



The Hem of His Garment

Mark 6:56, " And wherever he (Jesus) entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch, if it were, but the border of his garment; and as many as touched him were made well. "

In Matthew 9:20-22 and Mark 5:25-34 there is a story about a woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years. This woman said to herself, "if I may but touch his garment, I shall be well," (Matthew 9:21) and she was made whole the second she touched the hem of Jesus garment. What was so special about the garment of Jesus? Jewish customs during the time of Christ followed the laws and commandments of the Old Testament, and the wearing of white garments with fringes at the border of their garments signified a separated life unto God. During this time it was customary for man to wear a turban, girdle, tunic, an outer robe, belt, and sandals.

The material used for the garments were made of flax, wool, cotton, or a blend of any one of the three. It was the Jewish custom to wear white garments of which would be the turban, girdle, tunic, and belt. In Exodus chapter 28 and 39, we read about the special garments that the priest, the sons of the priest, and the choir singers (see 2 Chronicles 5:12) wore. These garments were made of fine white linen. There are four aspects of the white linen to consider when we begin to understand it's meaning not only during the time of Christ, but what it means for us today.

First, the garments were of costly material. During the time of Christ only the rich could afford such fine linen. The white linen was made from the stalk of wild flax fibers that originated in Palestine. The wild flax fibers were spun into fine lustrous linen. The linen not only had a natural luster, but it was 2 to 3 times stronger than cotton. The strength of this fine linen can convey God's strength, which reminds me of what David said in Psalms 18:32, "It is God who girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect." Remember, it was the priest and the choir singers who wore this lustrous fine linen. So, this fine linen speaks to God's strength and provision. The flax linen is known for its cooling effect. A person who wore such a garment would be kept cool from the heat of the day. The scripture tells us in Ezekiel chapter 44:17-18, which the priests and those who entered into the Lord's sanctuary were to be clothed in linen garments that did not cause sweat. No wool was to be used in the garment. In other words, they can not wear any garment that causes sweat. For sweat, is part of the curse in Genesis chapter 3 when the Lord God told Adam that the ground was cursed and it is with the sweat of the face, the labor of man, that man eats his bread (Genesis 3:17-19). Sweat signifies the works of man and God's righteousness is the gift of grace by faith in Christ Jesus; therefore, unmerited favor, or unearned favor of God done without the sweat of man or even the works of the Law of Moses. Paul comments in Galatians 3:10 that the law is under the curse and in Galatians 3:24 the law was to be "our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

Second, the color white signifies holiness. If our garments are white, then we are free from sin. In Ecclesiastes 9:8, it states to let your garments always be white. As David exclaimed his transgression so must we confess our sins that we may be washed white as snow. Isaiah chapter 1 verse 16 states, "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doing from before mine eyes; cease to do evil." Isaiah 1:18 it entreats us to come to him and plead [reason together] with the Lord God, "for though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow," (Amplified Bible). God who is holy has called us through Jesus Christ that we should be holy in all we do in this life (1Peter 1:15). Paul tells us in Philippians that we are not to be anxious for anything,

but seek our Lord and pray and make our request known to God (Philippians 4:4-8). We are to rejoice in the Lord always and dwell on things that are true, honest, pure, and things that are of good report. Also, Paul exhorts to "let your manner of life be without covetousness [the love of money or things], and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, " (Hebrews 13:5). We can have the assurances that all of our needs will be taken care of, for Jesus told us that our heavenly Father already knows all what we need (Matthew 6:25-34). Isaiah stated in Isaiah 61:10, "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." Those who have believed that Jesus came to earth as the Son of God, died on the cross for all our sins, and arose from the dead to give us all eternal life are now clothed with the costly white linen of Christ.

Third, the children of Israel were instructed by Moses through the Lord that they were to make fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a cord of blue, " (Numbers 15:38). This was to remind them of the commandments of the Lord that they should not seek after their own passions and desire that was contrary to the will of God. The blue cords were tassels that were worn on the four corners of their garments. The color blue symbolizes heaven. So, the children of Israel were to be heavenly minded and free from all earthly ambitions. The blue cord/tassels are called Tzitzit, and today they are only worn by men. Also, the Jewish prayer shawls with the dark blue lines and attached white tassels at the border represent this same reminder to all Jews. Some scholars believe that Jesus tunic had these tassels attached at the border of his garment.

Fourth, Jesus had a coat [tunic, or long robe] without a seam that was woven from the top (see John 19:23). Why was Jesus wearing a seamless tunic? To me this symbolizes not only a vessel for God, but a wholesome pure vessel that is used for God's glory. Jesus himself is the example of a pure vessel that contained God's power and glory. Jesus knew that power had flowed out of him after the women with the issue of blood touch the hem of his garment (Mark 5:30). For Jesus asked, "**Who touched my clothes?**" This power that had gone out of Jesus and healed the woman is known as Dunamis a Greek word meaning "power" or "force." In the English it means dynamite, which would be an explosive power. The power residing within Jesus is the very nature or virtue of God to act explosively when faith is applied. In Hebrews 11:1 it states, "now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Paul uses Abraham as an example of faith when he states in Romans 4:3, "Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness," Paul then tells us in Galatians 3:12-14 that the law does not require faith, but Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, for Christ became a curse for us. So, the promise of righteousness through faith has become our blessing as well as Abraham's. Can we be a vessel of honor fit for the master's use as Paul stated in the second chapter of 2nd Timothy? Yes, my friend we can.

Let us look unto "**Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith**" (Hebrews 12:2). Believe, confess, and receive the promise of healing, righteous, and more that is given to you by Jesus Christ. We can all be made whole like the women who touched the hem of his garment.

Written by Inge Schultz
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Tzitzit