

ENGRAVED UPON HIS HANDS

Text: Isaiah 49:16

Key Word: Engraved

Key Thought: We are engraved upon the hands of Jesus

*** Superficially the hand consists of a broad palm attached to the forearm by a joint called the wrist. At one side and at the outer edge of the palm are five digits, the thumb and four fingers. The thumb in humans is articulated so that it can be brought opposite to the fingers and thus be employed for grasping small objects. The fingers themselves can be folded forward over the palm for the holding of objects.

The chief difference between the hands of humans and those of the other primates is that the thumbs of the latter cannot be opposed to the fingers.

The human hand has 27 bones: the 8 bones of the carpus, or wrist, arranged in two rows of four; the 5 bones of the metacarpus, or palm, one to each digit; and the 14 digital bones, or phalanges, 2 in the thumb and 3 in each finger. The carpal bones fit into a shallow socket formed by the bones of the forearm . . .

The articulation of the human hand is more complex and delicate than that of comparable organs in any other animals. Because of this articulation, only humans are able to use and manipulate a wide variety of tools and implements. ***

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From this article we can clearly see that the human hand is unique to our species. God made us different from any of His other creations. We have the flexibility to pick up small objects. We also can get a tighter grip on things than what the animal kingdom can. **There is such an agility and sensitivity created into our hands that we need to ask the question why God made us this way.**

One other feature that I find captures my attention is the bone structure used in the human hand. I couldn't help notice how the number five is often repeated in the bones. We have 4 fingers and 1 thumb which make up the Phalanges bones. There are also 5 bones in each of the separate fingers. The number 5 in the Bible is the number of grace. I don't think this is a coincidence. The palm of the hand is where this bone structure is all linked together.

For born-again believers there are a number of wonderful truths that are beautifully portrayed in the hands of Jesus. **What Did the Outstretched Hands of Jesus Represent?**

I. A BRUISING

II. A BATTERING

III. A BROKENNESS

I. A BRUISING

*** The palm of our hand has been designed to be one of the most sensitive parts of our body.

“In humans, touch is accomplished by nerve endings in the skin that convey sensations to the brain via nerve fibers . . .

Touch is the least specialized of the senses, but acuteness can be sharpened by use; for example, people who are blind exhibit a remarkable delicacy of the tactile sense in their ability to read the fine, raised letters of the Braille system.” ***

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Most of us become desensitized to what we feel. Jesus knew that we would simply take for granted many of His blessings to us. Instead of using our hands for comforting and caring for one another, some use it to bring pain.

As Jesus walked through His vicious trial, He had to face an increase in painful experiences. One of the first pains was a bruising of His body. As our Lord was brought before the high priest and questioned about His actions, it was clear that it was a mock trial. At one point our Lord was illegally bruised for simply answering a question.

“When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby struck him in the face. ‘Is this the way to answer the high priest?’ he demanded.”

John 18:22

“Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him 68. and said, ‘Prophecy to us, Christ. Who hit you?’”

Matthew 26:67,68

I. A BRUISING (Contd.)

“Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, ‘Prophecy!’ And the guards took him and beat him.”

Mark 14:65

The word used to describe the slapping that Jesus took upon Himself (“*rhapisma*” - *Greek*) was that of an open hand that would strike Him upon the face with a strong force. There is no doubt that between the slapping and the clenched fists that His face would be bruised.

This is very important. **Jesus bore the bruising upon His body so no one could say that God is so far away from my problems and pain that He can’t understand.** Bruising was just the beginning of the suffering that our Lord bore upon Himself for our salvation so He could identify with mankind

“he was bruised (crushed - NIV) for our iniquities.”

Isaiah 53:5 KJV

*“A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;
4. He will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth . . .”*

*Isaiah 42:3,4
cf. Matthew 12:20*

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me . . . to release the oppressed [to set at liberty they that are bruised. - KJV]”

Luke 4:18

Jesus bore our bruises as He choose to face the illegal treatment which led up to His crucifixion. **A slap in the face represents an attack against our emotions and worthiness and worthlessness more than it is against our physical bodies.** It is used to place shame upon people. Jesus came to bear our shame as well as our sicknesses.

I found it interesting that the figurative meaning of the open, hallow hand is that of power. It was this part of our Lord’s hand that He allowed to be nailed to the cross. It is also this part of the hand that is used by oppressive people to usurp their power over others.

II. A BATTERING

After the bruising of our Lord we find His unjust treatment continued. Pilate was influenced by the angry crowd as they cried out for the blood of this innocent man. He could clearly see that it was envy (Matthew 27:18) that was at the root of their bitterness.

In a last attempt to sway their decision he had Jesus's body battered with a cat of nine tails.

“But he had Jesus flogged . . . “

Matthew 27:26

I find it interesting that one concern that has now reached the forefront in our society is that many women are being battered by their husbands. Women's shelters such as our Baldwin House are springing up all over our country. Some would suggest that it is not as serious as some would tend to believe. We do know of situations which are very dangerous. There is also the increase in child abuse as well as wives abusing their husbands.

Nearly 5.3 million incidents of domestic violence occur annually among US women aged 18 years and older, with 3.2 million occurring among men. Battered women average 6.9 physical assaults by the same partner in a year. Battered men average 4.4 assaults by the same partner in a year

In 2001, of all nonfatal violence directed against women, 20% was found to be of domestic physical violence, and in men, this number was found to be 3%. A 2002 study reported that 29% of women (almost 1-in-3) and 22% of men (more than 1-in-5) report having experienced physical, sexual, or psychological intimate partner violence during their lifetime.

Types of Abuse

Child abuse covers a wide range of parental actions that result in harm being inflicted on children of all ages. The kind of abuse, however, varies with age. Infants and preschool children are most likely to suffer deliberately inflicted fractures, burns, and bruises. This is known as the battered-child syndrome, first identified during the 1960s.

Historically, reported cases of sexual abuse, ranging from molestation to incest, primarily involve male perpetrators and school-aged or adolescent female victims. More recently, however, a growing number of pre-school victims and male victims have been identified.

(Contd.)

II. A BATTERING (Contd.)

Some states have broadened their statutory definitions of abuse to specifically include emotional or mental injury. Constant parental rejection, for example, can permanently cripple a child's personality.

Perhaps the most prevalent type of abuse is neglect—that is, physical or emotional harm resulting from a parent's failure to provide a child with adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, and moral training. A common symptom of neglect among young children is under feeding; an undernourished infant often fails to thrive and may even die. In the age range between 8 and 17 years, neglect, as opposed to physical or sexual abuse, was involved in about 70 percent of all validated reports of mistreatment in the U.S. in a recent year.

Child abuse is not, of course, only a U.S. problem. In Great Britain, for example, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children reports that child abuse increased by about 70 percent between 1979 and 1984.

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I believe that Satan so strongly despises the fact that we were created in the image of God that he is at the root of all this recent increase of battering. The more our society rejects the Word of God, the more it will open itself to the assault of the enemy.

As Jesus hung on the cross He could have called ten thousand angels to defend Him. But He never used His authority improperly. His hands and feet bore the agony of what evil men placed upon Him in order to purchase our salvation and identify with our pain.

III. A BROKENESS

The first time that this word is used is in reference to the Passover Lamb. Moses was given strict restrictions and regulations that had to be followed in their entirety. When dealing with this Passover lamb Moses was told,

“It must be eaten inside the house; take none of the meat outside of the house. Do not break any bones.”

Exodus 12:46

“They are to celebrate it on the fourteenth day of the second month at twilight. They are to eat the lamb, together with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

12. They must not leave any of it till morning or break any of its bones. When they celebrate the Passover, they must follow all the regulations.”

Numbers 9:11,12

“He protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken.”

Psalm 34:20

“Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down.³². The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other.

33. But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. . . .

36. These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: ‘Not one of his bones will be broken.’”

John 19:32,33,36

This means that not only were His legs not broken, but also there could not have been a bone in His body broken - which includes His hands. This is very important. The Scriptures had to be fulfilled exactly how they were supposed to.

III. A BROKENESS (Contd.)

“See I have engraved you on the palms of my hands;”

Isaiah 49:16

Anyone who thinks God has left them at their time of greatest need can simply look upon His hands and know that He was there all the time. When Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection they were startled and frightened because they thought they were seeing a ghost.

39. Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.

40. When he said this, he showed them his hands and feet.”

Luke 24:44

We need to remember the words of Thomas in response to the other disciples who said they had seen the Lord. Thomas said, . . .

“. . . Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe . . .

27. Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.’

John 20:25,27

These hands of Jesus that could not be broken bore the names of each and every individual that has/will accept His work of grace. Everyone who reaches out and believes in Him no longer has to be broken in their spirit.

The hands of our Lord bore many things upon the cross. **Are you engraved upon the hands of God?** Have you accepted His work of grace at Calvary? Have you asked Him for forgiveness of your sin? Today is your day of salvation! Don't let this opportunity pass by.

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Date: Mar 13/16

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: At the Foot of the Cross - D

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Isaiah 49:16; Luke 24:44; John 20:25,27