarfati... The Pope, on appointing him to his service, later empowered him to attend on Christian patients without formality and freed him from the obligation of wearing the Jewish badge.

5. The Judenhut (http://s126.photobucket.com/user/Bathory_bucket/media/judenhut.jpg.html?sort=3&o=9)



How did the badge impact the Jews?

6. Rabbi Moshe Isserles (16th century Poland), Code of Jewish Law, Orach Chaim 301:23

Connecting an item to clothing is effective [to permit] only if that item is ordinarily connected to clothing in that place. Something that is not ordinarily connected in that way is forbidden. One may travel with the green stars which the government of Persia has decreed all Jews must bear on their garments, even if the stars are weakly linked and not sewn.

7. Rabbi Yechiel Michel Epstein (19th-20th c. Lithuania), Aruch haShulchan Orach Chaim 301:84

The case of the green stars is more lenient than the case of bell decorations, requiring only a small attachment and not weaving or stitching, for the government obligates people to wear the stars on their garments. People are afraid to travel without the stars, and they guard the stars from falling off. The stars have the same status as stamps worn on a slave's garment. There is concern in that case lest the stamp fall and lest the slave then place the garment on his shoulder, but that is because the stamp is not joined well, as we will explain. The star is joined well, just not with weaving or stitching.

8. Rabbi Joseph Caro (16th century Israel), Code of Jewish Law, Yoreh Deah 178:1

Mechaber: We do not walk in the laws (*chukkim*) of the idolaters. Rama: And we do not try to appear like them.

Mechaber: One should not wear garb which is unique to them...

Rama: Rather, one should be separate from them in his clothes, and in his other behavior. This is all prohibited only as far as

- (a) conduct they practice for the sake of immorality, such as the red clothes their aristocracy wears, and
- (b) practices they have inaugurated and made into rules for themselves, without reason; there is reason to be concerned for Emorite superstition or idolatry behind these practices.

If they have a beneficial practice, though, such as that expert doctors wear a certain garment which signifies their expertise, then one may wear such a garment. Similarly, one may wear garments which are worn for honor or for some other reason.

9. Israel Abrahams, Jewish Life in the Middle Ages, Chapter 16

The effects produced by this system of branding the Jews as a pariah class were as deplorable as they were inevitable. The Jew became the mark for the meanest of insults. "Beaten, reviled, scorned, abused by every one.. he was made to swallow abuse like water, he was not allowed to take offence at anything." (Leroy-Bealieu, Israel Among the Nations) He lost his old refinements. Of old, no people had paid more attention to accuracy and polish in speech, to decency and cleanliness in dress, to self-respect in their manners and bearing...

The 20th Century Badge

10. <http://history1900s.about.com/library/holocaust/aa031298.htm>

Tzitzit

11. Numbers 15:38-40 (Koren translation)

Speak to the children of Israel and bid them that they make them fringes in the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of each corner a thread of *techelet*. And it shall be to you as a fringe, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of G-d, and do them, and that you seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you go astray; that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy to your G-d.

12. Talmud, Menachot 43b

Rabbi Meir used to say: Why is *techelet* different from any other color? Because *techelet* resembles the sea, and the sea resembles the heavens, and the heavens resemble the Divine Throne, as it is written (Exodus 24:10), 'And beneath His feet was a kind of paved work of sapphire stone, and like the very heaven for clarity.'

13. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (19th century Germany), Horeb 278

Thus when the sensitive eye and the sensitive heart of man wander out into the visible world, and are then thrown back upon themselves, they find the human garment – the first visible characteristic distinguishing man from beast – reminding man of his superiority over brutishness and making him aware of the existence of the Invisible One and His word, and recalling vividly G-d, human dignity and the mission of Israel....

14. Genesis 27:11-12, 15-16

And Jacob said to his mother Rebecca: My brother Esau is hairy, and I am smooth. Perhaps my father will feel me, and I would be like a trickster in his eyes, bringing a curse rather than a blessing upon myself...

And Rebecca took the precious clothes of her older son Esau, which were in the home with her, and she clothed her younger son Jacob. She put the goat hides upon his arms, and upon the smooth part of his neck.

15. Leviticus 18:3

Do not perform acts like those of the land of the Egypt, where you lived. Do not perform acts like those of the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you, and do not walk in their ways.

A Part and Apart

16. Talmud, Gittin 61a

We support needy non-Jews along with needy Jews, we visit ill non-Jews along with ill Jews, we bury deceased non-Jews along with deceased Jews, in pursuit of peaceful paths.

17. Genesis 33:12-16

And Esau said: Let us travel and go, and I will go alongside you.

And Jacob replied: My master knows that the children are soft and my sheep and cattle are nursing their young; if they would hasten one day, all of the sheep would die. Let my master pass before his servant; I will travel at my slow pace, according to the task before me and according to the needs of the children, until I will meet my master in Se'ir.

And Esau said: I will delegate to you some of the nation who are with me.

And Jacob replied: Why would this find favour in the eyes of my master?

And Esau returned that day to his path, to Se'ir.

18. Numbers 23:9

They are a people who dwells alone, and who will not be numbered among the nations.

19. Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, Confrontation, 1967

We cooperate with the members of other faith communities in all fields of constructive human endeavor, but, simultaneously with our integration into the general social framework, we engage in a movement of recoil and retrace our steps. In a word, we belong to the human society and, at the same time, we feel as strangers and outsiders.

20. Midrash Tannaim 33:28

"Alone" – not like Bilam's "alone", Numbers 23:9 "They are a people who dwells alone." And not like Jeremiah's "alone", Lamentations 1:1 "How has she come to dwell alone." But like Moses' "alone", Deuteronomy 32:12 "G-d will guide them alone."