

A large crowd followed and pressed around Yeshua. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Yeshua, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, **"If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed."** Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. **At once Yeshua realized that power had gone out from him.** He turned around in the crowd and asked, *"Who touched my clothes?"* His disciples answered, *"You see the people crowding against you, and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'"* But Yeshua kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and **fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth.** He said to her, **"Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."** Mark 5:24-34

While obviously a great account of Yeshua's compassion and supernatural power, this story left me with a few questions: Why did the woman think if she touched Yeshua's clothes she would be healed? Why did Yeshua feel the power go out from Him when she touched Him and not everyone else who was crowding around? And after a wonderful miracle, why was the woman fearful of Him? The answer to all three is the same: Faith.

Touching clothes doesn't normally result in a miracle, but when you approach Yeshua with the belief that He is the Messiah and all the prophets foretold of Him is true, you get a different result. Malachi had prophesied about the coming Messiah, *"But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings."* (Malachi 4:2) The garments the rabbis wore were rectangle-shaped prayer shawls with tassels attached to the corners (according to Numbers 15:37-39). In Hebrew the word for wing and the word for corner is the same: "kanaph." This woman not only knew the prophecy, she believed that Yeshua was the "sun of righteousness" and that there would be healing in His wings. She was right.

But what was different about her touch that it would draw power out of Yeshua?

For hundreds of years the Israelites had been adhering to the commandments. Leviticus 15:19-30 is very specific about the restrictions of a woman who is bleeding. It specifies that anything she sits or lays on becomes unclean. And anyone who touches anything she has sat or laid on becomes unclean. She would have been living in relative isolation for 12 years. According to the instructions for rabbis, her touching Yeshua would make Him ceremonially unclean.

This could explain her fear when He wanted to know who touched Him. But again, her faith was stronger than her fear. In this case she apparently believed Yeshua's priestly authority gave Him the power to cleanse her – an authority that surpassed both the priests in the temple and her unclean status. And again, she was right. Instead of making Him unclean, His righteousness cleansed her.

The woman's extraordinary faith in Yeshua beyond how she had known God all her life is what made her miracle possible. No wonder Yeshua was able to feel the power leave His body. She risked everything because of her faith. That got the attention of Yeshua, because that's what He does and what he asks us to do. That type of faith is hard to come by, but easy to recognize. Often we pray with faith, but we risk nothing. This woman took a huge step of faith, and great was her reward. She got her whole life back. She could once again be "clean" and accepted back into society.

This act of faith and Yeshua's reaction to it also showed the people another side of God. Through Yeshua, God was now approachable in our unclean state. This breaks the previous barriers between sinful man and a holy God. This is the gift Yeshua gives -- access to God and His mercy through Yeshua's righteousness -- truly new life to the bleeding woman and to us. Supernatural results can happen when we put our faith above our fear and believe Yeshua to be who He and the prophets say He is.

"Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Hebrews 11:1