

Laying on of Hands

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What about the laying on of hands to pass on the anointing?

There are Scriptures that appear to say we can pass on the anointing by the laying on of hands, so let's look at some of these now, in context.

Act 8:17 Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

It was traditional for the Jewish prophets, in conferring favours, to lay their hand on the person receiving that blessing. Whether it was the Father passing on the inheritance to his son or the sin of Israel is being passed onto the sacrificial lamb. Jesus would do this also, as did the apostles. This was a tradition that flowed through the entire Old Testament. The laying on of hands was showing agreement and association with whatever your hands were laid upon. A blessing was always passed on by the laying on of hands. It also showed the agreement by the person allowing hands to be laid upon them.

Hands have always played a great role in Judaism and Scripture. Hands are the parts of our body that can make things happen. It is with our hands that we can perform works, make repairs, deliver a child or carry a weapon. Hands are the part of the body that perform the physical tasks our minds wish to perform.

The hands are also a physical way in which we show worship to God (*raise Holy hands*), or agreement with His expectations of us. Noah agreed with God by physically, with his hands, build the ark. The hands are always an outward sign of our agreement with something. Whether it is to kill in a war or pray for the sick, hands are the outward act of a conscious decision.

There are 438 verses in Scripture relating to Hands in the KJV. 333 of those are in the Old Testament and 105 in the New. So it is important to realise the relevance in relation to our misunderstanding today.

Act 8:14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

Act 8:15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

Act 8:16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

Act 8:17 Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

If you remember from our earlier study the gentiles were not baptised until Caesarea in acts 10:44. That is an event which takes place after this time. The Samaritans had a form of Judaism¹. They still had to be proselytised back into Judaism to be accepted. As they had a form of relationship with the Spirit they were not fulfilled in the Spirit as the Jewish believers were, so the apostles laid hands on them to pray for the filling of the Spirit. This was not them imparting the Spirit, but God releasing it to them via the Apostles prayer as He had not as yet sent His Spirit to the Gentiles. This would have been seen by the Jewish believers as the Proselytising of the Samaritans into the faith as had been done many times before, so seeing them receive the Spirit in this way would not surprise them as the Samaritans were not totally classed as gentiles but as apostates. Also note that there is no mention here of tongues being imparted as to the Jews the Samaritans were already Jewish, just apostate as were the orthodox Pharisees and Sadducees

Act 9:17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

As with Acts 8, this is a Jew not a gentile that has been brought to salvation. So the same understanding applies. Paul was fulfilled in the Spirit as were the Jews at Pentecost.

Act 19:6 And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

Acts 19 is after the gentiles were baptised so how do we explain this?

¹ **Samaritanism** is the religion practiced by the Samaritan people. Like Judaism, it claims to be descended from ancient Israelite religion. It is closely related to Judaism in that it accepts the Torah as its holy book, though there are differences in the version accepted. Samaritans consider Jewish thinkers after the Torah as having been led astray while they themselves stayed to the true religion. Their temple was at Mount Gerizim, not Jerusalem.

If we read acts 19:6 in the context of the story we can see why it is different.

Act 19:2 He said unto them, have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

Act 19:3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

Act 19:4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

Act 19:5 When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Act 19:6 And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

Acts 19:2-5 explain quite clearly when read that the people spoken of were not believers but were truly seeking after the truth and understood the need for repentance. They were baptised into John but had no understanding of who Jesus was; only that someone would follow John. Paul explains to them the full Gospel message and they then accept Jesus and are baptised in His name. After this he went into to the synagogue to preach to the Jews.

It is the Holy Spirit that baptised them and filled them. Paul laying his hands was a customary gesture, and not how the Spirit was imparted. We have already established that the Spirit is given by God at the time of salvation, if not we could not be saved in the first place.

If Paul could in fact give the Spirit as and when he chose, this would take away the Holiness of the Spirit and make it something sinful man could control. We know this is not possible as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one and sin cannot be in the presence of God, nor would God allow His Spirit to be commanded by the sinful nature of man. God is Holy.

The laying on of hands ... - was an act of “prayer,” expressing an invocation to God that he would impart the blessing to “them.” There was

no anointing being passed on. It was customary to lay hands on any person when a “favour” was to be conferred or a blessing imparted.

If only a good anointing were passed on with the laying on of hands, Israel could not have passed on its sin to the sacrificial lamb.

Num 8:9 And thou shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together:

Num 8:10 And thou shalt bring the Levites before the LORD: and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites:

Num 8:11 And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the LORD *for* an offering of the children of Israel, that they may execute the service of the LORD.

Num 8:12 And the Levites shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and thou shalt offer the one *for* a sin offering, and the other *for* a burnt offering, unto the LORD, to make an atonement for the Levites.

Num 8:13 And thou shalt set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer them *for* an offering unto the LORD.

The laying on of hands is a symbolic act. It is God by His Spirit that does any work involved with the laying on of hands through prayer.

2Ti 1:6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up² the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

That thou stir up the gift of God - Greek, That you “re-enkindle”. The original word used here denotes the kindling of a fire, as by a bellows, etc.

The idea is that Timothy was to use all proper means to keep his passion for Christ burning within him, and more particularly his enthusiasm for

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G329

ἀναζωπυρέω

anazo pureo

an-ad-zo-poor-eh'-o

From G303 and a compound of the base of G2226 and G4442; to *re-enkindle*: - stir up.

the great cause to which he had been set apart. However rich the gifts which God has bestowed upon us, they do not grow of their own accord, but need to be cultivated by us. We need to grow and continue in the faith, not let it slip away with our focus going back to the world. We should not be distracted.

The language used here, “by the putting on of my hands,” is just what Paul, or any other one of the elders or leaders, would use in referring to the ordination of Timothy.

It is like the way an older Presbyterian, or Congregational or Baptist minister would address a pastor whom he had assisted to ordination. Nothing would be more natural than to remind him that his own hands had been laid on him when he was set apart to the work of the ministry.

It would be in the nature of a tender and solemn appeal, bringing all that there was in his own character, age, and relation to the other, to bear on him, in order to induce him to be faithful to his trust.

On other occasions, he would naturally remind him that others had united with him in the act, and that he had derived his authority through the presbytery, just as Paul appeals to Timothy.

Paul specifies in the next verse 2Ti 1:7. It is “the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” The meaning is that these had been conferred by God, and that the gift had been recognized by his ordination. It does not imply that any mysterious influence had gone from the hands of the ‘ordainers’, imparting any holiness to Timothy that he had not already received by the Spirit.

1Ti 5:22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

This Scripture is often quoted by the proponents of the faith movement and those that believe the anointing is passed on by us to others. They claim it means ‘be careful who you give the Spirit to’ as in Acts 18.

Act 8:18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

This is not the meaning of the Scripture in 1 Tim. It is talking of ordaining people into the ministry.

Num 27:20 And thou shalt put *some* of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient.

Num 27:21 And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask *counsel* for him after the judgment of Urim before the LORD: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, *both* he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.

Num 27:22 And Moses did as the LORD commanded him: and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation:

Num 27:23 And he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.

This was a historical Judaic way of working in agreement with God. Nothing physical was passed on but an agreement was shown in respect to the ministry of Joshua.

Do not be in a hurry to ordain someone into the ministry who is not fit to be there (false teachers for instance) and we are not to partake of their sin or teachings. Stand right before the Lord.

1 & 2 Timothy are explaining what type of person should be brought into the ministry. In fact 2 Timothy 2:15 states in no uncertain terms what a teacher should be doing.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

In today's church circles the laying on of hands has become something other than an outward sign of agreement, it has become a way of passing on the anointing from the anointed teacher or person. It has become a way that the "spirit" is passed from one person to another. The question is: what spirit is being passed on if it something we can do at will. Only God can change someone's heart and enable them to see the truth by His Spirit, so how would he give us the right to make that judgement on His behalf?

A comparison can be drawn between today's teachers and the Hindu Sidhus. Hindu teachers pass on the "anointing" through a system called

shaktipat³. The shaktipat has long been practiced in such areas as yoga. Yoga is a Hindu way of worshipping their gods. Each exercise or movement is a worship position. All the Hindu statues and icons are striking these poses as they are claimed to be holy.

With yoga now so prominent in the west and for the most part accepted by the church and Christians as OK. Is it surprising we see these occultic techniques being practiced as Christian?

The laying on of hands has gone from: Glorifying God by showing we agree with Him in His promises and Blessings – to – We have the power to pass on because man is great. The new church teachings say that we are the children of God therefore we also have the power of God cause we have been adopted into His family.

God never promised us power for ourselves, only through the Holy Spirit to Glorify the Father. As soon as we change the focus from God to man, we are accepting Satans lie in the Garden of Eden: “You can be like the Most High”

³ **Shaktipat** is a [Sanskrit](#) word that refers to the act of a [guru](#) or [spiritual](#) teacher conferring a form of spiritual "power" or awakening on a disciple/student. "Shakti" translates as *energy* and "pat" as *touch*. Shaktipat can be carried out by the spiritually enlightened master either by transmission of sacred word or mantra, a look, a thought or by touch. The touch is usually given to the [ajna chakra](#) (Eyebrow Area) or [third eye](#) (Forehead) of the disciple.