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Twisted Threads

22: 12

Twisted threads DIG: What is the purpose of the twisted threads (tassels or tzitzit)? Where are they to be placed? What other physical reminder of a spiritual truth do believers practice? How are they similar? How are they different? Why the blue cord on each tzitzit? Are we obligated to wear a tallit and the twisted threads today? Why? Why not?

REFLECT: In a secular society, what reminders do we have that keep our minds on Messiah? The calendar of seven festivals, Purim, Tisha B'Av, and other holidays are special reminders. But on a more frequent basis, the Lord's Supper, lighting the Shabbat candles and singing the barukh ata ADONAI over the bread and the wine (grape juice) also have great meaning.

The twisted threads were to serve as a reminder of ADONAI's mitzvot and Isra'el's obligation to obey them. Like immersion, they are a physical reminder of a spiritual truth.

While several of **the mitzvot** grouped in **22:1-12** refer to mankind's relationships with our neighbors, there are also **mitzvot** about the care of animals and birds. The impression remains that **the Second Address: The Specific Stipulations of the Covenant (12:1 to 26:19)**, covers a wide range of topics. The present group of **eleven mitzvot** in **22:1-12** make it clear that the scope of **ADONAI's** concern for proper treatment in the covenant community was just as wide. There was to be a wholehearted application of the Torah. In these next **twelve verses**, much of them are concerned with the **love** that should be shown to other members of the covenant community (**Deuteronomy 15:1-18; Leviticus 19:1-37**). While the brief statement: **Love your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39)**, does not occur in **Deuteronomy**, it is implied here, and in many parts of the book. **The** covenant **mitzvot** was comprehensive in its demand for **love**. The **love** of **YHWH**, and the **love** for one's **neighbors**.⁴⁸⁵



11. You are to make for yourself twisted threads (Hebrew: *g'dilim*, meaning *tassels* (Matthew 9:20 and 23:5) **on the four corners of your garment in which you cover yourself (22:12).** Numbers provides a fuller account of this mitzvah: **ADONAI spoke to Moses saying: Speak to Bnei-Yisrael. Say to them that they are to make for themselves tzitzit on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and they are to put a blue cord on each tzitzit. It will be your own tzitzit - so whenever you look at them, you will remember all the mitzvot of ADONAI and do them and not go spying out after your own hearts and your own eyes, prostituting yourselves. This way you will remember and obey all My mitzvot and you will be holy to your God. I am ADONAI your God. I brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am ADONAI your God"** (Numbers 15:37-41).

The rabbis wondered why YHVH commanded the inclusion of one blue cord among the white cords of the tzitzit. Tractate Menahot of the Babylonian Talmud reports Rabbi Meir asking "Why is blue different from all other colors?" and then answering, "Because blue resembles the sea, and the sea resembles the sky, and the sky resembles the throne of sh'khinah glory. As it is written: Above the sky over their heads was something like a throne, resembling a sapphire in appearance (Ezeki'el 1:26).

The object for these **twisted threads** was to remind **the Israelites** (by day and night, since the tallit was clothing by day and a blanket by night) of the Torah and to **be holy as He is holy (Leviticus 11:44).** By attaching **the tassels** to the tallit, we are reminded of **ADONAI's mitzvot**, our blueprint for living (see the commentary on **Exodus, to see link click Dj - The Ten Commandments**). **They** are a physical reminder of a spiritual truth. Today we don't have to wear **twisted threads**, although, because of our freedom in **Messiah**, if one chooses to do so, we can. But we have a much more significant reminder. We have **the Ruach ha-Kodesh** living within us, **conforming us into the image of**

Messiah (Romans 8:29b).⁴⁸⁶

Dear Heavenly **Father**, How wise **You** are to remind **Your** people daily to **be holy** as **You** are **holy (Leviticus 11:44)** by their wearing of **the twisted thread**. It would be good if people nowadays realized that **You** are **holy** and only those who are **holy** can enter heaven. Praise **You** that by **Yeshua's** death and resurrection **You** opened the door to **holiness** for all who chose to **love** and to follow **God (Romans 10:9-10)**. **He made the One who knew no sin to become a sin offering on our behalf, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (Second Corinthians 5:21)**. The choice of each person's eternal destiny is decided by who their heart **loves**. **God** looks to see if they have repented from their selfish ways and chosen to **love** and follow **Him (Second Peter 3:9)**. It is a real choice of eternal life of great joy or suffering the wrath of **God** in eternal punishment. **He who trusts in the Son has eternal life. He who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him (John 3:36)**. **Father God, I love You** and look forward to praising and worshiping **You** forever. Please do whatever it takes to open the hearts of my friends and family so they choose eternal life by loving **You** as first in their lives. In **Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen