

Personal Thoughts Regarding the Tzitzit

Matthew 9:20-21 (KJ2000) And, behold, a woman, who was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the **hem** of his garment: For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. [Mark 5:28; Luke 8:44]

The Greek behind the English word translated as hem is Strong's Number 2899 kraspedon - kras'-ped-on - of uncertain derivation; a margin, i.e. (specially), a fringe or tassel:--border, hem.

To understand what this fringe or tassel is, we need to refer to the Septuagint.

From Numbers:

15:37			15:38								
2532	2036-2962	4314	*	3004	2980	3588	5207	*	2532	2046	4314
kai	e e ipe k e urioV	proV	Mwus ehn	l e egwn	l e alhson	toiV	uio e iV	Isra ehl	kai	ere e iV	proV
And	the Lord	spoke	to	Moses,	saying,	Speak	to the	sons	of	Israel!	And you shall say to
1473	2532	4160	1438	2899	1909	3588	4419	3588	2440-1473		
auto e uV	kai	poihs e atwsan	eauto e iV	kr e aspeda	ep e i	ta	pter e ugia	tw n	imat e iwn	auto e wn	auto e wn
them,	and	let them make	for themselves	decorative hems	upon	the	borders		of their	cloaks	
1519	3588	1074-1473	2532	2007	1909	3588	2899	3588			
eiV	taV	gene e aV	aut e wn	kai	epiq e hsete	ep e i	ta	kr e aspeda		tw n	
throughout	their	generations.	And	you shall place	upon	the	decorative hems		of the		
			15:39								
4419	2832.1	5191	2532	1510.8.3	1473	1722	3588	2899	2532		
pterug e iwn	kl e wsm a	uak e inqinon	kai	e estai	um e in	en	toiV	krasp e edoiV	kai		
borders	yarn	of blue.	And	it will be	to you	in	the	decorative hems,	that		
3708	1473	2532	3403	3956	3588	1785	2962				
eoyesqe	aut e a	kai	mnhsq ehsesqe	pas e wn	tw n	entol e wn	kur e iou				
as you shall see	them,	then	[shall be remembered	all	the	commandments	of the Lord].				

By cross referencing this with the use of a Hebrew interlinear Tanach, we discover the Greek word Strong's number 2899 is translated from the Hebrew word Strong's Number 6734. tsiytsith - tsee-tseeth'- a floral or wing-like projection, i.e. a forelock of hair, a tassel:--fringe, lock. This word is more commonly transliterated today as tzitzit.

Why did God instruct the Children of Israel to wear tzitzit?

Numbers 15:39-40 (KJ2000) *And it shall be unto you a tassel (tzitzits), that you may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that you seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you use to follow harlotry: That you may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God. Deuteronomy 22:12 (KJ2000) You shall make tassels upon the four corners of your cloak, with which you cover yourself.*

We know that wearing the tzitzits was a commandment of God that the people would **remember and do all** the commandments of God and not be deceived by the own hearts and play the harlot.

Note: There were no languages that had a “J” in them until around 1500 AD. There was no such name as Jesus in the 1st Century. The Son of God is believed to have had the Hebrew name Yeshua. I have chosen to use Yeshua in this document, because I am more comfortable with the name Yeshua. Please be gracious with me if you may not yet be comfortable with the Jewishness of our Messiah.

What was it that the woman touched in Matthew chapter 9, Mark chapter 5 and in Luke chapter 8? She touched the fringe of his garment (the tzitzits). The tzitzits represent a physical manifestation of a spiritual phenomenon. A symbol of the belief system that one is staking out as the boundaries within which he is willing to walk and outside of which he is unwilling to venture. From Matthew chapter 9, Mark chapter 5 and Luke chapter 8, we know from the Scriptures that Yeshua wore tzitzits.

Because I desire to grow in sanctification and be set apart unto God, I seek to keep the commandments of God. There are many scriptural reasons to seek to keep the commandments of YHVH. The length and breadth of the reasons I choose to keep the instructions of God is beyond the scope of this discussion. However I will offer the following two scriptural references that should cause any believer to stop and think. Revelation 12:17 (KJ2000) *And the dragon was angry with the woman, and went to make war with **the remnant** of her offspring, **who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Yeshua Ha Mashiach.*** Revelation 14:12 (KJ2000) *Here is the patience of the saints: here are **they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Yeshua.*** From these two passages, we can deduce there is a great benefit to observing the commandments of God and holding fast to Yeshua as our salvation. As part of keeping the commandments of God, I decided to wear tzitzits.

But exactly what are the symbolic meanings associated with the tzitzits and how do we wear them. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia explains it this way:

“Their tradition prescribes the exact manner in which each tassel shall be made, and gives a symbolic meaning to the numbers of windings and knots, somewhat after the manner of the string-writing of several early civilizations (compare the Peruvian quipus). Thus in the tsitsith (*tzitzits*) a long cord is wrapped around seven shorter cords first seven times, then eight, then eleven, and finally thirteen, each series being separated from the others by two knots. The numbers seven and eight constituting fifteen together suggest YH, and the number eleven, WH. Together they make up the holy name YaHWeH. The number thirteen stands for echadh, the letters of which taken as numerals equal thirteen. The sentence Yahweh 'echadh means "Yahweh is one." Many other suggestions, more or less fanciful, have been worked out, all tending to associate the fringes with the Law in the mind of the wearer.”

There are many patterns used for tying tzitzits. All traditional patterns include seven white strands or chords and one blue (or techlet) strand or chord with some combination of knots. Without a prior understanding of why, I selected a particular pattern for tying tzitzits. It consists

Personal Thoughts Regarding the Tzitzit

of five double knots with a pattern of half hitches between each double knot. The blue strand is used to tie the half-hitches. The pattern I selected ties a series of half-hitches of ten, five, six and five. This is the numerical value that in Hebrew would spell out yod, hey, vav, hey. YHVH is the tetragamaton given to Moses for the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel. I latter found out the blue strand that binds all the other strands together is known as the servant strand. As I sat one morning pondering the meaning of these things, the following came to me:

The tzitzit are tied on a tallit. It is a rectangular garment with a hole in the center for the head to go through. With the tzitzits on the corners as it is draped over the body, it reminds me of a tent. The ones I wear are white. I wear what is referred to as a tallit katon. It is worn as an undergarment. White symbolizes purity. Like a tent, it provides a covering. The tzitzits remind me of the tent stakes like those used to hold a tent in place. Like tent stakes, the tzitzits set the boundaries or borders of the covering. As tent stakes set the boundaries for what the tent will cover, the tzitzits remind the wearer of the boundaries set out by the commandments or instructions God has given that allow us to stay under His covering. Remember the story of Balaam? As long as the children of Israel were abiding within the commandments that God had given them, they could not be cursed. Similarly the tzitzits remind me that as long as I stay within the commandments of God, I am under His covering. *Psalms 91:1-11 (KJ2000) He that dwells in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler, and from the deadly pestilence. **He shall cover you with his feathers, and under his wings shall you trust: his truth shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flies by day; Nor for the pestilence that walks in darkness; nor for the destruction that wastes at noonday. A thousand shall fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes shall you behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, even the most High, your habitation; **There shall no evil befall you, neither shall any plague come near your dwelling.** For he shall give his angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.*** The tzitzits on a tallit resemble the feathers on the end of a wing.

As I move from the tallit to the tzitzits themselves, a more in depth picture develops. Each tzitzit traditionally has seven white strands. The number seven represents completeness. The color white represents purity. Like the white strands, God's commandments or instructions are pure and complete. There is an eighth strand that is blue. The number eight comes after the number seven. Since eight comes after seven and seven represents completeness, eight represents that which comes after all is complete. Eight represents eternity – that which comes after completeness. The color blue represents royalty & righteousness. This eighth blue strand also binds all the strands together and is known as the servant strand. The eighth strand is also the same strand as the strand that is tied in a series of knots that spells out YHVH. So I see the eighth strand as representing the servant that is royal, righteous and rules in the world to come and is one with YHVH (God the Father). And who is this servant? This servant is none other than

Yeshua our Messiah. And the pure complete instructions that we saw represented in the white strands previously, came by the spoken Word of God. This Word of God also is none other than Yeshua our Messiah. This Yeshua is the same suffering servant who came from heaven to earth to lay down His life that all who would, **by faith**, choose to accept Him as Lord and Master in their lives and obey His commandments and instructions could and will share His righteousness in the world to come (eternity) and be one with YHVH. The blue strand serves to remind me that I am counted righteous by faith and this faith is not of works. For regardless of whether I believe in God or not, God is still and will always be God. My belief by faith that YHVH is the one and only God changed nothing. If there is no change, no work has been accomplished. My share in the world to come (eternity) is assured by faith that God's promises are true and is not earned by works. It is the cornerstone of my belief system. By faith, I know God's promises of eternal salvation to be true. If I know this to be true, by faith I can trust in all His promises. God has promised blessings and not curses not only for me but for the generations to come. Deuteronomy 28:1-14 (KJ2000) *And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command you this day, that the LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on you, and overtake you, if you shall hearken unto the voice of the LORD your God. Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your herds, the increase of your cattle, and the flocks of your sheep. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading-trough. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. The LORD shall cause your enemies that rise up against you to be defeated before your face: they shall come out against you one way, and flee before you seven ways. The LORD shall command the blessing upon you in your storehouses, and in all that you set your hand unto; and he shall bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you. The LORD shall establish you a holy people unto himself, as he has sworn unto you, if you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and walk in his ways. And all people of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of you. And the LORD shall make you bountiful in goods, in the fruit of your body, and in the fruit of your cattle, and in the fruit of your ground, in the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give you. The LORD shall open unto you his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand: and you shall lend unto many nations, and you shall not borrow. And the LORD shall make you the head, and not the tail; and you shall be above only, and you shall not be beneath; if that you hearken unto the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day, to observe and to do them: And you shall not go aside from any of the words which I command you this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them. If you ever become interested in what happens to those who will not keep His instructions read the rest of Deuteronomy chapter 28.*

Therefore I am reminded that if I choose to walk in a manner that's bounded by the commandments and instructions of God I am covered by the righteousness of God. No weapons

Personal Thoughts Regarding the Tzitzit

of evil will prevail upon me. I can trust on this by the promises of God, by the Word of God, who is the source of my salvation, by the selfless sacrifice of the suffering servant which is the cornerstone of my faith. The tzitzits remind me of God's promises and my belief in the truth of God's promises.

At a minimum during my day, I see these reminding symbols every morning and every evening. As I put them on and take them off, I stop and take time to reflect on my belief again. As I meet people in my daily walk, they ask me about these strings that hang from my clothing and each and every time is an opportunity to witness my belief. They are a physical manifestation of the spiritual phenomenon of my belief system. If I can ever fully grasp that belief system, just like the woman in Matthew chapter 9, Mark chapter 5 and Luke chapter 8, I too will be healed from the uncleanness that has afflicted me as I walk through this world.

As a physical manifestation of a spiritual phenomenon, the tzitzits that I wear are a continual witness not only to me but also to those of the world who see me as a peculiar person.

Deuteronomy 14:2 (KJ2000) *For you are a holy people unto the LORD your God, and **the LORD has chosen you to be a peculiar people** unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.* Exodus 19:5-6 (KJ2000) *Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a **special treasure unto me above all people**: for all the earth is mine: And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak unto the children of Israel.* 1 Peter 2:9 (KJ2000) *But you are a **chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own**; that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:* Deuteronomy 26:18 (KJ2000) *And **the LORD has declared you this day to be his peculiar people**, as he has promised you, and **that you should keep all his commandments**;*

If you do not wear tzitzits and are a believer in Yeshua as your Messiah claiming Him as your Lord, consider why not. WWYD?