

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.”

Tzitzit FAQs

This teaching is intended to answer many of the frequently asked questions pertaining to tzitzits. So, let's get started.

What are tzitzits (Tzitziot)?

Tzitzits are tassels or fringes that attach to our clothing, each containing a thread of blue. The Biblical instruction is found in both Deuteronomy 22:12 and Numbers 15:38-39.

When should we wear tzitzits?

First, let's read the corresponding verses about tzitzits.

Deuteronomy 22:12

“You shall make yourself tassels on the four corners of the garment with which you cover yourself.

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 (YHWH), to do them, not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to where after.

While Deuteronomy 22:12 simply offers the instruction, Numbers 15:39 better reveals the reasoning and purpose.

Numbers 15:39

And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the Lord (YHWH), to do them, not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to where after.

The tzitzits serve as a visual reminder, a visible device intended to constantly call to our attention that we are to represent YHWH in everything we do. So, the answer to when we should wear tzitzits is anytime we need to be remembering to keep YHWH's commandments...meaning, basically anytime we are wearing clothes and conscious.

Not all clothing or circumstances are likely appropriate. Common sense prevails. For example, it would not make much sense to wear them with your swimming apparel where it can get easily impaired. It could also be dangerous when wearing tzitzits during heavy work with machinery, as they could become caught. Use your own judgment in these cases.

How do I wear tzitzits?

In Deuteronomy 22:12, we read that the tzitzits are to be attached to the four corners of your garments.

Deuteronomy 22:12

“You shall make yourself tassels on the four corners of the garment with which you cover yourself.

At the time that this commandment was given, the Hebrew garment contained four corners. This would have caused the tzitzits to be visible, which would have been the intent in describing the location on the clothing. This has also led to the practice of wearing a total of four tzitzits. The instruction does not clearly state the need to wear four tzitzits, the minimum would be two, as to be consistent with the plural usage tzitziot in the commandment. Four tzitzits however, may be what was intended, similar to how the “four corners of the Earth” metaphorically represents the whole Earth in Scripture. The four corners of our garment would imply that our whole body is covered in the purpose and reminder to keep YHWH's commandments.

During the time of Patriarchs and Yeshua the Messiah, a garment had four corners. If you live in the Middle East or when you watch the news, you can notice Arabs wear a long dress called a thawb. It is a long-sleeved one-piece dress that covers the whole body. This garment (thawb) allows air to circulate which helps to cool the body during summer months. This is the same garment that today many Christian church priests wear. Because it is a one-piece garment, that dress has four corners.

It is to be noted that there was also another garment that people used to wear over this one piece garment during the times of Patriarchs and Yeshua the Messiah. This in Aramaic is called *bisht* and in English is called a cloak or a coat. This was an outer cloak made of an expensive material such as silk or linen that also had four corners. So the tzitzit was tied on the corner of this garment.

When Yeshua was crucified the soldiers took His outer garments (plural) and His inner garment and cast lots to see who would take it (John 19:23-24). This clearly shows that during the times of Yeshua there were outer garments and an inner garment that people used to wear.

The commandment itself does not literally state to wear a garment with four corners, but assumes the reader is already wearing a garment with four corners. The obvious intent of the commandment is to have the tzitzits visible, to remind you to keep all the commandments of YHWH.

For those that are really concerned about having a four-cornered garment, there are several means to accomplish this.

Belt loops on jeans or pants have corners, and many attach tzitzits to their belt loops. There also exist products that attach tzitzits to a four-cornered leather garment, that can then attach to your clothing in various ways.

Should woman wear tzitzits?

Yes...we believe so...for reference 119 Ministries offers a separate teaching dedicated just to this question, titled: "[Should Women Wear Tzitzits?](#)"

It is a Jewish tradition based on a poor application of the Hebrew word "*ben*" that has led to the modern day belief that women should not wear tzitzits. This has not always been the case. For example, here is a painting of a 15th century synagogue showing women wearing the same tallit as men with tzitzit attached.



The instruction for tzitzits was given to the “children” of Israel, not literally just the “male offspring” of Israel.

Should my children wear tzitzits?

We are instructed to teach our children the Torah.

Deuteronomy 6:7

You shall teach them (Torah commandments) diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

The wearing of tzitzits is a commandment found in the Torah. It is one of the simplest instructions we

can teach our children. Given that the intent of tzitzits is to help remind us to keep the rest of the commandments, tzitzits also serve well to help remind our children to keep and observe the commandments they have been taught and are being taught. It would logically follow that children should maybe start wearing tzitzits early on in their education about YHWH's commandments.

For more information on this topic, please see the blog teaching "[Should Children Wear Tzitzits](#)" on the 119 Ministries website at TestEverything.net.

Can I make my own tzitzit or should they only be made by certain people?

There are no instructions in the Torah that state that only certain people can make tzitzits. You can make your own, or if that does not suit you, there are many who offer such services online. There are different traditions on how to make tzitzits, in particular, the number of knots or even threads. However, tzitzits can be made in any way one chooses, as long as it contains a blue thread.

At work due to our uniform regulations (police officer, fire fighters, military, hotel staff, hospital staff, etc) I cannot wear tzitzits. What do I do?

This is a common problem. The first step is to respectfully talk with your employer and determine whether arrangements can or cannot be made. Quite often, restrictions on wearing tzitzits is due to safety concerns and the nature of the work. For example, a member of our own team at 119 Ministries is a police officer and has been for about twenty-eight years. He wears his tzitzits in his pocket to try to apply the commandment the best that he is able. Life always take precedence in observing the Torah. See our teaching [Weightier Matters](#) for more information.

If arrangements to wear tzitzits cannot be made, many wear their tzitzits underneath their uniform, applying the commandment the best that they are able.

How long should a tzitzit be in length?

There is not an established length for tzitzits in the Torah. In the first century, some Jews made their tzitzits absurdly long, as to draw attention to themselves. This is not the point of tzitzits, and Yeshua called them out on such practices (Matthew 23:5). Find a size that is right and appropriate for you.

Why do some tzitzits for sale not contain a blue thread, or why do I see Jews wearing tzitzits without a blue thread?

Many tzitzit purchased from Israel do not have a blue thread. This is due to the manmade traditions and rules that exist among the orthodox Jews. In such cases, all you have to do is tie a blue thread on it.

Rabbinic (Jewish Rabbis) sources have stated that the blue color comes from a snail called *hilazon*. But *hilazon* isn't a biological species name, just a rabbinic name. The mystery lies in figuring out the species to which they were referring.

The search for the answer began in the early 20th century, when Isaac Herzog, who went on to become the first Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel wrote a doctoral thesis in which he concluded that a snail called the *Murex trunculus* (the rabbinic name *hilazon*) was the "most likely candidate" for the source of the blue dye.

While the Talmud (oral manmade law of Judaism) does not give a full identification of the *hilazon*, it does provide important clues. It was found near Haifa; and the color of its dye is “similar to the sky and the sea” .

Key to Herzog’ s conclusion was the fact that archaeological digs uncovered large ancient dyeing facilities close to Haifa, and mounds of *Murex trunculus*. But Herzog’ s conclusion had some drawbacks. The snail’ s dye was purplish blue, not the pure blue described in the Talmud. It took until the early 1980’ s for this riddle to be solved. In research unrelated to the search for the biblical dye, Otto Elsner, a professor at Shenkar College of Engineering and Design, near Tel Aviv, noticed that on sunny days, *Murex trunculus* dye became more blue and less purple. It turned out that the missing link between Herzog’ s experiments and biblical dyeing methods was ultraviolet light, which transforms the blue-purple colorant to unadulterated blue.

Because modern Jews did not know the origin of the original blue dye or the traditional blue dye, they chose to break the commandment by not wearing a blue thread at all.

Fortunately, the Torah does not require any specific source of blue dye. Contrary to Jewish tradition, we can wear tzitzits with a blue thread without dye from the possible historical source of a snail.

Can I add any other colors in addition to the blue thread?

Tassels can be of different colors and the Scripture does not mention the various colors in which the thread must be made except for one the specific color. But it does say that you **MUST** have a blue thread that would remind you of the commandments of YHWH. Almost all Tassels nowadays have multiple blue threads. But the Scriptures specifically say “put a blue cord in the tzitzit” . As you can see the blue thread is singular not plural. Over the years, based on their own traditions, people added more blue threads into it. There is also no restriction in placing other colors of meaning and significance into the tzitzits along with the required blue thread.

Did they wear tzitzits in the New Testament times?

Yes. As we have already read, the Pharisees had a tradition of absurdly long, attention drawing, tzitzits that Yeshua criticized.

Matthew 23:5

*They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes (Greek: *kraspedon*) (tzitzits) long...*

The same Greek word used in Matthew 23:5 is also used in the story about the woman with the blood issue touching Yeshua’ s tzitzits for healing. Just like the woman with the blood issues, many others adopted the practice of touching Yeshua’ s tzitzits for healing.

Matthew 9:20 to 21 (also see Luke 8:43-44)

*And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe (Greek: *kraspedon*) (tzitzits) of his garment, for she said to herself, “If I only touch his garment, I will be made well.”*

Matthew 14:35-36

And when the men of that place recognized him, they sent around to all that region and brought to him all who were sick and implored him that they might only touch the fringe (Greek: *kraspedon*) (tzitzits) of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.

Mark 6:56

And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or countryside, they laid the sick in the marketplaces and implored him that they might touch even the fringe (Greek: *kraspedon*) (tzitzits) of his garment. And as many as touched it were made well.

We hope that this teaching has been helpful in your understanding of the Biblical wearing of tzitzits.

We pray that this teaching has blessed you, and remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom

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

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

EMAIL: Info@119ministries.com

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/119Ministries

WEBSITE: www.TestEverything.net & www.ExaminaloTodo.net

TWITTER: www.twitter.com/119Ministries#