

Healing In His Wings (Winterfire)

New England. The only non-geographical regional name recognized by the US federal government, first established before the US even existed, nearly 400 years ago. Site of the pilgrim landing and the first American Thanksgiving to Almighty God. Home of the original Tea Party. Birthplace of the American Revolution and the American War of Independence. Cradle of the world's greatest democracy, birthed in 1776 just 225 miles from here. A prominent player in the abolition of slavery; the first region of the US to be transformed by the Industrial Revolution.

New England. Home of the Puritans and the Great Awakening with firebrand preachers Jonathan Edwards, George Whitfield, and the like. Mother of literary geniuses like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Father of patriots like John Adams, John Hancock, Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Adams, and John Quincy Adams.

New England. Cities like Portland, Portsmouth, Boston, New Bedford, Fall River, Providence, New Haven, Bridgeport, Stamford, Worcester, Springfield, Waterbury, Hartford, Lowell, Cambridge, and Manchester.

New England. An average population density nearly three times the rest of the country, and nearly ten times the rest of the country in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. The highest percentage in the nation of residents unaffiliated with any religion. Outside the so-called Bible Belt. But inside one of the next great North American revivals of Apostolic truth. New England. On fire. New England. Winterfire.

Paul said it in 1 Corinthians 15:46 – first the natural, then the spiritual. Don't you think it possible that the corner of the country that first birthed the idea of political freedom from the kingdoms of men might just be the corner of the country that, in the last of the last days and the end of the end times, explodes with spiritual freedom from the kingdom of Satan?

In the words of Isaiah, "I will say to the north, give up!"

In the words of Hosea, "And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God."

In the words of Jeremiah, "Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backslider!"

In the words of Ezekiel, "And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself."

And in the words of Joel, "And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of you, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."

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Our Scriptural journey begins one chapter after Israel has refused to enter into the Promised Land because of fear and unbelief. After God speaks judgment on the rebellious generation, He begins to prepare a new generation to obey His commandments so they can enter in. God is totally serious about His people obeying His laws. And it is in this context that the death of one man causes God to bring into effect a command that will affect millions of lives for thousands of years.

Numbers 15:32-36 And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses.

God designed something to help His people remember His laws, to put a wall between them and sin, so He would not have to punish them.

Numbers 15:37-41 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring: That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God. I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.

This is not an accidental or incidental commandment! God knows that human beings are visual learners, so He gave the Jews the prayer shawl (Tallit) as an object lesson. They were to put tassels or fringes (Tzitzit) on the borders or corners (Kanaph) of this garment. They would often wrap the tassels around their fingers as they prayed to remind them of the commandments of the Lord.

There were five knots on each tassel, to remind them of the five books of the Torah. There were four spaces between the knots, to remind them of the four letters in the name of God (YHWH – Yahweh). There were 39 windings in each twisted coil, which equals the numerical value of the Hebrew words “the Lord is One” (and Jesus suffered the same number of stripes for our healing!). The numerical value of the Hebrew words Tzitzit is 600. Add to that the 5 knots and the 8 strings making up the Tzitzit and you get the number 613, the number of commandments that God gave to Moses. The sole purpose of the Tallit was to hold the Tzitzit. When you wore the Tallit you were literally wrapping yourself in the name and the laws of God! The Jewish people call the Tallit “a hug from God.”

The prayer shawl, or Tallit, is still used at all major Jewish occasions – circumcisions, bar mitzvahs, weddings and even as a shroud for burial. It protects the scrolls of the Torah when they are moved. It even inspired the Jewish flag. In Biblical times, Jewish men wore the Tallit all the time, not just at prayer. The garment was a constant sign that a person was willingly submitted to, reminded of, and wrapped in God’s commands.

When the priests entered the Tabernacle and looked up, they saw a huge Tallit spread over the furniture and activity of the Tabernacle.

Exodus 26:1 Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubims of cunning work shalt thou make them.

Even today, Jewish weddings are often performed under a prayer shawl held up by four poles (Chuppah). That dates back to Boaz and Ruth, where the Tallit was cast over the one being claimed for marriage.

Ruth 3:9 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.

What Ruth was literally saying to Boaz was “take me under your wing,” for the Hebrew word KANAPH that is translated “corner” is also translated “wing” 76 times in the Bible. For this reason, the corners of the prayer shawl are often called wings.

Psalms 91:1-4 He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

As well, when the priest held out his arms to say a blessing, his Tallit looked exactly like wings.

Numbers 6:23-26 Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

Since the fringe of a man’s garment represented his obedience of God’s commands, to cut it off was the equivalent of saying he was backslidden. That’s what happened in the cave with David and King Saul, why David’s conscience was smitten, and why Saul knew his kingdom would fall.

1 Samuel 24:4-6 And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily. And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. And he said unto his men, The LORD forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the LORD.

Today, one fringe (tzitzit) is cut off the corner of a man’s prayer shawl when he dies, then he is wrapped in the garment to symbolize that he is now free from the law’s demands. But for this to happen to a living person is a serious thing. While it wasn’t David’s place to cut the corner off Saul’s garment, a similar prophetic word had already been given by Samuel. Saul had decided to do things his own way, ignoring the commandments of God, and so God had judged him.

1 Samuel 15:26-28 And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being king over Israel. And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.

Jesus condemned the Pharisees for making long tassels on their garments, because they were just doing it for show. They wanted everyone to think that they valued God's laws so highly, but they were breaking His commandments in their hearts!

Matthew 23:1-5 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

Tallit literally means "to cover" and some translate it "little tent." Every Jewish man had his own little tent or tabernacle where he could meet with God. By pulling it up over his head to form a tent, he could totally focus on God in his own prayer closet! This is what Jesus referred to.

Matthew 6:6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

Some scholars believe that Paul, Aquila and Priscilla were actually makers of "little tents" – in other words, they made prayer shawls! (There is no Greek word for Tallit.)

Acts 18:1-3 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

When the disciples went into the tomb on Easter morning, the reason they knew the Romans had not stolen the body is that Jesus' prayer shawl (napkin) was folded properly and set respectfully in a place by itself. Only a Jewish person would know how to fold it right – and only a Jewish person would recognize the symbolism. Jesus would have definitely worn a Tallit in keeping with the laws of God.

John 20:6-8 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

The Tallit is most likely the mantle that the great prophet Elijah passed on to his successor Elisha. Elijah had saturated this mantle with his prayers to the God of heaven, and when Elisha struck the waters with it, there was power to part them!

2 Kings 2:14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.

There was even a prophetic word of restoration and revival spoken over the Jews by the prophet Zechariah, letting them know that one day the laws of God symbolized by the Tzitzit would be seen as an advantage and not a disadvantage by the world around them.

Zechariah 8:23 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.

God has never had a problem demanding that His people be separate from the world around them! In fact, the command to make fringes (tzitzit) on their garments was only given to the Jews one other time, in a passage dealing specifically with distinction, boundaries and separation.

Deuteronomy 22:5 The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God.

Deuteronomy 22:8-12 When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence. Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled. Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together. **Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest thyself.**

When you literally wrap yourself in the commandments of God you may not receive the commendation of men! You will be SEPARATE!

What a wonderful heritage Israel had, but they wasted it! By the end of the Old Testament, they have only recently returned from a 70-year captivity in Babylon – and they have already begun to backslide again! It seems like there is no hope for a permanent solution. Malachi, the last prophet to write, offers to Israel one last time the choice between destruction and hope.

Malachi 4:1-3 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts.

If Israel will only fear the name of the Lord and keep His commandments, they will be free – really free! But sadly, they didn't listen ... and the long barren period of the 400 silent years begins. Four long centuries in which no one hears from the Lord!

Nothing more is heard from Malachi's prophecy for centuries, until three of the gospel writers record the story of one person who puts the puzzle together. It's not a religious scholar or popular leader – it's just a little woman who grasps what everyone else has missed.

Luke 8:43-44 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stancheth.

Why did she touch the Tzitzit (tassels) of Jesus' garment? Two reasons: First, they represented the commandments and promises of Almighty God. Second, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his WINGS" – healing even in the corners of His garment, even in the little tassels on his Tallit!

All three of the gospel writers that record this miracle record another miracle immediately afterwards. When the little woman stops Jesus, He is actually on His way with Jairus to heal his little girl. Word comes that she has died, but Jesus continues to the house and walks right past all the mourners. Why are these two miracles recorded together? Because of the Tallit that Jesus is wearing!

Mark 5:41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.

Tradition has called Jairus' daughter Tabitha, but the word is Talitha, and the command is actually, "TALIT HA CUMI!" – "Little girl who is under my wings, under my covenant, under my promises, under my tabernacle – arise!" The law of death WAS in this place, but now the law of life IS in this place. THE RULES HAVE CHANGED!

The woman with the issue of blood started something great when she claimed a 400-year-old promise!

Matthew 14:35-36 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased; And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

All that little woman did was this: SHE TOUCHED SOMETHING THAT WAS TOUCHING JESUS. That is what happens with sinners all the time – they touch you, and you are touching Jesus!

But there is another important principle at work here: There is power in the COMMANDMENTS of God! There is power in a life of SEPARATION. This is the problem with most of "Christianity" today – they can't HELP the world because they are LIKE the world!

YOU ARE NOT WASTING YOUR TIME LIVING A HOLY LIFE! YOU ARE NOT WASTING YOUR TIME PREACHING AND TEACHING GOD'S COMMANDMENTS OF SEPARATION!

The New Testament makes a distinction between two types of power. **DUNAMIS** is the ability to DO things beyond your natural ability. **EXOUSIA** is the ability to NOT do things you have the ability to do.

The CROSS is the ultimate example of this second kind of power. Scripture is explicit – no one took Jesus' life from Him – He says four times in John 10 that He is voluntarily sacrificing His life!

DUNAMIS is "DOING power" ... EXOUSIA is "RESTRAINING power"

Ephesians 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power (DUNAMIS) that worketh in us,

1 Corinthians 6:12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power (EXOUSIA) of any.

1 Corinthians 11:10 For this cause ought the woman to have power (EXOUSIA) on her head because of the angels.

1 Corinthians 11:15 But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering. (A MANTLE!)