

# Laying on of Hands 2024 Part 1

## Word/Phrase Study

### Negative (Left)

*Leviticus 4:13-15 - And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty; When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation. **And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the LORD: and the bullock shall be killed before the LORD. [Emphasis added are mine]***

In this instance, when the congregation of Israel would sin through ignorance (unknowingly) before the Lord and it later it was made known, the elders of the congregation would act as representatives of the whole congregation of Israel. They would all lay their hands upon the head of a bullock, passing on the sins (of ignorance) of the whole congregation of Israel upon the bullock, and then kill the bullock before the Lord. The law required a death penalty for sinning against God. The bullock paid the penalty, in place of the people, for sinning against God unknowingly.

Now, if you were the bullock, this whole course of events would be negative from your perspective and rightly so. But for the people of Israel, it was the way that God would pass on the sins of the people on to an animal to pay the price of the sin. In the light of the people, that was a positive way for God to deal with sin in the congregation. The only problem is you had to keep offering these sacrifices for sin. Thank God He paid the penalty Himself in Jesus, once and for all.

### Positive (Right)

*Leviticus 9:22 - **And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings. [Emphasis added are mine]***

In this short excerpt, Aaron lifted up his hands, stretched them toward the people and blessed them. Without touching them, he pronounced a blessing over them. The physical act of stretching his hands toward them and blessing them was the unseen act of God blessing the people. Here we see the impartation of a blessing accompanied with the stretching out of hands.

### Negative (Left)

*Leviticus 16:21-22 - And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

In this instance, Aaron, the high priest, is shown laying both of his hands on a live goat. As he touches the goat, Aaron confesses and over the goat all of the sins of the children of Israel. This confession and act of laying on of hands imparted all the sins of Israel on to the live goat. The goat would then bear upon himself all of the iniquities of Israel and would be sent away to an uninhabited land in the wilderness.

This is a foreshadow of the end result of a man left in his own sin, come judgment day. He will bear all his sins and be thrown into the lake of fire, just as the goat took the sins upon himself into an uninhabited land.

### Positive (Right)

*Numbers 8:10-14 - And thou shalt bring the Levites before the LORD: and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites: 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. 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. And thou shalt set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer them for an offering unto the LORD. Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

Here we see laying on of hands imparting several things for several purposes. The children of Israel first laid their hands on the Levites. The Levites were the priests of all of Israel and would be the ministers to the Lord for the Israelites. Hands were laid on to show representation for the people by the people. As they did this Aaron, the high priest, offered the Levites, as an offering for the children of Israel to the Lord. Laying on of hands can sometimes designate offerings by the people to the Lord. Hence, we observe infant dedications to the Lord rather than baptisms to offer our children to the Lord as His own.

The Levites in turn, place their hands upon the heads of the bullocks. One of the bullocks was a sin offering and the other was a burnt offering. Both were to make an atonement for the Levites unto the Lord. Then the Levites were offered to the Lord, to be separate from the children of Israel, for they had become the Lord's for specific service unto Him through this ceremony.

### Negative (Left)

*Leviticus 24:10-16 - And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp; And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the LORD, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:.) And they put him in ward, that the mind of the LORD might be shewed them. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; **and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him.** And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, **Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin.** And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, **he shall surely be put to death,** and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the LORD, shall be put to death. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

Here we see a story of Israelites getting into a fight. During there fight, as often happens nowadays, someone blasphemed the name of the Lord and cursed. The Lord said to Moses that all of them that “heard him” should lay their hands on his head and commanded that all the congregation stone him. Previously, we read in Leviticus, that when hands were laid on the goats head, the sins were passed on to the goat and the goat was sent away alone into the wilderness to suffer for the sins of the people. In this case, the Lord made an example of this man and how much the Lord reveres and demands respect of His name. The man who blasphemed His name and cursed bore his own sin and paid the death penalty himself for that sin, by stoning.

### **Positive (Right)**

*2 Kings 4:32-37 - And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. **He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD.** And **he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.** Then he returned, and **walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.** And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

This was the story of Elisha resurrecting the Shunammite woman’s child. He went upstairs to the child’s room and shut the door. He proceeded to pray unto the Lord. He then did a very strange thing, that if it were done today people would think this man was absolutely crazy and probably call Elisha pervert of some kind. Nevertheless, it says that Elisha laid

upon the child, put his mouth on the mouth of the child, put his eyes on the eyes of the child, his hands upon the hands of the child, and then stretched and sprawled himself upon the child. Very strange indeed! The child being dead and cold, began to warm up. Elisha then walked to and fro downstairs and went back up again and stretched himself upon the child again and the child sneezed 7 times and opened his eyes. The child was brought back to life through prayer and much more than the laying on of hands. It was prayer and physical body contact.

### Negative (Left)

*Nehemiah 13:21 - Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

Nehemiah used the term “I will lay hands on you” as a threat meaning, “I’m gonna beat you up”, to put it mildly. I’m sure he said it in a manner that was more intimidating than that, but it’s one of those “you had to have been there” type of things. So here laying hands was to bring harm to someone else.

*Esther 3:5-6 - And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath. And **he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone;** for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

In Ester, the same meaning is used for “lay hands on” and that was to inflict harm on another person. Moving into the New Covenant we see the same meaning used in these following verses:

*Matthew 21:45-46 - And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when **they sought to lay hands on him,** they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

*Luke 20:19 - And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

*Luke 21:12 - But before all these, **they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you,** delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

*Acts 5:17-18 - Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, **And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison. [Emphasis added are mine]***

*Acts 21:27-32 - And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. [Emphasis added are mine]*

In these passages Jesus spoke against the Pharisees and other religious leaders and how in their hearts they wanted to “lay hands on Him” to do Him harm, but they were afraid of the people because they thought Jesus to be a respected prophet. Then Jesus warned His disciples that the religious leaders would lay their hands on them, persecute them, and bring them before the courts for His name’s sake. In Acts, the fulfillment of this prophecy of Jesus concerning His people is recorded. Notice when laying on of hands is described in the negative aspect of inflicting harm, it’s the Pharisees and religious leaders that are always trying to harm with their hands, rather than bless.

### **Positive (Right)**

In contrast to these verses, we see laying on of hands in a much different light as you finish the Old Covenant and come in to the New Covenant.

*Proverbs 31:19-20 - She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. [Emphasis added are mine]*

In this instance, Solomon is describing a virtuous woman and uses the words “layeth her hands to the spindle” meaning she puts them to work to accomplish a task. But this virtuous woman also stretches out her hand to the poor and needy. Here we see that laying her hands and stretching out her hands are used in a manner that is fruitful, productive, and blesses others just like when Moses stretched out his hands to bless the people verbally.

*Mark 5:22-24,35-43 - And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, And besought him greatly,*

saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: **I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.** And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him... While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. **But when he had put them all out,** he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. **And he took the damsel by the hand,** and said unto her, **Talitha cumi;** which is, being interpreted, **Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.** And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat. [**Emphasis added are mine**]

Here we see Jairus' faith confession in Jesus and His ability to heal his daughter by simply laying His hands on her and saying "and she shall live." Notice in this excerpt, Jesus came to the house and removed mockers, scoffers, and unbelievers from the environment he was about to work. That is very similar to Elisha going upstairs, closing the door behind him, and praying alone for the Shunammite woman's child. Jesus then simply took her hand and told her to rise. She did and was resurrected from the dead.

*Mark 16:15-18 - And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. **And these signs shall follow them that believe;** In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; **they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.** They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

One of the signs that will follow those who believe and are baptized will be the laying of hands on the sick and their recovery. We are supposed to expect this. We need to go out by faith, praying and laying hands on the sick and seeing them recover, so the glory of God would be manifest to those receiving.

*Acts 6:1-7 - And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you*



*seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

Here, like we the Levitical priests in the Old Covenant, the laying of hands for commissioning brethren for service is recorded even amongst the apostles and the early 1<sup>st</sup> century church. This is not the only occurrence seen in Acts.

*Acts 8:14-19 - Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) **Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.** And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

In this event, the apostles from Jerusalem sent Peter and John to the Samaritans. They heard that the Samaritans received the gospel and were baptized, yet the Holy Spirit had not fallen on them. When Peter and John arrived, they prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit. Peter and John then laid their hands on them, and then the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit. Here, the Holy Spirit is seen to be imparted through prayer and the laying on of hands, another impartation of blessing. This blessing is the impartation of the Holy Spirit of Jesus.

*Acts 13:1-4 - Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. **And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.** So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

In the church at Antioch, there were certain prophets and teachers, which included Barnabus and Saul (Paul), who were fasting and praying. The Holy Spirit spoke and said

He wanted Barnabas and Saul separated unto what He had called them for. When they heard the Holy Spirit speak, they fasted, prayed, and laid hands on them and sent them out according to the Word of the Lord. Here the laying on of hands is seen as commissioning certain people for a service unto God, similar to what was recorded in the Old Covenant.

*Acts 19:6 - And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

Here is another instance where laying on of hands is used to impart the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues. Notice, they also prophesied. Paul spoke in Romans of desiring to see them so that he may impart to them some spiritual gift (see Romans 1:11). Prayer and the laying on of hands, according to the Spirit, will allow the body to impart some (meaning any) of the spiritual gifts to be used for God's glory and the edification of the body.

*Acts 28:7-9 - In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously. And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: **to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.** So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed: [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

Here Paul is seen carrying out the Word of the Lord in that when he came into the house of one that was sick, Publius, he prayed, laid hands on him, and healed him. This is according to the Word of the Lord recorded in Mark 16:15-18 testifying that this type of sign would follow those that believed and were baptized. This is something that the people of God should walk in by faith.

*1 Timothy 4:14 - Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was **given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.** [**Emphasis added are mine**]*

Here, Paul is reminding his spiritual son, Timothy, to not neglect a gift that was prophesied over him with the laying on of hands by the elders. This act of laying on of hands was a common occurrence in the early church and it was for the purpose of blessing that person with any spiritual gift to be used according to the Word of the Lord to edify His body.

In summation, from Old Covenant to New Covenant, the act of laying on of hands was a very regular and frequent incident. It was used in conjunction with prayer and the Word of the Lord in order to impart something. On the negative side, scripture has recorded impartations or transfers, by the laying of hands, of sin to animals or other people. Laying on of hands has also been used to describe threatening and inflicting harm on other persons. In the New Covenant, this term and connotation was usually inflicted by the Pharisees and religious leaders of Jesus' day.



In contrast, when laying on of hands is used according the Word of the Lord, it is strictly for the purposes of imparting a blessing of some kind. The blessing could be a dedication, presentation, or offering to the Lord, especially for a specific service. The blessing was also seen to be imparting life to the dead, help to the needy and poor, and for the purposes of producing productive and fruitful work. In the opening of the New Covenant, laying on of hands was seen primarily to heal the sick and resurrect the dead. After the gospels, like the Old Covenant, laying on of hands was used for commissioning particular individuals for service according to the Word of the Lord. And an overwhelming amount of evidence shows that laying on of hands was used to impart spiritual gifts to the body in order to edify the body according to the Word of the Lord, and most importantly, to impart the Holy Spirit to those who have put their trust on Jesus and have believed and been baptized.

Since the focus of this study is on Hebrews 6:1,2 and the origins or beginnings of the doctrine of Christ, it is safe to assume that the reference to laying on of hands included all that we have shown previously, but maybe, primarily, to impart the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands. If you have studied the doctrines of Christ thus far, you will see that the doctrines of Christ are all focusing on salvation. First, repentance from dead works is necessary, followed by exercising faith in God (Jesus Christ), baptisms (which include water baptism in Jesus' name and baptism in the Spirit), and now laying on of hands. The reference in Hebrews 6 to the laying on of hands may be particular to imparting the Holy Spirit to others after you have come into the kingdom.

HW Assignment – find and read every instance of Jesus delivering someone from demonic possession