

## The Doctrine of the Laying on of Hands

Let's again read our text of ACTS 19:1-7 considering what we have just studied, and see another New Testament doctrine once again mentioned in verse 6. ACTS 19:1 *And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 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. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 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. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.*

The focus of this portion of our study will be on the doctrine of the laying on of hands. And this doctrine of the laying on of hands is not a unique New Testament doctrine, because this very same doctrine was practiced in Old Testament times also, and foreshadowed a common teaching, and practice of the New Testament.

Let's begin our examination of the doctrine of the laying on of hands by defining the symbolism here. Let's look at the hand. The hand is a symbol of skill, energy, power and action, so to be in the hand of any one is to be in his power. Sister Alice Mooneyhan, a Bible teacher who taught along with Brother Copley in the original Grace and Glory Bible college, notes that "the hand speaks of authority." And, of course, the ultimate Power and Authority is God. All of the Old Testament full overcomers realized this fact, and all New Testament full overcomers will also realize this to be a fact in their own lives. Which is to say, the full overcomer reaches out by faith, and latches on to the leading guiding hand of God, and allows Him to direct their life. This is accomplished by yielding to the leading and guiding of the Holy Ghost. Full overcomer Noah allowed the hand of God to direct his building of the Ark, thus, by faith, he and his family escaped the flood. Abraham followed by faith the leading hand of God, and was led into a strange land, which God gave Abraham and his descendants for an inheritance, which they still haven't fully appropriated. Full overcomer Enoch walked hand and hand with God, by faith, and God translated Enoch, {study GENESIS 5:22-24, and HEBREWS 11:5}. And the list goes on and on of the Old Testament full overcomers who allowed the Almighty hand of God to direct the path of their lives. Thus they were able to achieve otherwise impossible objectives. And so it will be with the New Testament full overcomers also, who by faith reach out their hands to the open hand of God, and allow His Power to manifest Him self in their lives, and the lives their hands touch. May we each do this in our own life also!

As we go through this portion of our study let us keep in mind that the laying on of hands is symbolic in one way or another of showing that believers are in agreement with God. We can kind of think of the laying on of hands in Jesus name as a contract between man and God concerning any specific request.

The act of laying on of hands in scripture dates back to the time of GENESIS. In GENESIS 48 we find Jacob (Israel) reunited with his son Joseph, and Joseph is with his two young sons Ephraim and Manasseh. Joseph has brought His young sons before His father Israel, and in GENESIS 48:13-16 we see Israel blessing Ephraim and Manasseh by laying his hands upon them. GENESIS 48:13 *And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him. 14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn. 15 And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, 16 The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.* So here we see the laying on of hands for a blessing, and specifically a blessing unto the Lord.

In NUMBERS 8 we find the Levites being separated from among the children of Israel, cleansed, and brought before the Lord. NUMBERS 8:10 & 11 tells us: *And thou shalt bring the Levites before the LORD: and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites: 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.* Note that the Levites were to be separated unto the Lord ... *that they may execute the service of the LORD.* The Lord in his instructions concerning the Levite goes on to state in NUMBERS 8:14 and 16: *14 Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine. ...16 For they are wholly given unto me from among the children of Israel; instead of such as open every womb, even instead of the firstborn of all the children of Israel, have I taken them unto me.* So we see that by the laying on of hands the Levites were separated unto the Lord, and wholly given unto the Lord, to do the service of the Lord. Furthermore we note that those who laid their hands upon the Levites were also in agreement with the Lord, as were the Levites. The laying on of hands then was like a contract between all parties involved.

In ISAIAH 48:12 & 13 we read these words of the Lord, which we know by studying REVELATION 1:4, 11, and 17 & 18, speaks of Jesus: *12 Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last. 13 Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together.* This then is the creative omniscient power that is in the hand of the Lord. In HEBREWS 1:10 the Apostle Paul acknowledges this power when he quotes from PSALMS 102:25 and writes: *And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands.*

The doctrine then of the laying on of hands expresses the power that can be latched on to by Holy Ghost filled believers, reaching out their hands unto the mighty power of God, manifest through Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Ghost whom He sent on the day of Pentecost, showing their agreement with Him, and their faith in trusting in His power to accomplish whatever it is they are asking Him to do, kind of like the contract between all parties mentioned above, only this is a Superior contract. Let's look at a few more examples from scripture.

Moses latched on to the mighty hand of God, and was thus enabled to lead the children of Israel out of the land of bondage there were in, also known as Egypt. The phrase "mighty hand" is found seventeen times in scripture. Seventeen again is the number that has to do with VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS. Here are some of Moses' words concerning the "mighty hand" of God. DEUTERONOMY 5:15 *And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day. ...7:8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ...7:19 The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched out arm, whereby the LORD thy God brought thee out: so shall the LORD thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid. ...9:26 I prayed therefore unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand. ...26:8 And the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders: 9 And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey.*

What do all of the above verses have to do with the doctrine of the laying on of hands? The verses we have just looked at acknowledge the power that is in the "mighty hand" of God. Obviously Moses couldn't have done what he did without acknowledging by faith, and then latching on to, by faith, the "mighty hand" of God, and then God, through the hand of Moses, manifested His mighty wonder working power. Of course Moses had to first learn how this was to work in his life, and this is explained for us in EXODUS 4. EXODUS 4:2 *And the LORD said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he*

said, A rod. 3 And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. 4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand: 5 That they may believe that the LORD God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee. ...17 And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs. And many signs Moses did with that rod that was in his hand, all acknowledging the power that is in the "mighty hand" of God. (We will see a little later in this portion how the laying on of hands in the name of Jesus was indeed another sign that was to follow the New Testament disciples, showing their complete faith and confidence in the "mighty hand" of the Lord.)

We see the "mighty hand" of God manifest by the hand of Moses in the following verses from EXODUS 14. EXODUS 14:13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. 14 The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. 15 And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward: 16 But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. 17 And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. 18 And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen. 19 And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: 20 And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night. 21 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. 22 And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. 23 And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. 24 And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, 25 And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians. 26 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. 27 And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. 28 And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. 29 But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. 30 Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. 31 And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.

The laying on of hands in Jesus name is nothing more than allowing the "mighty hand" of God to manifest His wonder working power in the lives of those who allow themselves to be thus touched. Recall in our definition above that we noted the hand is a symbol of skill, energy, power and action, so to be in the hand of any one is to be in his power, thus "the hand speaks of authority." Of course the ultimate Authority lies in the "mighty hand" of God. Moses, in our above example, could not have divided the Red Sea had not the power and Authority of Almighty God been behind Moses out stretched hand.

Noah and his family couldn't have survived the flood had he not followed the plans of the Ark shown him by the "mighty hand" of God. Enoch could not have been translated without walking hand in hand with God, and one day, God, having the stronger upper "mighty hand," just pulled old Enoch up to Him in a swift act of translation.

Moses, Noah and Enoch are Old Testament worthies of faith mentioned in HEBREWS 11. We find the faith of Joshua also noted in HEBREWS 11:30. Before Joshua led the children of Israel we find the Lord instructing Moses to lay his hands on Joshua, thus turning the leadership of the children of Israel from Moses to Joshua. This is noted in NUMBERS 27:15-23. NUMBERS 27:15 *And Moses spake unto the LORD, saying, 16 Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, 17 Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd. 18 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; 19 And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight. 20 And thou shalt put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. 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. 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: 23 And he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.* Then in DEUTERONOMY 34:9 we read: *And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.*

Now if you read the above verses carefully you will note that Joshua was full of the spirit of wisdom before Moses laid his hands on him: the laying on of Moses hands upon Joshua was to be done in the sight of the congregation of Israel so that they would honour him like they had Moses. Thus we see that the laying on of hands by Moses unto Joshua was a blessing from the Lord to show the children of Israel that Joshua was wholly given unto the Lord, thus walking hand in hand with the Lord, showing them that he too would be able to lead the children of Israel, for he also was holding onto the "mighty hand" of the Lord (by faith of course). By Moses laying his hands upon Joshua, and blessing him in the sight of all Israel, a kind of contract was entered unto between the children of Israel, Joshua, and God.

In all of the above Old Testament examples we see that the laying on of hands was symbolic in one way or another of showing that these believers were in agreement with God. They all acknowledged by faith, and with out stretched hands to God, that He could do anything. We know that Jesus was in agreement with God, and JOHN 3:35 tells us: *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.* JOHN 13:3 further states that: *Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God.* Jesus often times laid His hands on people, and His hands were like a conduit from heaven full of the healing power of God. Let's review a few scriptures that further brings out the power that was manifest by the laying on of the precious hands of Jesus.

MATTHEW 8:1 *When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. 2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. 3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.*

MARK 5:22 *And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet, 23 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. 24 And Jesus went with him;... ..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. 42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.*

MARK 6:1 And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him. ...5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

MARK 7:31 And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. 32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. 33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; 34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. 35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. 36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it; 37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

MARK 8:22 And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. 23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. 24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. 25 After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

LUKE 4:40 Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

LUKE 7:11 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people. 12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her. 13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. 14 And he came and touched the bier (coffin): and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. 15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

LUKE 13:10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. 11 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. 12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. 13 And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

All of the above scriptures that we have read from the gospel record show the manifest power that was displayed by the laying on of the hands of Jesus.

During Jesus ministry here on earth He sent out His twelve Apostles two by two, a fact recorded in MATTHEW 10; MARK 6:7-13; and LUKE 9:1-6, which you can study further on your own. LUKE 9:1 & 2 tells us: *Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. 2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.* Notice here that it was Jesus who gave them the power and authority to cure diseases, to heal the sick. LUKE 9:6 tells us: *And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.* MARK 6:13 further tells us: *And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.* In this verse we find that the Apostles “anointed with oil” many that were sick before they healed them. The anointing with oil symbolizes the Holy Spirit, {study EXODUS 29:22-25}, and foreshadows the power that is to be manifest in Jesus name. After these that were sick were “anointed with oil,” they were then healed. In LUKE 10 Jesus expanded this ministry unto another seventy. LUKE 10:1 tells us: *After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.* One of their instructions Jesus gave them is found in LUKE 10:9 *And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.* Implied in these above verses is the notion that these Apostles and disciples would of had to lay their hands on the sick, otherwise how else were they to “anoint with oil” those that were sick?



Then after His resurrection, Jesus gave his disciples the following instructions that are recorded in MARK 16, a very important portion of scripture concerning the doctrine of the laying on of hands in Jesus name. MARK 16:15 *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 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. 19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.*

Note the instructions from Jesus found in verse 18 above, ...they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. This was the New Testament doctrine of Jesus concerning the laying on of hands for the sick. Note also in verse 17 above that the laying on of hands in Jesus name was one of the signs that was to follow them that believe. Early on this New Testament doctrine was preached primarily unto the Jews, and 1 CORINTHIANS 1:22 notes: *For the Jews require a sign.* This New Testament church age doctrine of the laying on of hands in Jesus name was acted upon, and further expounded upon by the power of the Holy Ghost in the early chapters of the book of ACTS.

Recall ACTS 1:8 tells us in part: *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:...*, and look what happened by the hands of the Apostles after the day of Pentecost when they were filled with the Holy Ghost. ACTS 3:1 *Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. 2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; 3 Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. 4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. 5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. 6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. 7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up; and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.*

This healing got the attention of all the people that saw this lame man, for they all knew it was the same man that formerly sat at the Beautiful gate of the temple. A multitude gathers of marveling people, and Peter preaches his second sermon, with once again his focus, or theme of the sermon was about Jesus, the Holy One, and the Just, and the Prince of life. Peter goes on to explain to the multitude why it was that he and John could lay hands on the sick, and they were healed by stating in ACTS 3:16 *And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.* Peter finishes preaching his sermon, and ACTS 4:4 tells us the results of this Holy Ghost inspired sermon, and gives a clue to how many heard him preach, for it reads: *Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.* Meanwhile ACTS 4:1-3 tells us that Peter and John were essentially arrested by the Jewish Sanhedrin, and put in hold until the next day. Peter then preaches his third sermon, which is too good to pass up, so we will read it starting in ACTS 4:8 *Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, 9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; 10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. 11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

The Sanhedrin then marvelled at these powerful words of Peter, and especially noted that Peter and John had been with Jesus, ACTS 4:13 tells us. The Sanhedrin council was also confounded at the boldness of Peter and John, especially perceiving the fact that they were uninstructed in the learning of the Jewish scholars. ACTS 4:13 reads: *Now*

when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. After another brief private Sanhedrin council was held, Peter and John were threatened by them, and told not to speak any more in the name of Jesus. Of course we know that Peter and John, and the rest of the Apostles didn't follow this lame ill advised advice, and then we read the following account, which in my way of thinking is a high water mark (so to speak) in the book of ACTS. ACTS 4:23 *And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: 25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? 26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. 29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, 30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.*

Note that their collective prayer here was for the will of God to prevail, and that they be granted the boldness to continue to speak the word of God, and for Him to continue stretching forth His mighty hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may continue to be performed in the name of Jesus. In other words they were lifting up their hands to God asking for His continued help, and asking for God to continue stretching forth His hand in a mighty way, so that in the name of Jesus many others could be helped too. God, through the power of the Holy Ghost, gave them an immediate sign that He would honor their unselfish request, which is noted in verse 31. ACTS 4:31 *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.* Wow, what a verse! ACTS 4:33 summarizes the results of their prayer, stating: *And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.*

So far in this portion of or lesson we have really only given one example of the laying on of hands in Jesus name by the Apostles after Jesus resurrection, and seen what took place at Jerusalem after Peter and John prayed for the lame man, who was immediately healed, and have noted what a great uproar this caused at Jerusalem. This event however was just the tip of the iceberg as what the Lord Jesus meant when He spoke in MARK 16:18 *...they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.* Note what is stated in ACTS 5 and beyond. ACTS 5:12 *And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people;... 15 Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. 16 There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.* Obviously God had answered their collective prayer we read above in ACTS 4:30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

This doctrine of laying on of hands in the name of Jesus, and their preaching in the name of Jesus got the attention of everyone from miles around, including the Sanhedrin council. So once again the Jewish Sanhedrin arrested the Apostles, and put them in the common prison. Then we read in ACTS 5:19 *But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, 20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. 21 And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught.* Obviously the mighty hand of the Lord once again prevailed on the Apostles behalf. Later that day the Sanhedrin council once again had the Apostles brought before them, and we read what they said in ACTS 5:28 *Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name?*

and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Peter then preached them a short Holy Ghost inspired sermon, which you can study on your own in ACTS 5:29-33. Peter's words brought the council to the point of killing the Apostles. Then one of the council, named Gamaliel, the wise old teacher of Saul of Tarsus, stood up and stated: ACTS 5:38 *And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: 39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. 40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. 42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*

The end result of all this was that the number of disciples multiplied, so much so, that the Apostles needed help to keep up. ACTS 6 tells us that seven wonderful men full of the Holy Ghost were selected to help the Apostles. Then we read in ACTS 6:6 *Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. 7 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.* The purpose of their laying hands on these men was not necessarily for healing, but that the power of Holy Ghost would anoint these men and allow them to magnify the word of God in Jesus precious name. In other words we are seeing here that the laying on of hands was symbolic in one way or another of showing that these believers were in agreement with God, had symbolically entered a contract with God by laying their hands on these disciples in Jesus name, and were relying on His power as manifest by the Holy Ghost. They were in essence, by faith, reaching out to the hand of God, latching on to His Almighty wonder working power, and allowing Him to use their hands as conduits to bless those who were to be touched. Stephen was one of those thus touched, and we read in ACTS 6:8 *And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.* No doubt Stephen laid his hands on many, and prayed in the name of Jesus for His Almighty touch. This was how he was able to do *...great wonders and miracles among the people.*

Philip was another of the seven who had the Apostles lay hands on him in ACTS 6:6, and in ACTS 8:5-7 we read: *Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. 6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. 7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.* How did Philip do these miracles? By laying his hands on these people and praying in the name of Jesus for their healing.

Next we read in ACTS 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: 15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: 16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) 17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.* Note here that the laying on of hands was not in this case for healing, but that these new believers would receive the Holy Ghost. By faith the Apostles laid their hands on them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, and God used their hands like a conduit from heaven, *...and they received the Holy Ghost.*

The laying on of hands in Jesus name for healing, and for receiving the Holy Ghost became common practice among the disciples of the Lord. Ananias of Damascus was familiar with this New Testament doctrine of the laying on of hands in Jesus name, and after the conversion of Saul of Tarsus he was given specific instructions from the Lord as to what he was to do with his hands concerning Saul of Tarsus. We read this in ACTS 9. ACTS 9:10 *And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath*



seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. ...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. 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. Of course we know Saul of Tarsus goes on to become the Apostle Paul, and he learned the doctrine of laying on of hands in Jesus name from Ananias of Damascus, having received his natural sight restored by the laying on of hands, and by having his spiritual eyes enlightened by receiving the powerful gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands. So what we see here then is that the Apostle Paul first learned this doctrine of the laying on of hands from a practical experience that was taught to him by Ananias of Damascus.

Now was the laying on of hands necessary for the healing of the sick, or for receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost? No. MARK 16:17 & 18 tells us: And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 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. The laying on of hands was a sign that followed them that believe. And what is the purpose of a sign? To point one in a particular direction, and to confirm whether or not that one is on the right path. Webster says that a sign is something that indicates a fact. The fact being conveyed by the laying on of hands in Jesus name then is that a divine agreement, kind of like a contract only better, has been achieved. The laying on of hands in Jesus name was a sign that was given of the Lord to follow them that believe. And as we have seen in many of the above examples, the laying on of hands in Jesus name acted like a conduit from heaven full of the healing power of God. But New Testament doctrine also teaches that the laying on of hands was not necessary for the healing of the sick. For example, recall in ACTS 5:15 ...that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. 16 ...and they were healed every one. We see that it was in the name of Jesus that these were healed, some of the many signs and wonders wrought by the hands of the Apostles spoken of in ACTS 5:12.

Let's read two more accounts in the life of Peter where people were healed in Jesus name, and Peter didn't lay his hands on them. ACTS 9:32 And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda. 33 And there he found a certain man named Aeneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy. 34 And Peter said unto him, Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately. 35 And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord.

ACTS 9:36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. 37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber. 38 And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them. 39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. 40 But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. 41 And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive. 42 And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord.

We have now examined several accounts where people in the New Testament were healed by the laying on of hands in Jesus name, and by just praying in Jesus name. The doctrine of the laying on of hands in Jesus name was given in these New Testament times as a sign that would follow those who believe, this according to MARK 16:17 & 18 (above). When Paul and Barnabas started their first missionary journey from Antioch,

Syria in ACTS 13:3 we read that those of the church of Antioch ...laid their hands on them, they sent them away. This was an expression of their agreement with God, their contract with God (if you will), that these two disciples would be blessed as they made their journey to points unknown for the purpose of spreading the good news concerning Jesus. In ACTS 14:3 we read how this request was answered, for it states this concerning Paul and Barnabas: ...they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

What we have seen in all of the above examples that the laying on of hands was symbolic in one way or another of showing that these believers were in agreement with God. By the laying on of hands in Jesus' name many were healed. By the laying on of hands in Jesus' name many received the gift of the Holy Ghost. Paul received the gift of the Holy Ghost after Ananias of Damascus laid his hands on him, and 1 CORINTHIANS 14:18 tells us in Paul's own words: *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all.*

The Apostle Paul after years of experience as an Apostle wrote the following Holy Ghost inspired advice unto the Apostle Timothy in 1 TIMOTHY 5:22 Lay hands suddenly {hastily} on no man,... and what we read in ACTS 19:6 is no exception to this rule. Paul got to know these disciples at Ephesus before he laid his hands upon them. Paul got acquainted with what they knew, and what they believed before he laid his hands upon them. Let's read our text again noting especially this time verse 6. ACTS 19:1 *And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 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. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 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. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.*

## The Doctrine of Prophecy

This concludes our discussion of the doctrine of the laying on of hands, however let's examine a little further what has taken place here in verse 6. Paul laid his hands upon these twelve or so disciples for the purpose of them to receive the Holy Ghost, which they did as evidenced by their speaking in other tongues, and other languages, another New Testament doctrine we have already talked about. This was one of the signs that Jesus told his disciples of back in MARK 16. MARK 16:17 *And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;... .* {See again pages 481-484 of these notes}.

There is one more New Testament doctrine that was especially taught by Paul, and emphasized unto these dozen or so Ephesian disciples. Paul himself probably didn't realize this at first here at Ephesus, but I am sure the Lord was revealing certain things to Paul as he ran his race course. Paul would later write unto the Ephesian Saints this statement found in EPHESIANS 3:20 *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,*... and Paul, and these Ephesian disciples witnessed this very thing. Paul laid his hands upon these disciples for the purpose of them to receive the Holy Ghost, which they did as evidenced by their speaking in other tongues, and exceeding abundantly above that, these twelve or so disciples also received the gift of prophecy. The doctrine of the gift of prophesy is a New Testament doctrine especially taught by Paul.

The origins of the gift of prophecy date back to the time of Enoch, an Old Testament full overcomer found listed in HEBREWS 11. Recall that Enoch walked with God, and pleased God, because he was a man of faith, and a man who diligently sought God, (study HEBREWS 11:5 & 6). One day the spirit of the Lord (the Holy Ghost in other words) came mightily upon Enoch, and he prophesied these words found in JUDE. JUDE 1:14 *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the*