

haLakha 3

Talit & Tzitzit

1. Define Tzitzit

B'midbar (Numbers) 15:37-41

³⁷ Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ³⁸ "Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. ³⁹ And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the LORD and do them, and that you *may* not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined, ⁴⁰ and that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy for your God. ⁴¹ I *am* the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I *am* the LORD your God."

"Tassles" with blue thread on corners

See and remember the Commandments

2. Rabbinic Definition and Use of Talit & Tzitzit

Garment with at least four corners

Mitzvah limited to daytime = "that you may look upon them"

Talit

Four cornered robe with fringe (*tzitzit*) on each corner

Established due to change in clothing fashion

Only worn by married men in some orthodox synagogues, and by all men who have made their Bar-Mitzvah in Conservative and Reform. Some Reform and Conservative congregations also allow women to wear Talit.

Be careful to not mix species (*shatnez*), silk or rayon is best

Large enough to cover at least half the wearer's torso (orthodox fashion)

All other variations unimportant

How it worn is up to the user

Talit Katan

"Small talit" worn under shirt for all-day wear

Tzitzit

Fringe (tassels) with eight strings and five knots

'T'khelet' (azure/blue) thread not used (Orthodox tradition) as color came from a now-extinct mollusk

Eight strings & five knots

Numerical value of "*tzitzit*" is 600

Add five knots & eight strings = 613, for all the commandments

Most have 7,8,11 & 13 winds between knots

7 + 8 = 15 (the value of yud and hey), 11 = value of vav & hey

Total = the name of G-d: 13 = value of Echad, "G-d is One"

Some have 10,5,6 & 5 winds, the value of each letter in G-d's name

If any are cut or torn off, it is not usable until replaced

3. Prayers for wearing Talit or Tzitzit

Baruch Ata Adonai, Meklech ha-olam, Asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hit'atef batzitzit.

Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to wrap ourselves in the *tzitzit*.

4. Brit HaChadashah

Greek text uses *kraspedon*, tassel

Matityahu (Matthew) 9:20-22 (hem) Luke 8:43-44 (border)

20 And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. 21 For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well." 22 But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour.

43 Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, 44 came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped.

The woman related to Yeshua through the 613 commandments (written Torah), as the 'Living Torah'

Matityahu 14:35-36 (hem)

35 And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick, 36 and begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched *it* were made perfectly well.

Mark 6:56 (hem). Messiah = healing in his wings (talit) Mal'akhi 4.2

56 Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.

2 But to you who fear My name
The Sun of Righteousness shall arise
With healing in His wings;
And you shall go out
And grow fat like stall-fed calves.

Matityahu 23:5 (borders). The wrong use of tzitzit

5 But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments.

5. Messianic Application

The wearing of Talit or Tzitzit continues as one of the eternal commandments given by haShem (God), identifying the wearer as part of Israel and reminding him of his covenant with God.

Yeshua did not contradict or alter this *mitzvah*. In fact, scripture confirms he wore tzit-tzit.

(Tradition) No such command exists for Gentiles.

However, as a Gentile grows into an identity with God's people, he may share in the *mitzvah*, so long as its purpose and use is correct.

In Messiah, since there is no difference between men and women with regard to how we relate to God (Galatians 3.28), there should be no restriction for women to wear tzit-tzit or tallit. The only qualification is the garment should be in feminine styles and colors so as to not appear as wearing men's clothing. D'varim 22.5

