

The Biblical Woman With The Flow Of Blood

'A certain woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years, had suffered many things by many physicians, had spent all she had and was no better but rather grew worse. Having heard the things concerning Jesus, came up behind Him in the crowd and touched His clothes for she said, "If I just touch His clothes I will be made well." Immediately the flow of her blood was dried up and she felt in her body she was healed of her affliction. Immediately Jesus, perceiving in Himself the power of healing had gone out from Him, turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched My clothes?" His disciples said to Him, "You see the multitude pressing against You and You say, 'Who touched me?'" He looked around to see the woman who had done this thing, but the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had been done to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. Jesus said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace and be cured of your disease" (Mark 5:25 to 34).

'A woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her living on physicians and could not be healed by any, came behind Jesus and touched the tassel of His cloak and immediately the flow of her blood stopped. Jesus said, "Who touched me?" When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, "Master, the multitudes press and jostle You and You say, 'Who touched me?'" But Jesus said, "Someone did touch Me for I perceived power (of healing) has gone out of Me." When the woman saw she was not hidden she came trembling, and falling down before Him declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. He said to her, "Daughter, be comforted. Your faith has made you well. Go in peace" (Luke 8:43 to 48). Apostle Matthew recorded Jesus as saying, "Daughter, have courage! Your faith has made you well." The woman was made well from that hour (Matthew 9:22).

To fully understand the significance of these verses and the suffering the woman endured we need to look at the culture of Israel in those days. There is no mention of the woman's name nor her age but suffering that condition for twelve years, she was probably middle aged. She was a face in the crowd but she would certainly have been a Jewish woman. Her constant haemorrhaging for twelve years would have rendered her ceremoniously 'impure' and 'unclean' so she would have been forced to live alone and isolated, unable to attend services in the temple or synagogue because as an 'unclean' person she would have been forced by the Laws of Moses to have kept her distance from everyone including her immediate family and possibly children too. If she were married she would not have been able to be intimate with her husband, according to Jewish Law. In those days there was no such thing as sanitary protection so to avoid infection, women were kept isolated. Men were not exempt from being regarded as 'unclean'. 'If any man has an emission of semen he will bathe his entire body in water and be unclean until the evening. Every garment and all skin where the semen is, will be washed with water and be unclean until the evening. If a man lies (has sex) with his wife and there is an emission of semen, they will both bathe themselves in water and be unclean until the evening. If a woman has a discharge of blood, she will be in her impurity seven days and whoever (husband or children) touches her will be unclean until the evening. Everything she lies on in her impurity will be unclean. Everything she sits on will be unclean. Whoever (in this case, husband) touches her bed will wash his clothes, bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening. Whoever touches anything she sits on will wash his clothes, bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening. If it is on the bed, or on anything where she sits, when he touches it, he will be unclean until the evening. If he lies (has sex) with her and her monthly flow is on him he will be unclean seven days and every bed where he lies will be unclean. If a woman has a discharge of her blood many days not in the time of her normal period, or if she has a discharge beyond the time of her period, all the days of the discharge of her uncleanness will be as in the days of her period. She is unclean. Every bed where she lies all the days of her discharge will be to her as the bed of her period and everywhere she sits will be unclean, as the uncleanness of her period. Whoever touches these things will be unclean, will wash his clothes, bathe himself in water and be unclean until the evening. If she is cleansed of her discharge, she will count to herself seven days and after that she will be clean ... Thus you will separate the Children of Israel from their uncleanness so they will not die in their uncleanness when they defile My tabernacle that is in their midst. This is the law of him who has a discharge and of him who has an emission of semen so he is unclean and of her who has her period and of a man or woman who has a discharge and of him who lies with her who is unclean' (Leviticus 15:16 to 33).

For twelve years the poor woman would have been alone, isolated, in distress and possibly in pain. She may have been suffering from Endometrial Hyperplasia, which is mid or post-menopausal haemorrhaging. In modern times this is easily treated but two thousand years ago it was a terribly debilitating condition. She had no money left for their primitive treatments which were not helping her and her condition was worsening. We can see why she was so desperate to seek healing from Jesus. Another problem was, women were not supposed to approach men in those days. She was alone. Nobody was with her to speak out on her behalf. Furthermore, her embarrassing condition would have made her hesitant to openly approach Him and call out loudly like so many other sick people had so she chose to seek healing secretly. She silently pushed through

the crowd and without saying anything, with strong faith she would receive healing, reached out and touched the tassel of Jesus' cloak, which was her point of contact with the authority of God. It would have taken a lot of courage for a woman to was alone and 'unclean' to reach out and touch the clothing of a young single Man. Jesus always treated men and woman as equals so like many people who were healed by Him, the poor woman was forced to tell everyone the nature of her affliction. In her case it would have been particularly humiliating to tell the crowd what her embarrassing condition was. She was an older woman, while Jesus and the disciples were all young men. Jesus realised it took real courage to reach out to Him in that way and He acknowledged that when He said, "Have courage."

The garment Jesus wore would have been like a rectangular seamless cloak called a 'Tallit' that was worn over the head. On the corners of the tallit were tassels called 'Tzitzit'. God made clear His desire for Jewish people to wear a tallit. In Jesus' day, the tallit was usually worn whenever a person went outside their home. In winter the tallit was woollen and long enough to be worn from head to foot. In summer the tallit was made of linen and was shorter and thus cooler. When the woman touched the garment of Jesus, she would have reached out to touch the tzitzit, not the hem, as some modern translations say. It is significant because the tzitzit were woven into the garment in obedience to a direct instruction from God. 'You will not wear wool and linen mixed together. You will make yourselves tassels on the four borders of your cloak to cover yourself' (Deuteronomy 22:11 & 12). 'Tell the Children of Israel to make tassels in the borders of their garments throughout their generations and put on the tassel of each border a cord of blue. It will be to you a tassel so you may look on it and remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them so you not follow after your own heart and remember to do all My commandments and be holy to your God' (Numbers 15:38 to 40).

In both of the above verses, the Children of Israel were told to wear tassels on the corners of their tallits. In the Hebrew language, the language Jewish people spoke in Jesus' day and even today, every letter or character in the Hebrew alphabet has a numerical value. The tzitzit has four sets of twisted cord separated by a double knot. The name of the Lord God in Hebrew, YHWH or Yahweh has the numerical value of 26, so the phrase, 'The Lord is one' can be numerically spelled out on each tzitzit with four twists each separated by a double knot. Together, all four tzitzit are a visual symbol of the 613 Laws given to Moses. Each tzitzit has seven white stands, which is God's number of perfection. Each tzitzit also has a blue cord depicting the royalty of the coming Messiah, Jesus. It was also a reminder to keep God's commandments. It was His authority over humanity. The Jewish woman who touched the tzitzit of Jesus' tallit would have known that and by her faith and her submission to the authority God had invested in Jesus brought about her healing. The blue dye used by the Children of Israel came from a native murax or hillazon snail. Thousands of snails were needed to make just a small amount of blue dye. A similar shade of blue is now on the Israeli flag.

The woman mentioned above was not the only person who recognised the tzitzit as being a symbol of the authority of God through Jesus. Many other people knew that too. 'When the people of that place recognized Jesus, they sent disciples into all of the surrounding region and brought to Him all who were sick and they asked Jesus to allow them to just touch the tassel of His garment and as many as touched it were made whole' (Matthew 14:35 & 36). 'Wherever Jesus went, into villages, into cities or into the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and asked Jesus if they might touch just the tassel of His garment and as many as touched Him were made well' (Mark 6:56). 'Truly this Man was the Son of God!' (Mark 15:39).

Amen and God bless you.

www.bibleabookoftruth.com