

## ***Did You Know that the hem or fringe from a Jew's garment was a status symbol?***

When David spared Saul's life, he took away evidence that he had him in his power; *"Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily"* (privately). I Samuel 24:4. Why did David do this? The act of cutting off the hem (fringe) of Saul's robe was of very great significance. When the shouting began the next day Saul said; *"Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee today into mine hand in the cave; and some bade me kill thee; but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my Lord; for he is the Lord's anointed. Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it."* I Samuel 24:10-11. David had robbed Saul of his status symbol, the fringe of his robe that identified him as king.

The hem of a Jew's garment was not, as in modern clothes, a simple fold of the cloth, sewn down to prevent the edge from fraying. It was a decorative feature which made a statement about the status and importance of the wearer.

The hem or fringe of a garment indicated the rank or personality of the one wearing it. Remember Jesus severely rebuked the Pharisees for enlarging their fringes; *"But all their works they do for to be seen of men; they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments."* Matthew 23:5. They were trying to magnify their importance. The tassels on the fringes were formed by the threads decorating the fringe being brought together at the corners of the garment and knotted. The original purpose of the fringe and tassels as stated in the law became obscured in course of time, becoming a mere tradition.

The first mention of fringes and tassels in Scripture occurs in Numbers, where the people were instructed to include a special feature in their tassels – thread of blue. *"Again the spoke to Moses, saying, "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."* Numbers 15:37 NKJV. This was a reminder to the Israelites to *"remember all the commandments of the Lord and do them"*, Numbers 15:39.

The wearing of a garment decorated with a fringe and bearing a number of tassels was commonplace in Israel and in neighboring countries. Remember the story of Ruth and Boaz and when Boaz discovered Ruth at his feet, *"And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself; and behold, a woman lay at his feet. And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman."* Ruth 3:8-9. The skirt of Boaz would doubtless be edged with the fringe and tassels that indicated his status.

When the prophet Zechariah foretold that ten men will take hold of the skirt of a Jew and say, *“Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.”*

Zechariah 8:23. Why take hold of the skirt? Because the fringe of the skirt would indicate that the Jew was a man of God.

What of the miracle of the woman who had the blood issue for 12 years, *“And, behold, a woman, which 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.”* Matthew 9:20-21.

When she touched the hem of Jesus garment, it was the same as touching Him! She looked to Him by faith and when her faith touched His grace she was healed. She was claiming her right as a daughter of Abraham. She was looking to her Messiah and trusting Him to deliver her from her situation. She was claiming the promises of the Word of God and resting in the grace of God!

Do you need to touch Him today? Has Jesus spoken to your heart today?  
Are you lost and need salvation? **Touch the hem of His garment today!**  
Are you walking in humble obedience? **Touch the hem of His garment today!**  
Are you troubled & burdened down? **Touch the hem of His garment today!**

We don't need a tassel or fringe to get what we need from God. All we need is what the woman who touched Him had: **faith**. Come to Jesus today!

Today's *Did You Know?* was submitted by Sherry Shannon, Assistant teacher of the Dorcas class. All Scripture is from the King James Version unless otherwise noted.