

# 119

## MINISTRIES

*“The following is a direct script of a teaching that is intended to be presented via video, incorporating relevant text, slides, media, and graphics to assist in illustration, thus facilitating the presentation of the material. In some places, this may cause the written material to not flow or sound rather awkward in some places. In addition, there may be grammatical errors that are often not acceptable in literary work. We encourage the viewing of the video teachings to complement the written teaching you see below.”*

### **Parashah Points: Shelach – WWJD? He Would Wear Tzitziyot!**

Welcome to another episode of Parashah Points—short thoughts from the weekly Torah Portion.

This week’s Parashah Point comes from Shelach, which is Hebrew for “Send,” and it goes from Numbers 13:1 to Numbers 15:41.

This Torah portion discusses the twelve spies who went to assess the Promised Land and came back with a bad report. This story is followed by various commandments about offerings, the story about the Sabbath breaker and his punishment, and then the commandment about wearing *tzitziyot*.

There’s a lot we can talk about in this Torah Portion. Today we’re going to talk about the strange commandment to wear *tzitziyot* and what it means for us today.

If you were involved in church youth group during the nineties, you likely remember a trendy wristband that kids used to wear as a symbol of their faith. On these wristbands was the acronym WWJD, which stood for, “What Would Jesus Do?”

These wristbands were meant to serve as a physical reminder to live honorable lives for Jesus—that is, Yeshua—the Messiah. It was a neat idea to help Christians remember that they are representing the Messiah and that they should act accordingly. Interestingly, in our Torah Portion this week, we actually see a biblical version of this very same idea:

#### **Numbers 15:38-39**

Speak to the people of Israel, and tell them to **make tassels** on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner. **And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the Lord, to do them, not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to where after.**

The word “tassels” here comes from the Hebrew word *tzitziyot*. *Tzitziyot* are loosely hanging threads that are specially knotted and worn on the corners of one’s garment. Sometimes they are also referred to as tzitzits.

According to the passage, wearing *tzitziyot* wasn't just some temporary instruction that God told the ancient Israelites to do. God's people are to wear *tzitziyot* "throughout their generations" as a reminder that they are to live set apart lives in accordance with God's commandments. Like those WWJD wristbands we wore in the nineties, *tzitziyot* remind us that we are representing the God of Israel and the Messiah Yeshua, and we ought to act accordingly.

Speaking of WWJD, many people might be surprised to learn that Jesus-Yeshua wore *tzitziyot* Himself!

### **Matthew 9:20**

*And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the **fringe** of his garment*

The Greek word for "fringe" in this verse is *kraspedon*, which refers to Yeshua's *tzitziyot*! In fact, it is the same word used in the Septuagint when referring to *tzitziyot* in Numbers 15:38. So it's clear that our Messiah kept this commandment, which makes sense seeing as how He was an observant Jew in the first century. Why wouldn't He have worn them? It would have been a sin not to, and we know that Yeshua did not sin.

On a side note, it is said of the Messiah that He will have "healing in His wings" (Malachi 4:2). Interestingly, the Hebrew word for "wings" in Malachi 4:2 is *kanaph*, which is the same Hebrew word translated as "corner" of the garment on which the *tzitziyot* are hung. Messiah Yeshua, therefore, literally came with healing in His "wings." So there is a prophetic aspect to this commandment as well.

In addition to being a reminder to keep God's commandments, another practical benefit of wearing *tzitziyot* today is that it opens up opportunities to present the Gospel. A lot of people are curious when they see someone wearing *tzitziyot* since it's not something they see all of the time. This can often lead to questions and very fruitful discussions about your faith.

At the end of the day, like putting on a wedding ring as a symbol of your covenant commitment to your spouse, wearing *tzitziyot* is a small way to express your commitment to the God of Israel. It's a special symbol to remind yourself, and the rest of the world, to whom you belong.

Thank you for joining us for another Parashah Point!

*We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at [www.testeverything.net](http://www.testeverything.net)*

**Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.**

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