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· **The Scriptures richly abound in references to forms of posture and gestures, the descriptions in the Bible being sufficient to show that they were much the same as those practiced in the Middle East today. These Orientals are considerably more demonstrative and less inhibited in the expression of their feelings than are many of the Western peoples. Either accompanied by words or without words, attitudes and gestures carried considerable force and meaning.**

•• Prayer And Homage, Standing

- Among the Hebrews and many of the other nations mentioned in the Bible, there was no set form of posture for prayer. All the **attitudes** assumed were highly respectful. **Standing was a common posture.** Jesus spoke of this position for prayer.
- And when you **stand** praying, forgive whatever you have against anyone, in order, that your Father who is in the heavens may also forgive you your trespasses. (**Mark 11:25**)
- Immediately after being baptized, Jesus was evidently **standing** and **praying** when the heaven was opened up and the Holy Spirit in bodily shape like a dove came down upon him, and God's own voice was heard from the heavens.
- Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized and, as he was praying, the heaven was opened up (**Luke 3:21**)
- And the Holy Spirit in bodily shape like a dove came down upon him, and a voice came out of heaven; You are my Son, the beloved. I have approved you. (**Luke 3:22**)

•• Kneeling Was A Common Attitude Of Prayer

- Jesus himself **knelt** in the garden of Gethsemane.
- And he himself drew away from them about a stone's throw, and **bent his knees** and began to pray. (**Luke 22:41**)
- In representing the nation of Israel in prayer Solomon **knelt** at the inauguration of the temple.
- And it came about that, as soon as Solomon finished praying to Yehowah with all this prayer and request for favor, he **rose up** from before the altar of Yehowah, from **bending down upon his knees** with his palms spread out to the heavens. (**1 Kings 8:54**)
- While many of the instances in the Bible use the word **knees** in the plural, it may be that at times a person would **kneel** upon **one knee**, as is done sometimes by modern Orientals.
- But Peter put everybody outside and, **bending his knees**, he

prayed, and, turning to the body, he said; Tabitha, rise! She opened her eyes and, as she caught sight of Peter, she sat up. (**Acts of Apostles 9:40**)

- And when he had said these things, he kneeled down with all of them and prayed. (**Acts of Apostles 20:36**)
- So when we had completed the days, we went forth and started on our way, but they all, together with the women and children, conducted us as far as outside the city. And **kneeling** down on the beach we had prayer (**Acts of Apostles 21:5**)
- On account of this I bend my **knees** to the Father. (**Ephesians 3:14**)

.. Bowing

- The Jews, wherever they were found, when worshiping turned their faces toward the city of Jerusalem and its temple.
- For they shall hear of your great name and of your strong hand and of your stretched-out arm, and he actually comes and **prays toward this house**. (**1 Kings 8:42**)
- In case your people go out to the war against their enemy in the way that you send them, and they indeed pray to Yehowah in the **direction of the city** that you have chosen and the house that I have built to your name. (**1 Kings 8:44**)
- But Daniel, as soon as he knew that the writing had been signed, entered into his house, and, the windows in his roof chamber being open for him **toward Jerusalem**, even three times in a day he was **kneeling** on his knees and **praying** and **offering praise before his God**, as he had been regularly doing prior to this. (**Daniel 6:10**)
- In vision Ezekiel saw 25 men with their **backs toward the temple** of Yehowah, bowing with their faces toward the East.
- So he brought me to the inner courtyard of the house of Yehowah, and, look! At the entrance of the temple of Yehowah, between the porch and the altar, there were about twenty-five men with their **backs to the temple of Yehowah** and their faces to the east, and they were **bowing** down to the east, to the sun.

(Ezekiel 8:16)

- Temples of the sun worshipers were built in such a manner that the entrance was on the West side, making the worshipers face East on entering. But the temple of Yehowah was built with the entrance in the East so that the worshipers of Yehowah there **turned their backs** on the place of the rising of the sun.

.. Extending The Arms

- In the postures of standing and kneeling, the **palms of the hands would sometimes be spread out to the heavens**, or the **hands would be lifted up or extended forward as in supplication**.
- And Solomon began standing before the altar of Yehowah in front of all the congregation of Israel, and **he now spread his palms out to the heavens**. (**1 Kings 8:22**)
- For Solomon had made a platform of copper and then put it in the middle of the enclosure. Its length was five cubits, and its width five cubits, and its height three cubits, and he kept standing upon it. And he proceeded to kneel upon his knees in front of all the congregation of Israel and to **spread his palms out to the heavens**. (**2 Chronicles 6:13**)
- Then Ezra blessed Yehowah the true God, the great One, at which all the people answered, Amen! Amen! With **the lifting up of their hands**. They then bowed low and prostrated themselves to Yehowah with their faces to the earth. (**Nehemiah 8:6**)
- The face would sometimes be **uplifted**,
- For then in the Almighty you will find your exquisite delight, and you will **raise your face** to God himself. (**Job 22:26**)
- Or a person might lift up his eyes toward the heavens.
- Next he commanded the crowds to recline on the grass and took the five loaves and two fishes, and, **looking up to heaven**, he said a blessing and, after breaking the loaves, he distributed them to the disciples, the disciples in turn to the crowds. (**Matthew 14:19**)
- And **with a look up into heaven** he sighed deeply and said to him,

Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. (Mark 7:34)

- Jesus spoke these things, and, **raising his eyes to heaven**, he said; Father, the hour has come, glorify your son, that your son may glorify you. (John 17:1)

· Sitting And Prostrating

- **Sitting** was another **posture** employed in prayer, the **petitioner evidently kneeling and then sitting back upon his heels**.
- After that King David came in and **sat down** before Yehowah and said, Who am I, O Yehowah God, and what is my house that you have brought me thus far? (1 Chronicles 17:16)
- From this position he could **bow his head or rest it on his bosom**. Or, as Elijah did, he might crouch to the earth and put **his face between his knees**.
- And Ahab proceeded to go up to eat and drink. As for Elijah, he went up to the top of Carmel and began **crouching to the earth and keeping his face put between his knees**. (1 Kings 18:42)
- **Falling down** or **falling on one's face** is often the way the Scriptures express a person's prostrating himself. This was usually done by falling on the knees and bowing forward, resting on the hands or, more often, the elbows, with the head touching the ground.
- And the man proceeded to **bow down and prostrate himself** before Yehowah (Genesis 24:26)
- And I **proceeded to bow down and prostrate myself** before Yehowah and bless Yehowah the God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the true way to take the daughter of the brother of my master for his son. (Genesis 24:48)
- Then Ezra blessed Yehowah the true God, the great One, at which all the people answered, Amen! Amen! with the lifting up of their hands. They then **bowed low and prostrated themselves to Yehowah** with their **faces to the earth**. (Nehemiah 8:6)
- At this they fell upon their faces and said; O God, the God of the spirits of every sort of flesh, will just one man sin and you become indignant against the entire assembly? (Numbers 16:22)

- You men, rise up from the midst of this assembly, that I may exterminate them in an instant. At this **they fell upon their faces.** (**Numbers 16:45**)
- And going a little way forward, he **fell upon his face, praying** and saying; My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me. Yet, not as I will, but as you will. (**Matthew 26:39**)
- In great sorrow or very fervent prayer the petitioner might actually **lie on his face** with his **body outstretched**. In cases of extreme distress, the **petitioner might wear sackcloth**.
- When David raised his eyes, he got to see Yehowah's angel standing between the earth and the heavens with his drawn sword in his hand extended toward Jerusalem, and David and the older men, covered with sackcloth, **at once fell down upon their faces.** (**1 Chronicles 21:16**)
- False worshipers also bowed down before their idols.
- You **must not bow down to them nor be induced to serve them**, because I Yehowah your God am a God exacting exclusive devotion, bringing punishment for the error of fathers upon sons, upon the third generation and upon the fourth generation, in the case of those who hate me. (**Exodus 20:5**)
- And the women came calling the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people began to eat and **to bow down to their gods.** (**Numbers 25:2**)
- In this thing may Yehowah forgive your servant. When my lord comes into the house of Rimmon **to bow down there**, and he is supporting himself upon my hand, and I have to bow down at the house of Rimmon, when I bow down at the house of Rimmon may Yehowah, please, forgive your servant in this respect. (**2 Kings 5:18**)
- That at the time that you hear the sound of the horn, the pipe, the zither, the triangular harp, the stringed instrument, the bagpipe and all sorts of musical instruments, you fall down and worship the image of gold that Nebuchadnezzar the king has set up. (**Daniel 3:5**)

- And whoever **does not fall down and worship** will at the same moment be thrown into the burning fiery furnace. (**Daniel 3:6**)
- Because of this, at the same time as all the peoples were hearing the sound of the horn, the pipe, the zither, the triangular harp, the stringed instrument and all sorts of musical instruments, all the peoples, national groups and languages were **falling down and worshiping the image** of gold that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. (**Daniel 3:7**)
- Because of this, at that same time certain Chaldeans approached and accused the Jews. (**Daniel 3:8**)
- They answered, and they were saying to Nebuchadnezzar the king; O king, live on even for times indefinite. (**Daniel 3:9**)
- You yourself, O king, set forth the command that every man that hears the sound of the horn, the pipe, the zither, the triangular harp, the stringed instrument, and the bagpipe and all sorts of musical instruments, should **fall down and worship** the image of gold. (**Daniel 3:10**)
- And that whoever would **not fall down and worship** should be thrown into the burning fiery furnace. (**Daniel 3:11**)
- There exist certain Jews whom you appointed over the administration of the jurisdictional district of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, these able-bodied men have paid no regard to you, O king, they are **not serving your own gods**, and the image of gold that you have **set up they are not worshiping**. (**Daniel 3:12**)
- Additionally, false worshipers would often **kiss their idols**.
- And I have let seven thousand remain in Israel, all the knees that have not bent down to Baal, and **every mouth that has not kissed him**. (**1 Kings 19:18**)

.. Religious Gestures Toward An Object

- Job pointed out the danger of letting one's heart be **enticed toward some object of reverence** such as the sun or the moon to the point of making a worshipful gesture toward it, perhaps **placing one's hand to one's mouth in a kiss the way pagan moon worshipers and**

those giving homage to idols did. Job realized that this was a denial of the true God and would require an accounting for such error.

- If I used to see the light when it would flash forth, or the **precious moon walking** along. (Job 31:26)
- And my heart began to be **enticed in secrecy** and **my hand proceeded to kiss my mouth.** (Job 31:27)
- That too would be an **error for attention by the justices,** for I should have denied the true God above. (Job 31:28)

•• Christian Postures For Prayer

- Jesus prayed publicly, in sincerity, as did Paul and others. He also recommended private prayer.
- Also, when you pray, you must not be as the hypocrites, **because they like to pray standing in the synagogues** and on the corners of the broad ways to be visible to men. Truly I say to you, They are having their reward in full. (Matthew 6:5)
- You, however, when you pray, **go into your private room and, after shutting your door, pray** to your Father who is in secret, then your Father who **looks on in secret** will repay you. (Matthew 6:6)
- But Jesus condemned ostentatiousness in making long prayers for a pretense, a practice, into which some of the scribes had fallen.
- They are the one's devouring the houses of the widows and for a pretext making **long prayers,** these will receive a heavier judgment. (Mark 12:40)
- And who devour the houses of the widows and for a **pretext make long prayers.** These will receive a heavier judgment. (Luke 20:47)
- However, Christians adopted many of the customs and practices of the Jewish synagogue one's that God did not disapprove and the same **attitudes** and **postures** of prayer are mentioned in the **Christian Greek Scriptures.** Nowhere do they give support to a facial or bodily attitude of assumed piety and sanctimoniousness.

- They do not make any given **posture**, such as placing the palms together or clasping the hands when offering prayer, essential. In fact, prayers can be made silently and completely without outward manifestation, when the individual is carrying on an assigned duty or is faced with an emergency.
- In turn the king said to me; What is this that you are seeking to secure? **At once I prayed to the God of the heavens.** (**Nehemiah 2:4**)
- Christians are told to carry on prayer **with every form of prayer and supplication.**
- While with **every form of prayer and supplication** you carry on prayer on every occasion in spirit. And to that end keep awake with all constancy and with supplication in behalf of all the holy ones. (**Ephesians 6:18**)

• **Respect, Humility - Kneeling**

- The **attitudes** and postures of the Orientals in expressing respect for one another and especially when petitioning superiors were much the same as the attitudes assumed in prayer. We find examples of kneeling in supplication before others. This was not in worship of the person but in acknowledgment of that one's position or office, with deep respect.
- And when they came toward the crowd, a man approached him, **kneeling down** to him and saying; (**Matthew 17:14**)
- There also came to him a leper, entreating him even on **bended knee**, saying to him; If you just want to, you can make me clean. (**Mark 1:40**)
- And as he was going out on his way, a certain man ran up and **fell upon his knees** before him and put the question to him; Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit everlasting life? (**Mark 10:17**)
- And he went sending again a third chief of fifty and his fifty. But the third chief of fifty went up and came and **bent down upon his knees** in front of Elijah and began to implore favor of him and speak to him; Man of the true God, please let my soul and the soul of these fifty servants of yours be precious in your eyes. (**2 Kings 1:13**)

- **Bowing** was more frequently used in greeting others, in approaching them on a matter of business, or in displaying a **high degree of respect**. Jacob bowed seven times on meeting Esau.
- And he himself passed on ahead of them and proceeded to **bow down to the earth seven times** until he got near to his brother. (**Genesis 33:3**)
- Solomon, even though he was king, showed respect to his mother by bowing to her.
- So Bath-sheba came in to King Solomon to speak to him for Adonijah. At once the king rose to meet her and **bowed down** to her. Then he sat down upon his throne and had a throne set for the mother of the king, that she might sit at his right. (**1 Kings 2:19**)
- Bowing could also be a symbol of acknowledgment of defeat.
- And to you the sons of those afflicting you must go, **bowing down**, and all those treating you disrespectfully must bend down at the very soles of your feet, and they will have to call you the city of Yehowah, Zion of the Holy One of Israel. (**Isaiah 60:14**)
- Those persons defeated might appear before their conqueror in **sackcloth** and, additionally, with **ropes upon their heads** in an appeal for mercy.
- So his servants said to him, Here, now, we have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are kings of loving-kindness. Please, let us carry **sackcloth** upon our loins and **ropes upon our heads**, and let us go out to the king of Israel. Perhaps he will preserve your soul alive. (**1 Kings 20:31**)
- Accordingly they girded **sackcloth about their loins**, with ropes upon their heads, and came in to the king of Israel and said; Your servant Ben-hadad has said; Please, let my soul live. To this he said; Is he still alive? He is my brother. (**1 Kings 20:32**)
- Some think that the ropes mentioned were put **about their necks** to symbolize their **captivity and submission**.

- Although it was a common thing for the Jews to **bow** before authority to show respect, Mordecai **refused to bow** before Haman. This was because Haman, as an **Agagite**, was very likely an **Amalekite**, concerning whom Yehowah had said that he would completely wipe out their remembrance from under the heavens and that he would have war with **Amalek** from generation to generation.
- Yehowah now said to Moses; Write this as a memorial in the book and propound it in Joshua's ears, I shall completely wipe out the **remembrance of Amalek from under the heavens**. (**Exodus 17:14**)
- And Moses proceeded to build an altar and to call its name Yehowah-nissi. (**Exodus 17:15**)
- Saying; Because a hand is against the throne of Yah, Yehowah will have war with Amalek from generation to generation. (**Exodus 17:16**)
- Since **bowing down or prostration** would have a connotation of peace toward Haman, **Mordecai refused to perform this act**, because he would have violated God's command in doing so.
- Now Haman kept seeing that Mordecai was **not bowing low and prostrating himself to him**, and Haman became filled with rage. (**Esther 3:5**)

.. Prostrating

- Joshua **prostrated** himself before an angel, as prince of the army of Yehowah, not in worship, **but in acknowledgment of the superior office the angel held** and of the fact that the angel was obviously sent from Yehowah with a command for him.
- To this he said; No, but I, as prince of the army of Yehowah I have now come. With that Joshua **fell on his face to the earth and prostrated himself** and said to him, What is my lord saying to his servant? (**Joshua 5:14**)
- When Jesus was on earth, persons would **prostrate** themselves before him to petition and to do **obeisance to him**, and he did not reprove them.
- On a further occasion while he was in one of the cities, look! A

man full of leprosy! When he caught sight of Jesus he fell upon his face and begged him, saying; Lord, if you just want to, you can make me clean. (Luke 5:12)

- Then he said; I do put faith in him, Lord. And he did obeisance to him. (John 9:38)
- This was because he was the appointed King, the King-Designate, as he himself said; God's royal majesty has approached [ED]
- The kingdom of God has drawn near. [NW] (Mark 1:15)
- Jesus was the heir to the throne of David and therefore was rightfully honored as a king.
- As for the crowds, those going ahead of him and those following kept crying out; Save, we pray, the Son of David! Blessed is he that comes in Yehowah's name! **Save him, we pray, in the heights above!** (Matthew 21:9)
- Took the branches of palm trees and went out to meet him. And they began to shout; **Save, we pray you! Blessed is he that comes in Yehowah's name, even the king of Israel!** (John 12:13)
- But when Jesus had found a young ass, he sat on it, just as it is written: (John 12:14)
- Have no fear, daughter of Zion. Look! Your king is coming, seated upon an ass's colt. (John 12:15)
- However, the apostles of Jesus Christ refused to permit others to **prostrate** themselves before them. This was because, in the instances described, **prostration** was done as an **attitude of worship**, as though the **power of the Holy Spirit** in the apostles, which performed the healing and other powerful works, **were their own**.
- The apostles realized that the **power was from God** and that credit for these things should be given to him and **all worship** should be **directed toward Yehowah** through Jesus Christ, of whom they were merely the representatives.
- As Peter entered, Cornelius met him, fell down at his feet and **did obeisance to him**. (Acts of Apostles 10:25)

- But Peter lifted him up, saying; **Rise. I myself am also a man.** (Acts of Apostles 10:26)
- In connection with the respect paid to Jesus, the word often used is *pro-sky-ne'o*, a word having the basic meaning **do obeisance**, but also translated worship.
- And when they went into the house they saw the young child with Mary its mother, and, falling down, they **did obeisance to it**. They also opened their treasures and presented it with gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. (Matthew 2:11)
- In reply Jesus said to him; It is written: It is **Yehowah your God you must worship**, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service. (Luke 4:8)
- Jesus was not accepting worship, which belongs to God alone
- Then Jesus said to him; Go away, Satan! For it is written: It is **Yehowah your God you must worship**, and it is to **him alone** you must **render sacred service**. (Matthew 4:10)
- But recognized the act of the one **doing obeisance** as **recognition of the authority given Him by God**. The angel whom Jesus Christ sent to bring the Revelation to John expressed the principle that **man's worship belongs only to God**, when he **refused to accept worship from John**.
- At that I fell down before his feet to worship him. But he tells me; **Be careful! Do not do that!** All I am is a fellow slave of you and of your brothers who have the work of witnessing to Jesus. **Worship God**. The bearing witness to Jesus is what inspires prophesying. (Revelation 19:10)

See Also OBEISANCE

See Also WORSHIP

- **Covering the head was a sign of respect** on the part of women. This custom was followed in the Christian congregation. In discussing the principle of Christian headship, the apostle Paul stated,
- But I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ, in turn the **head of a woman is the man**, in turn the head of the

Christ is God. (1 Corinthians 11:3)

- Every man that prays or prophesies having something on his head shames his head. (1 Corinthians 11:4)
- But every woman that prays or prophesies with her head uncovered shames her head, for it is one and the same as if she were a woman with a shaved head. (1 Corinthians 11:5)
- For if a woman does not cover herself, let her also be shorn, but if it is disgraceful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. (1 Corinthians 11:6)
- For a man ought not to have his head covered, as he is God's image and glory, but the woman is man's glory. (1 Corinthians 11:7)
- For man is not out of woman, but woman out of man. (1 Corinthians 11:8)
- And, what is more, man was not created for the sake of the woman, but woman for the sake of the man. (1 Corinthians 11:9)
- That is why the woman ought to have a sign of authority upon her head because of the angels. (1 Corinthians 11:10)

See Also HEADSHIP

- Removing one's sandals was a gesture of respect or reverence. Moses was commanded to do this at the burning bush and Joshua in the presence of an angel.
- Then he said; Do not come near here. Draw your sandals from off your feet, because the place where you are standing is holy ground. (Exodus 3:5)
- In turn the prince of the army of Yehowah said to Joshua; Draw your sandals from off your feet, because the place on which you are standing is holy. At once Joshua did so. (Joshua 5:15)
- Since the tabernacle and the temple were holy places, the priests are said to have performed their duties at the sanctuary barefoot. Likewise, the loosening of the laces of another person's sandals or bearing his sandals for him was considered a menial duty and an

expression of one's **humility and consciousness of insignificance** when contrasted with his master. It is still a practice in the Middle East that when one enters a house, his sandals are taken off, sometimes by a servant.

- I, for my part, baptize you with water because of your repentance, but the one coming after me is stronger than I am, whose **sandals I am not fit to take off**. That one will baptize you people with Holy Spirit and with fire. (**Matthew 3:11**)
- The one coming behind me, but the lace of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie. (**John 1:27**)

See Also SANDAL

.. Pouring Water On Another's Hands

- Elisha was identified as the minister or servant of Elijah by the expression he **poured out water upon the hands of Elijah**. This was a service performed particularly after meals. In the Middle East it was not the custom to use knives and forks, but fingers, and the servant would afterward **pour water over the hands of his master for washing**.
- At that Jehoshaphat said; Is there not here a prophet of Yehowah? Then let us inquire of Yehowah through him. So one of the servants of the king of Israel answered and said; There is here Elisha the son of Shaphat, who **poured out water upon the hands of Elijah**. (**2 Kings 3:11**)
- A similar practice was the **washing of feet**, performed as an **act of hospitality, also of respect and, in certain relationships, of humility**.
- After that he put water into a basin and started to **wash the feet of the disciples** and to **dry them off with the towel** with which he was girded. (**John 13:5**)
- With that the man came on into the house, and he went unharnessing the camels and giving straw and fodder to the camels and water **to wash his feet and the feet of the men** who were with him. (**Genesis 24:32**)
- Then the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave water that they might **have their feet washed**, and he gave fodder for their asses. (**Genesis 43:24**)

- Having a witness borne to her for fine works, if she reared children, if she entertained strangers, if **she washed the feet of holy ones**, if she relieved those in tribulation, if she diligently followed every good work. (**1 Timothy 5:10**)

• Agreement, Sharing Together

- Handshaking and striking the palms of the hands** were gestures employed to express **agreement, ratification, or confirmation** of a contract or bargain.
- But they promised by **shaking hands** to put their wives away, and that, they being guilty, there should be a ram of the flock for their guiltiness. (**Ezra 10:19**)
- The Scriptures warn against doing this in guaranteeing security of a loan for another person.
- My son, if you have gone surety for your fellowman, if you have **given your handshake** even to the stranger. (**Proverbs 6:1**)
- If you have been ensnared by the sayings of your mouth, if you have been **caught by the sayings of your mouth**. (**Proverbs 6:2**)
- Take this action then, my son, and deliver yourself, for you have come into the palm of your fellowman. Go humble yourself and storm your fellowman with importunities. (**Proverbs 6:3**)
- A man that is wanting in heart **shakes hands**, going full surety before his companion. (**Proverbs 17:18**)
- Do not get to be among those **striking hands**, among those who go security for loans. (**Proverbs 22:26**)
- Joint participation, or sharing together**, was also denoted by a **handshake** or **grasping** of another's hand.
- As he was going along from there he got to encounter Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him. When he blessed him, he accordingly said to him. Is your heart upright with me, just as my own heart is with your heart? To this Jehonadab said; It is. If it is, **do give me your hand**. So he **gave him his hand**. At that he made him get up into the chariot with him. (**2 Kings 10:15**)

- Yes, when they came to know the undeserved kindness that was given me, James and Cephas and John, the ones who seemed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the **right hand of sharing together**, that we should go to the nations, but they to those who are circumcised. (**Galatians 2:9**)

.. Blessing

- **Putting hands on head, lifting hands.** Since the **Hebrew** word *ba-rakh'* has to do with **bending the knees and kneeling** as well as **blessing**, it is probable that, when **receiving a blessing**, **persons knelt down and bowed themselves toward the one giving the blessing**. Then the one blessing would put his hands on the head of the one being blessed.
- Joseph now took the two of them, Ephraim by his right hand to Israel's left, and Manasseh by his left hand to Israel's right, and brought them close to him. (**Genesis 48:13**)
- However, Israel put out his right hand and placed it on Ephraim's head, although he was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head. He purposely laid his hands so, since Manasseh was the firstborn. (**Genesis 48:14**)
- And he took the children into his arms and began blessing them, **laying his hands upon them**. (**Mark 10:16**)
- In bestowing a blessing upon a group of people, it was common to **lift the hands toward them as the blessing was uttered**.
- Then Aaron **raised his hands** toward the people and blessed them and came down from rendering the sin offering and the burnt offering and the communion sacrifices. (**Leviticus 9:22**)
- But he led them out as far as Bethany, and **he lifted up his hands and blessed them**. (**Luke 24:50**)

.. Swearing

- **Raising hand, placing hand under thigh.** In making an oath, it was customary to **raise the right hand**. God speaks of himself as doing this, symbolically.

- For **I raise my hand to heaven in an oath**, and I do say; As I am alive to time indefinite. (**Deuteronomy 32:40**)
- Yehowah has sworn **with his right hand** and with his strong arm: I will no more give your grain as food to your enemies, nor will foreigners drink your new wine, for which you have toiled. (**Isaiah 62:8**)
- The angel in Daniel's vision raised **both his right hand and his left** to heaven to utter an oath.
- And I began to hear the man clothed with the linen, who was up above the waters of the stream, as he proceeded to raise his **right hand and his left hand** to the heavens and to **swear by the One who is alive for time indefinite**. It will be for an appointed time, appointed times and a half. And as soon as there will have been a finishing of the dashing of the power of the holy people to pieces, all these things will come to their finish. (**Daniel 12:7**)
- Another method of confirming an oath was to place one's hand under the **others thigh or hip**, as Abraham's steward did in swearing that he would get a wife for Isaac from Abraham's relatives
- Hence Abraham said to his servant, the oldest one of his household, who was managing all he had; **Put your hand, please, under my thigh**. (**Genesis 24:2**)
- With that the servant put his **hand under the thigh of Abraham his master** and swore to him concerning this matter. (**Genesis 24:9**)
- And as Joseph did for Jacob in **swearing** not to bury Jacob in Egypt.
- Gradually the days approached for Israel to die. So he called his son Joseph and said to him; If, now, I have found favor in your eyes, place your hand, please, **under my thigh**, and you must exercise loving-kindness and trustworthiness toward me. **Please, do not bury me in Egypt**. (**Genesis 47:29**)
- And I must lie with my fathers, and you must carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their grave. Accordingly he said; I myself shall do in keeping with your word. (**Genesis 47:30**)

- Then he said; **Swear to me**. So **he swore to him**. At that Israel prostrated himself over the head of the couch. (**Genesis 47:31**)
- The word **thigh** applies to the upper part of the **leg from the hip to the knee**, in which the femur is located. According to the Jewish rabbi Rashbam, this method of **swearing** was used when a superior **adjured an inferior**, such as a master his servant or a father his son, who also owes him obedience.
- And according to another Jewish scholar, Abraham Ibn Ezra, it was the custom in those days for a servant to take an oath in this manner, placing his hand **under his masters thigh**, the latter sitting upon his hand. This signified that the servant was under his masters authority. [*The Soncino Chumash, edited by A. Cohen, London, 1956, p. 122*]

•• Grief, Shame

- **Throwing dust on the head, ripping garments, wearing sackcloth.** **Grief** was usually accompanied by weeping
- Then Joseph **fell upon the face of his father** and burst into tears over him and kissed him. (**Genesis 50:1**)
- After that Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. (**Genesis 50:2**)
- And they took fully forty days for him, for this many days they customarily take for the embalming, and the Egyptians continued to **shed tears** for him seventy days. (**Genesis 50:3**)
- Jesus gave way **to tears**. (**John 11:35**)
- Often by bowing the head sadly.
- Should the fast that I choose become like this, as a day for earthling man to afflict his soul? For **bowing down his head** just like a rush, and that he should spread out mere sackcloth and ashes as his couch? Is it this that you call a fast and a day acceptable to Yehowah? (**Isaiah 58:5**)
- By throwing dust on one's head.
- At this Joshua ripped his mantles and **fell upon his face** to the

earth before the ark of Yehowah until the evening, he and the older men of Israel, and they kept putting dust upon their heads. (Joshua 7:6)

- Or by sitting on the ground.
- And they kept sitting with him on the earth seven days and seven nights, and there was no one speaking a word to him, for they saw that the pain was very great. (Job 2:13)
- And her entrances will have to mourn and express sorrow, and she will certainly be cleaned out. She will **sit down on the very earth.** (Isaiah 3:26)
- Grief was often expressed by the **ripping of garments.**
- And a man of Benjamin went running from the battle line so that he arrived at Shiloh on that day **with his garments ripped apart** and dirt on his head. (1 Samuel 4:12)
- When they raised their eyes from far off they did not then recognize him. And they proceeded to raise their voice and weep and **rip each one his sleeveless coat apart** and toss dust toward the heavens upon their heads. (Job 2:12)
- And sometimes by **putting ashes** on the head.
- Then Tamar placed **ashes upon her head**, and the striped robe that was upon her she ripped apart, and she kept her hands put upon her head and went walking away, crying out as she walked. (2 Samuel 13:19)
- When the Jews were condemned to destruction at the hands of their enemies by the order of King Ahasuerus, **sackcloth and ashes** themselves came to be spread out as a couch for many.
- And in all the different jurisdictional districts, wherever the king's word and his Law were reaching, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting and weeping and wailing. **Sackcloth and ashes** themselves came to be spread out as a couch for many. (Esther 4:3)
- Yehowah warned Jerusalem **to gird on sackcloth and wallow in ashes** for the trouble coming against her.

- O daughter of my people, **gird on sackcloth and wallow in the ashes**. Make your mourning that for an only son, the wailing of bitterness, because suddenly the despoiler will come upon us. (**Jeremiah 6:26**)
- Micah told those of the Philistine city of Aphrah to **wallow in the very dust**.
- In Gath do not you men tell it out, positively do not weep. In the house of Aphrah **wallow in the very dust**. (**Micah 1:10**)

See Also RIPPING OF GARMENTS

• Cutting Off Or Pulling Out Hair, Beating Breast

- Cutting off the hair
- And Job proceeded to get up and rip his sleeveless coat apart and **cut the hair off his head** and fall to the earth and bow down (**Job 1:20**)
- Pulling some of the hair out of one's own beard
- Now as soon as I heard of this thing I ripped apart my garment and my sleeveless coat, and I began to **pull out some of the hair of my head and of my beard**, and I kept sitting stunned. (**Ezra 9:3**)
- Covering the head.
- And David was going up by the ascent of the Olives, weeping as he went up, with his head covered, and he was walking barefoot, and all the people that were with him **covered each one his head**, and they went up weeping as they went up. (**2 Samuel 15:30**)
- Afterward Mordecai returned to the kings gate. As for Haman, he hurried to his house, mourning and with **his head covered**. (**Esther 6:12**)
- Covering the mustache.
- Sigh without words. For the dead one's no mourning should you make. Your headdress bind on yourself, and your sandals you

- should put upon your feet. And you should **not cover over the mustache**, and the bread of men you should not eat. (**Ezekiel 24:17**)
- And the visionaries will have to be ashamed, and the diviners will certainly be disappointed. And they will have to **cover over the mustache**, all of them, for there is no answer from God. (**Micah 3:7**)
 - And **laying one's hands on his own head** denoted grief or shame, even to the point of being stunned.
 - Then Tamar placed ashes upon her head, and the striped robe that was upon her she ripped apart, and **she kept her hands put upon her head** and went walking away, crying out as she walked. (**2 Samuel 13:19**)
 - For this cause also you will go forth with **your hands upon your head**, because Yehowah has rejected the objects of your confidence, and you will have no success with them. (**Jeremiah 2:37**)
 - Some believe that the latter gesture signified that the **heavy hand of God's affliction was resting on the mourner**. Isaiah walked about **naked and barefoot** as a sign of the shame to come upon Egypt and Ethiopia.
 - At that time Yehowah spoke by the hand of Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying; Go, and you must loosen the sackcloth from off your hips, and your sandals you should draw from off your feet. And he proceeded to do so, **walking about naked and barefoot**. (**Isaiah 20:2**)
 - And Yehowah went on to say; Just as my servant Isaiah **has walked about naked and barefoot three years as a sign and a portent** against Egypt and against Ethiopia. (**Isaiah 20:3**)
 - So the king of Assyria will lead the body of captives of Egypt and the exiles of Ethiopia, boys and old men, **naked and barefoot, and with buttocks stripped, the nakedness of Egypt**. (**Isaiah 20:4**)
 - And they will certainly be terrified and be ashamed of Ethiopia their looked-for hope and of Egypt their beauty. (**Isaiah 20:5**)

- Under the feeling of unusual grief or contrition one might **beat the breast in grief**.
- Saying; We played the flute for you, but you did not dance, we wailed, but you did not **beat yourselves in grief**. (**Matthew 11:17**)
- But there was following him a great multitude of the people and of women who kept **beating themselves in grief** and bewailing him. (**Luke 23:27**)
- Or **slap the thigh for regret, shame, and humiliation or mourning**.
- For after my turning back I felt **regret**, and after my being led to know I made a **slap upon the thigh**. I became ashamed, and I also felt humiliated, for I had carried the reproach of my youth. (**Jeremiah 31:19**)
- Cry out and howl, O son of man, for it itself has come to be against my people. It is against all the chieftains of Israel. The very one's hurled to the sword have come to be with my people. Therefore make a **slap on the thigh**. (**Ezekiel 21:12**)

•• Anger, Ridicule, Insult, Calling Down Evil

- **Wagging the head, slapping another's face**. Generally accompanied by words, various gestures denoted strong expressions of anger, animosity, derision, reproach, contempt, and so forth, toward others. Among them were gestures with the mouth and wagging the head or the hand
- This is the word that Yehowah has spoken against him; The virgin daughter of Zion has despised you, she has held you in derision. Behind you the daughter of Jerusalem has **wagged her head**. (**2 Kings 19:21**)
- As for all those seeing me, they hold me in derision, they keep opening their mouths wide, they keep **wagging their head**: (**Psalms 22:7**)
- You set us as a proverbial saying among the nations, a **shaking of the head** among the national groups. (**Psalms 44:14**)
- And to them I myself have become something reproachable. They see me, they begin **wagging their head**. (**Psalms 109:25**)

- This is the exultant city that was sitting in security, that was saying in her heart, I am, and there is nobody else. O how she has become an object of astonishment, a place for the wild animals to lie stretched out! Everyone passing along by her will whistle, he will **wag his hand**. (**Zephaniah 2:15**)
- **A slap in the face**
- They have opened their mouth wide against me, with reproach they have **struck my cheeks**, in large number they mass themselves against me. (**Job 16:10**)
- However, I say to you; Do not resist him that is wicked, but whoever **slaps you on your right cheek**, turn the other also to him (**Matthew 5:39**)
- After he said these things, one of the officers that was standing by gave Jesus a **slap in the face** and said; Is that the way you answer the chief priest? (**John 18:22**)
- And pulling out the hair of another's beard.
- My back I gave to the strikers, and **my cheeks to those plucking off the hair**. My face I did not conceal from humiliating things and spit. (**Isaiah 50:6**)
- Jesus suffered the highest forms of indignity before the Jewish high court by being **spit on, slapped**, having his **face covered**, and then being **hit with fists** and **taunted** with the words; Prophecy to us, you Christ. Who is it that struck you?
- Then they **spit into his face and hit him with their fists**. Others slapped him in the face. (**Matthew 26:67**)
- Saying: Prophecy to us, you Christ. Who is it that struck you? (**Matthew 26:68**)
- And some started to **spit on him** and to cover his whole face and **hit him with their fists** and say to him; Prophecy! And, slapping him in the face, the court attendants took him. (**Mark 14:65**)
- Afterward he was given similar treatment by the soldiers.

- And they spit upon him and took the reed and began hitting him upon his head. (**Matthew 27:30**)
- Also, they would hit him on the **head with a reed** and **spit upon him** and, bending their knees, they would do obeisance to him. (**Mark 15:19**)
- And they began coming up to him and saying; Good day, you King of the Jews! Also, they would give him slaps in the face. (**John 19:3**)

•• **Dust Throwing Was Another Form Of Contempt**

- Shimei employed this against David along with **cursing and throwing stones** at him.
- With that David and his men kept going on in the road, while Shimei was walking on the side of the mountain, walking abreast of him that he might **call down evil**, and he kept **throwing stones while abreast of him, and he threw a lot of dust**. (**2 Samuel 16:13**)
- As an evidence of the fury of the mob as Paul made his defense before them in Jerusalem, they raised their voices, crying out and throwing their outer garments about and **tossing dust into the air**.
- Now they kept listening to him down to this word, and they raised their voices, saying; Take such a man away from the earth, for he was not fit to live! (**Acts of Apostles 22:22**)
- And because they were crying out and throwing their outer garments about and **tossing dust into the air**. (**Acts of Apostles 22:23**)
- **Clapping the hands** might be a **gesture** merely to **command attention**, as at,
- And it came about that when she was going home, she kept inciting him to ask a field from her father. Then **she clapped her hands** while upon the ass. At this Caleb said to her: What do you want? (**Joshua 15:18**)
- More often it was a **sign of anger**.

- At that Balak's anger blazed against Balaam and he **clapped his hands**, and Balak went on to say to Balaam; It was to execrate my enemies that I called you, and, look! You have blessed them to the limit these three times. (**Numbers 24:10**)
- Contempt or ridicule.
- One will clap his hands at him and will whistle at him from his place. (**Job 27:23**)
- At you all those passing along on the road have **clapped their hands**. They have whistled and kept **wagging their head** at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying; Is this the city of which they used to say; It is the perfection of prettiness, an exultation for all the earth? (**Lamentations 2:15**)
- Sorrow
- This is what the Sovereign Lord Yehowah has said; **Clap your hands and stamp with your foot**, and say; Alas! On account of all the bad detestable things of the house of Israel, because by the sword, by the famine and by the pestilence they will fall. (**Ezekiel 6:11**)
- Or animosity, rejoicing at bad that befell a rival, a hated enemy, or an oppressor, it was sometimes accompanied by stamping of the feet.
- For this is what the Sovereign Lord Yehowah has said; For the reason that you **clapped the hands and you stamped with the feet** and you **kept rejoicing** with all scorn on your part in your soul against the soil of Israel. (**Ezekiel 25:6**)
- There is no relief for your catastrophe. Your stroke has become unhealable. All those hearing the report about you will certainly clap their hands at you, because upon whom was it that your badness did not pass over constantly? (**Nahum 3:19**)

•• Appointing, Anointing

- Certain **gestures** were employed to represent **an appointment to office or authority**. At the inauguration of the priesthood, Aaron was **anointed with the holy anointing oil**.

- Finally he **poured some of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head** and anointed him so as to sanctify him. (**Leviticus 8:12**)
- **Kings were anointed.**
- Accordingly Samuel took the horn of oil **and anointed him in the midst of his brothers.** And the spirit of Yehowah began to be operative upon David from that day forward. Later Samuel rose and went his way to Ramah. (**1 Samuel 16:13**)
- Zadok the priest now took the horn of oil out of the tent and **anointed Solomon**, and they began to blow the horn, and all the people broke out saying; Let King Solomon live! (**1 Kings 1:39**)
- King Cyrus of Persia was not literally anointed by a representative of God but was figuratively spoken of as Yehowah's anointed one because of his appointment to conquer Babylon and to release God's people.
- This is what Yehowah has said to his **anointed one**, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have taken hold of, to subdue before him nations, so that I may ungird even the hips of kings, to open before him the two-leaved doors, so that even the gates will not be shut. (**Isaiah 45:1**)
- Elisha was **anointed** by being **appointed**, but was never literally **anointed with oil.**
- And Jehu the grandson of Nimshi you should anoint as king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat from Abel-meholah you should anoint as prophet in place of you. (**1 Kings 19:16**)
- Accordingly he went from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat while he was plowing with twelve spans before him, and he with the twelfth. So Elijah crossed over to him and threw his official garment upon him. (**1 Kings 19:19**)
- Jesus was **anointed** by his Father Yehowah, **not with oil, but with Holy Spirit.**
- The **spirit** of the Sovereign Lord Yehowah is upon me, for the reason that Yehowah has **anointed** me to tell Good News to the meek ones. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to those taken captive and the wide opening of

the eyes even to the prisoners. (**Isaiah 61:1**)

- Yehowah's **spirit** is upon me, because he **anointed** me to declare Good News to the poor, he sent me forth to preach a release to the captives and a recovery of sight to the blind, to send the crushed one's away with a release. (**Luke 4:18**)
- Then he started to say to them; Today this scripture that you just heard is fulfilled. (**Luke 4:21**)
- Through him, his **spirit-begotten** brothers making up the Christian congregation are **anointed**.
- But he who guarantees that you and we belong to Christ and **he who has anointed us is God**. (**2 Corinthians 1:21**)
- Therefore because he was exalted to the right hand of God and received the promised Holy Spirit from the Father, **he has poured out this which you see and hear**. (**Acts of Apostles 2:33**)
- This **anointing appoints, commissions, and qualifies** them as **ministers** of God.
- And you have **an anointing from the holy one**, all of you have knowledge. (**1 John 2:20**)
- Not that we of ourselves are **adequately qualified** to reckon anything as issuing from ourselves, but our being adequately qualified **issues from God**. (**2 Corinthians 3:5**)
- Who has indeed **adequately qualified us to be ministers** of a New Covenant, not of a written code, **but of spirit**, for the written code condemns to death, but the **spirit makes alive**. (**2 Corinthians 3:6**)

See Also ANOINTED

See Also ANOINTING

- The **laying on of hands** was a method of **designating** the **appointment** of a person to an office or a duty, as in the case of the seven men who were **appointed** by the apostles to care for the food distribution in the congregation at Jerusalem.
- And they placed them before the apostles, and, after having

prayed, these **laid their hands upon them.** (**Acts of Apostles 6:6**)

- Was appointed to a particular service by the body of older men in the congregation.
- Do not be neglecting the gift in you that was given you through a prediction and when the body of older men **laid their hands upon you.** (**1 Timothy 4:14**)
- Later he was delegated by the apostle Paul to **make appointments** of others, which he was admonished to do only after careful consideration.
- Never **lay your hands hastily upon any man**, neither be a sharer in the sins of others. Preserve yourself chaste. (**1 Timothy 5:22**)
- The **laying on of hands** also had other significances, one being the acknowledgment of something, as at;
- You must now present the bull before the tent of meeting, and Aaron and his sons must **lay their hands upon the bulls head.** (**Exodus 29:10**)
- Then you will take the one ram, and Aaron and his sons must **lay their hands upon the rams head.** (**Exodus 29:15**)
- Where Aaron and his sons **acknowledged the sacrifices as being offered in their behalf.** Similar meaning is found in;
- And the older men of the assembly must **lay their hands upon the bulls head** before Yehowah, and the bull must be slaughtered before Yehowah. (**Leviticus 4:15**)
- The **laying on of hands** was also used to designate certain one's to whom **benefits or power would flow**, as in Jesus healing;
- But when the sun was setting, all those who had people sick with various diseases brought them to him. By **laying his hands upon each one of them he would cure them.** (**Luke 4:40**)
- And in the **Holy Spirit's** coming upon those upon whom **Paul laid his hands.**
- And when **Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came**

upon them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying. (Acts of Apostles 19:6)

- This does **not mean** that the **spirit passed through the hands** of Paul, but that as Christ's representative, he was authorized to **designate**, in harmony with the requirements laid down, **who would receive gifts of the spirit**.
- When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they dispatched Peter and John to them. (Acts of Apostles 8:14)
- And these went down and prayed for them to get Holy Spirit. (Acts of Apostles 8:15)
- For it had not yet fallen upon any one of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Acts of Apostles 8:16)
- Then they went **laying their hands upon them**, and they began **to receive Holy Spirit**. (Acts of Apostles 8:17)
- Now when Simon saw that through the **laying on of the hands of the apostles the spirit was given**, he offered them money. (Acts of Apostles 8:18)
- Saying; Give me also this authority, that anyone upon whom **I lay my hands may receive Holy Spirit**. (Acts of Apostles 8:19)
- That it was not necessary to **lay on hands** to transmit the gifts of the spirit was shown by the fact that in the case of Cornelius and his household the apostle Peter was **merely present** when they were given **Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues**.
- While Peter was yet speaking about these matters **the Holy Spirit fell upon all those hearing the word**. (Acts of Apostles 10:44)
- And the faithful one's that had come with Peter who were of those circumcised were amazed, because the **free gift of the Holy Spirit was being poured out also upon people of the nations**. (Acts of Apostles 10:45)
- For they heard them **speaking with tongues and magnifying God**. Then Peter responded. (Acts of Apostles 10:46)

• Favor

- **Standing before a superior.** Favor and recognition were represented by **standing** before an authority, since permission was required to enter into the presence of a king.
- Have you beheld a man skillful in his work? Before kings is where he will **station** himself. He will not **station** himself before commonplace men. ([Proverbs 22:29](#))
- In reply the angel said to him; I am Gabriel, who stands near before God, and I was sent forth to speak with you and declare the Good News of these things to you. ([Luke 1:19](#))
- Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur, and in **standing** before the Son of man. ([Luke 21:36](#))
- After these things I saw, and, look! A great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, **standing** before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes, and there were palm branches in their hands. ([Revelation 7:9](#))
- That is why they are before the throne of God, and they are rendering him sacred service day and night in his temple, and the One seated on the throne will spread his tent over them. ([Revelation 7:15](#))
- A great crowd is shown as **standing** before the throne, indicating that they have favored recognition before God.
- To speak of **lifting up another person's head** was, at times, a symbolic way of signifying his being raised or restored to favor.
- In three days from now Pharaoh **will lift up your head** and he will certainly return you to your office, and you will certainly give Pharaoh's cup into his hand, according to the former custom when you acted as his cupbearer. ([Genesis 40:13](#))
- Accordingly he returned the chief of the cupbearers to his post of cupbearer, and he continued to give the cup into Pharaoh's hand. ([Genesis 40:21](#))

- At length it came about in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin the king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-fifth day of the month, that Evil-merodach the king of Babylon, in the year of his becoming king, **raised up the head of Jehoiachin** the king of Judah and proceeded to bring him forth from the prison house. (**Jeremiah 52:31**)

.. Filling Hands With Power

- The **filling of the hands of the priests with power** of the priestly office was represented by Moses when, as mediator, he put the various items to be sacrificed on the hands of Aaron and his sons and waved the offering to and fro before Yehowah. The **waving to and fro represented constant presentation before Yehowah**.
- Then he took the fat and the fat tail and all the fat that was upon the intestines, and the appendage of the liver and the two kidneys and their fat and the right leg. (**Leviticus 8:25**)
- And out of the basket of unfermented cakes that was before Yehowah he took one unfermented ring-shaped cake and one ring-shaped cake of oiled bread and one wafer. He then placed them upon the fatty pieces and the right leg. (**Leviticus 8:26**)
- After that he put all of them upon the palms of Aaron and the palms of his sons and began to **wave them to and fro** as a wave offering before Yehowah. (**Leviticus 8:27**)

.. Friendship

- Kissing, washing feet, anointing head.** Friendship was expressed by a kiss.
- Then Isaac his father said to him; Come near, please, and **kiss** me, my son. (**Genesis 27:26**)
- All the people now began to cross the Jordan, and the king himself crossed, but the king **kissed** Barzillai and blessed him, after which he returned to his place. (**2 Samuel 19:39**)
- And on occasions of greater emotion, falling on the neck in embrace along with **kissing** and **tears**.

- And Esau went running to meet him, and he began to embrace him and fall upon his neck and **kiss** him, and they burst into **tears**. (**Genesis 33:4**)
- Then he fell upon the neck of Benjamin his brother and gave way to **weeping**, and Benjamin **wept upon his neck**. (**Genesis 45:14**)
- And he proceeded to **kiss** all his brothers and to **weep** over them, and after that his brothers spoke with him. (**Genesis 45:15**)
- Then Joseph had his chariot made ready and went up to meet Israel his father at Goshen. When he appeared to him he at once **fell upon his neck and gave way to tears upon his neck** again and again. (**Genesis 46:29**)
- So he rose and went to his father. While he was yet a long way off, his father caught sight of him and was moved with pity, and he ran and fell upon his **neck** and **tenderly kissed him**. (**Luke 15:20**)
- Indeed, quite a bit of weeping broke out among them all, and they fell upon Paul's **neck and tenderly kissed him**. (**Acts of Apostles 20:37**)
- There were three gestures that were always considered necessary as marks of hospitality toward a guest: **kissing** him in greeting, **washing his feet**, and **anointing his head**.
- With that he turned to the woman and said to Simon; Do you behold this woman? I entered into your house; You gave me **no water for my feet**. But this woman **wet my feet with her tears** and wiped them off with her hair. (**Luke 7:44**)
- You **gave me no kiss**, but this woman, from the hour that I came in, **did not leave off tenderly kissing my feet**. (**Luke 7:45**)
- You did not **grease my head with oil**, but this woman **greased my feet with perfumed oil**. (**Luke 7:46**)
- In the reclining manner of eating that was practiced during the days Jesus was on earth, to **lean on another's bosom** was an attitude of intimate friendship or favor, and this was known as the bosom position.

- There was reclining in **front of Jesus bosom** one of his disciples, and Jesus loved him. (**John 13:23**)
- So the latter **leaned back upon the breast of Jesus** and said to him, Lord, who is it? (**John 13:25**)
- This custom was the basis of the illustrations in;
- Now in course of time the beggar died and he was carried off by the angels **to the bosom position of Abraham**. Also, the rich man died and was buried. (**Luke 16:22**)
- And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, he existing in torments, and he saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in the **bosom position with him**. (**Luke 16:23**)
- No man has seen God at any time, the only-begotten god who is in the **bosom position with the Father** is the one that has explained him. (**John 1:18**)
- Eating another's bread with him was symbolic of friendship and peace toward him.
- After that Jacob sacrificed a sacrifice in the mountain and invited his brothers to eat bread. Accordingly **they ate bread** and passed the night in the mountain. (**Genesis 31:54**)
- Then he said to his daughters; But where is he? Why is it that you have left the man behind? Call him, that he may **eat bread**. (**Exodus 2:20**)
- Then Jethro, Moses father-in-law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God, and Aaron and all the older men of Israel came to **eat bread** with Moses father-in-law, before the true God. (**Exodus 18:12**)
- To turn thereafter to do him harm was considered the vilest treachery. Of this the traitor Judas was guilty.
- Also the man at peace with me, in whom I trusted, who was **eating my bread, has magnified his heel against me**. (**Psalms 41:9**)
- I am not talking about all of you, I know the one's I have chosen.

But it is in order, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, He that **used to feed on my bread has lifted up his heel against me.** (John 13:18)

· Innocence, And Denial Of Responsibility

- **Innocence** in a matter or the act of relieving oneself of responsibility was figuratively demonstrated by one's **washing one's hands.**
- Then all the older men of that city who are nearest to the slain one should **wash their hands** over the young cow, the neck of which was broken in the torrent valley. (Deuteronomy 21:6)
- In this way the psalmist declares his innocence at;
- Surely it is in vain that I have cleansed my heart and that I **wash my hands in innocence** itself. (Psalms 73:13)
- I shall **wash my hands in innocency** itself, and I will march around your altar, O Yehowah. (Psalms 26:6)
- Pilate tried to evade his responsibility in connection with the death of Jesus by **washing his hands** before the crowd, saying; I am innocent of the blood of this man. You yourselves must see to it.
- Seeing that it did no good but, rather, an uproar was arising, Pilate **took water and washed his hands before the crowd,** saying; I am **innocent of the blood of this man.** You yourselves must see to it. (Matthew 27:24)

· Shaking Out The Garments

- **Disclaiming of further responsibility** was shown by Paul when he **shook out his garments** before the Jews in Corinth to whom he had preached and who opposed him, and then said,
- But after they kept on opposing and speaking abusively, he **shook out his garments** and said to them; **Let your blood be upon your own heads. I am clean.** From now on I will go to people of the nations. (Acts of Apostles 18:6)
- When Nehemiah **shook out his bosom**, that is, the bosom of his garment, he was signifying utter casting out by God.

- Also, my bosom I shook out and then said; In this manner may the true God shake out from his house and from his acquired property every man that does not carry out this word, and in this manner may he become shaken out and empty. To this all the congregation said; Amen! And they began to praise Yehowah. And the people proceeded to do according to this word. **(Nehemiah 5:13)**

• Shaking Dust From Feet

- **Shaking the dirt or the dust off of one's feet** likewise indicated disclaiming of responsibility. Jesus instructed his disciples to take this action toward a place or city that would not receive them or hear them.
- Wherever anyone does not take you in or listen to your words, on going out of that house or that city **shake the dust off your feet.** **(Matthew 10:14)**
- But wherever you enter into a city and they do not receive you, go out into its broad ways and say; **(Luke 10:10)**
- **Even the dust that got stuck to our feet** from your city we wipe off against you. Nevertheless, keep this in mind, that the kingdom of God has come near. **(Luke 10:11)**
- These **shook the dust off their feet** against them and went to Iconium. **(Acts of Apostles 13:51)**

• Joy, Clapping hands.

- **Joy** was demonstrated by **clapping the hands**
- Then he brought the son of the king out and put upon him the diadem and the Testimony, and so they made him king and anointed him. And they began to **clap their hands** and say; Let the king live! **(2 Kings 11:12)**
- All you peoples, clap your hands shout in triumph to God with the sound of a joyful cry. **(Psalms 47:1)**
- And by **dancing**, often accompanied by music.
- Finally Jephthah came to Mizpah to his home, and, look! His

- daughter coming out to meet him with **tambourine playing and dancing!** Now she was absolutely the only child. Besides her he had neither son nor daughter. (**Judges 11:34**)
- And David was **dancing** around before Yehowah with all his power, all the while David being girded with an ephod of linen. (**2 Samuel 6:14**)
 - **Shouting and singing at work**, particularly during the grape harvest, were expressions of happiness or of grateful joy.
 - And **rejoicing and joyfulness** have been taken away from the orchard, and in the vineyards there is no joyful crying out, there is no shouting done. No wine in the presses does the treader tread out. **Shouting I have caused to cease.** (**Isaiah 16:10**)
 - And **rejoicing and joyfulness** have been taken away from the orchard and from the land of Moab. And from the winepresses I have caused the wine itself to cease. No one will be doing the treading with shouting. The **shouting will be no shouting.** (**Jeremiah 48:33**)

.. Opposition

- **Waving the hand threateningly** against someone indicated opposition.
- It is yet day in Nob to make a halt. He **waves his hand threateningly at the mountain of the daughter of Zion**, the hill of Jerusalem. (**Isaiah 10:32**)
- In that day Egypt will become like women, and it will certainly tremble and be in dread because of the **waving of the hand of Yehowah of armies** which he is waving against it. (**Isaiah 19:16**)
- **Lifting up one's own head** was the figurative description of an attitude having the significance of **taking action, usually to oppose, fight, or oppress.**
- Thus Midian was subdued before the sons of Israel, and they **did not lift up their head anymore**, and the land had no further disturbance for forty years in the days of Gideon. (**Judges 8:28**)
- For, look! Your very enemies are in an uproar, and the very one's

intensely hating you have **raised their head**. (**Psalms 83:2**)

- **Lifting up the hand against someone** in authority indicates **rebellion** against him.
- Eventually Ahimaaz called and said to the king; It is well! With that he bowed to the king with his face to the earth. And he went on to say; Blessed be Yehowah your God, who has surrendered the men that **lifted up their hand against my lord** the king! (**2 Samuel 18:28**)
- The matter is not that way, but a man from the mountainous region of Ephraim, whose name is Sheba the son of Bichri, has **lifted up his hand against King David**. You people, give him over by himself, and I will withdraw from the city. Then the woman said to Joab; Look! His head will be pitched to you over the wall! (**2 Samuel 20:21**)
- **Licking the dust** is symbolic of defeat and destruction.
- Before him the inhabitants of waterless regions will bow down, and his very enemies will **lick the dust itself**. (**Psalms 72:9**)
- And kings must become caretakers for you, and their princesses nursing women for you. With faces to the earth they will bow down to you, and the **dust of your feet they will lick up**, and you will have to know that I am Yehowah, of whom those hoping in me will not be ashamed. (**Isaiah 49:23**)
- **Hand or foot on the back of the neck of one's enemies** is a **figurative** way of describing the **defeat** of an enemy, his being put to rout and fleeing away, being pursued and caught.
- As for you, Judah, your brothers will laud you. Your hand will be on the **back of the neck of your enemies**. The sons of your father will prostrate themselves to you. (**Genesis 49:8**)
- And it came about that as soon as they had brought out these kings to Joshua, Joshua proceeded to call all the men of Israel and to say to the commanders of the men of war that had gone with him; Come forward. Place your feet **on the back of the necks of these kings**. So they came forward and placed their feet **on the back of their necks**. (**Joshua 10:24**)

- And as for my enemies, you will certainly **give me the back of their neck**, those hating me intensely, I shall also silence them. (2 Samuel 22:41)
- And as for my enemies, you will certainly **give me the back of their neck**, and as for those hating me intensely, I shall silence them. (Psalms 18:40)

• Taking Authority Or Action

- **To stand up or to rise** carried with it the significance of taking **authority, power, or action**. Kings are spoken of as **standing up** when they take their **kingly authority** or begin to exercise it.
- And that one having been broken, so that there were four that finally stood up instead of it, there are four kingdoms from his nation that will **stand up**, but not with his power. (Daniel 8:22)
- And in the final part of their kingdom, as the transgressors act to a completion, **there will stand up a king** fierce in countenance and understanding ambiguous sayings. (Daniel 8:23)
- And now what is truth I shall tell to you; Look! There will yet be three kings **standing up for Persia**, and the fourth one will amass greater riches than all others. And as soon as he has become strong in his riches, he will rouse up everything against the kingdom of Greece. (Daniel 11:2)
- And a mighty king will **certainly stand up** and rule with extensive dominion and do according to his will. (Daniel 11:3)
- And one from the sprout of her roots **will certainly stand up** in his position, and he will come to the military force and come against the fortress of the king of the north and will certainly act against them and prevail. (Daniel 11:7)
- And there must **stand up in his position** one who is to be despised, and they will certainly not set upon him the dignity of the kingdom, and he will actually come in during a freedom from care and take hold of the kingdom by means of smoothness. (Daniel 11:21)
- And during that time **Michael will stand up, the great prince who is standing in behalf of the sons of your people**. And there will

certainly occur a time of distress such as has not been made to occur since there came to be a nation until that time. And during that time your people will escape, every one who is found written down in the book. (**Daniel 12:1**)

- Yehowah is represented as rising up to carry out judgment of the people.
- When God **rose up to judgment**, to save all the meek of the earth. (**Psalms 76:9**)
- **Do rise up**, O God, do judge the earth, for you yourself should take possession of all the nations. (**Psalms 82:8**)
- Satan is described as **standing up** against Israel when he incited David to take a census of them.
- And Satan proceeded to **stand up against Israel** and to incite David to number Israel. (**1 Chronicles 21:1**)
- **Girding up of the loins** implies **preparation for action**. This had reference to the custom in Bible times of binding up one's flowing garments with a belt or girdle in order not to be hampered in connection with doing work, running, and so forth.
- **Gird up your loins**, please, like an able-bodied man. I shall question you, and you inform me. (**Job 40:7**)
- And as for you, you should **gird up your hips**, and you must rise up and speak to them everything that I myself command you. Do not be struck with any terror because of them, in order, that I may not strike you with terror before them. (**Jeremiah 1:17**)
- Happy are those slaves whom the master on arriving finds watching! Truly I say to you, he will **gird himself** and make them recline at the table and will come alongside and minister to them. (**Luke 12:37**)
- Hence **brace up your minds for activity**, keep your senses completely. Set your hope upon the undeserved kindness that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (**1 Peter 1:13**) Footnote

.. **Miscellaneous, Lying Down At Feet**

- When Ruth wanted to remind Boaz of his position as repurchaser, she came at night, **uncovering his feet and lying down by them**. When he awoke, she said to him; I am Ruth your slave girl, and you must spread out your skirt over your slave girl, for you are a repurchaser. Ruth hereby indicated that she was **willing to undergo brother-in-law marriage**.
- And she proceeded to go down to the threshing floor and to do according to all that her mother-in-law had commanded her. (**Ruth 3:6**)
- Meantime Boaz ate and drank, and his heart was feeling good. Then he went to lie down at the extremity of the grain heap. After that she came stealthily and uncovered him at his feet and lay down. (**Ruth 3:7**)
- And it came about at midnight that the man began to tremble. So he bent himself forward, and, look! A **woman lying at his feet!** (**Ruth 3:8**)
- Then he said; Who are you? In turn she said; I am Ruth your slave girl, and you must spread out your skirt over your slave girl, for you are a repurchaser. (**Ruth 3:9**)

•• Appearance When Fasting

- **Afflicting one's soul** most likely referred to **fasting** and could represent **mourning, acknowledgment of sins, repentance, or contrition**.
- And it must serve as a statute to time indefinite for you people: In the seventh month on the tenth of the month you should **afflict your souls**, and you must not do any work, either the native or the alien resident who is residing as an alien in your midst. (**Leviticus 16:29**)
- It is a Sabbath of complete rest for you, and you must **afflict your souls**. It is a statute to time indefinite. (**Leviticus 16:31**)
- And they began to wail and weep and fast until the evening over Saul and over Jonathan his son and over the people of Yehowah and over the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. (**2 Samuel 1:12**)

- As for me, when they became ill, my clothing was sackcloth, with fasting I **afflicted my soul**, and upon my bosom my own prayer would return. (**Psalms 35:13**)
- Gird yourselves, and beat your breasts, you priests. Howl, you ministers of the altar. Come in, spend the night in sackcloth, you ministers of my God, for from the house of your God grain offering and drink offering have been withheld. (**Joel 1:13**)
- Sanctify a time of fasting. Call together a solemn assembly. Gather together the older men, all the inhabitants of the land, to the house of Yehowah your God, and cry to Yehowah for aid. (**Joel 1:14**)
- When Jesus was on earth, hypocritical persons put on a sad face, disfiguring their faces in order to make a **show of holiness by fasting**, but Jesus told his disciples that when **fasting they should grease their heads and wash their faces** so that they would appear normal to men, knowing that the Father looks upon the heart.
- When you are fasting, **stop becoming sad-faced like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces** that they may appear to men to be fasting. Truly I say to you, they are having their reward in full. (**Matthew 6:16**)
- But you, when fasting, grease your head and wash your face. (**Matthew 6:17**)
- That you may appear to be fasting, not to men, **but to your Father who is in secrecy**. Then your Father who is looking on in secrecy will repay you. (**Matthew 6:18**)
- **Fasting** was sometimes **practiced by Christians** in order for them to give undivided attention **to spiritual matters**.
- As they were publicly ministering to Yehowah and **fasting**, the **Holy Spirit** said; Of all persons set Barnabas and Saul apart for me for the work to which I have called them. (**Acts of Apostles 13:2**)
- Then they fasted and prayed and laid their hands upon them and let them go. (**Acts of Apostles 13:3**)

See Also FAST

.. Laying Hand On Eyes Of Deceased

- Yehowah's expression to Jacob, **Joseph will lay his hand upon your eyes**
- I myself shall go down with you to Egypt and I myself shall surely bring you up also. Joseph will lay his hand upon your eyes. (**Genesis 46:4**)
- Was a way of saying that Joseph would close Jacob's eyes after his death, which was ordinarily a **duty of the firstborn son**. So it seems that Yehowah here indicated to Jacob that the **right of firstborn should go to Joseph's**.
- For Judah himself proved to be superior among his brothers, and the one for leader was from him, **but the right as firstborn was Joseph's** (**1 Chronicles 5:2**)

.. Whistling

- To **whistle at** something represented **astonishment** or **wonderment**. Such was the attitude produced in those viewing the awesome desolation of Judah, and later, the fearsome ruin of Babylon.
- Here I am sending and I will take all the families of the north, is the utterance of Yehowah, even sending to Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and against its inhabitants and against all these nations round about, and I will devote them to destruction and make them an **object of astonishment** and **something to whistle at and places devastated to time indefinite**. (**Jeremiah 25:9**)
- Because of the indignation of Yehowah she will not be inhabited, and she must become a desolate waste in her entirety. As for anyone passing along by Babylon, he will stare in astonishment and **whistle on account of all her plagues**. (**Jeremiah 50:13**)
- And Babylon must become piles of stones, the lair of jackals, an object of astonishment and **something to whistle at, without an inhabitant**. (**Jeremiah 51:37**)

- It was the custom of kings or men of authority **to lean on the arm** of a servant or one in an inferior position, as did King Jehoram of Israel.
- At that the adjutant upon whose hand the king was **supporting himself** answered the man of the true God and said, If Yehowah were making floodgates in the heavens, could this thing take place? To this he said; Here you are seeing it with your own eyes, but from it you will not eat. (2 Kings 7:2)
- And the king himself had appointed the adjutant upon **whose hand he was supporting himself** to have charge of the gateway, and the people kept trampling him in the gateway, so that he died, just as the man of the true God had spoken, when he spoke at the time that the king came down to him. (2 Kings 7:17)
- King Ben-hadad II **supported himself on the hand of his servant** Naaman as he bowed down at the house of his god Rimmon.
- In this thing may Yehowah forgive your servant. When my lord comes into the house of Rimmon to bow down there, and he is **supporting himself upon my hand**, and I have to bow down at the house of Rimmon, when I bow down at the house of Rimmon may Yehowah, please, forgive your servant in this respect. (2 Kings 5:18)

• Illustrative Usage, Washing Another's Feet

- Jesus employed one of the Oriental customs in an illustrative way when, giving his disciples a lesson in humility and serving one another, he **washed his disciples feet**. Peter spoke up, asking him to wash not only his feet but also his hands and his head. But Jesus replied; He that has bathed does not need to have more than his **feet washed**, but is wholly clean.
- He, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he came forth from God and was going to God. (John 13:3)
- Got up from the evening meal and laid aside his outer garments. And, taking a towel, he girded himself. (John 13:4)
- After that he put water into a basin and started to wash the feet of the disciples and to dry them off with the towel with which he

was girded. (John 13:5)

- And so he came to Simon Peter. He said to him; Lord, are you washing my feet? (John 13:6)
- In answer Jesus said to him; What I am doing you do not understand at present, but you will understand after these things. (John 13:7)
- Peter said to him; You will certainly never wash my feet. Jesus answered him; Unless I wash you, you have no part with me. (John 13:8)
- Simon Peter said to him; Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. (John 13:9)
- Jesus said to him; He that has bathed does not need to have more than his **feet washed, but is wholly clean**. And you men are clean, but not all. (John 13:10)
- Here Jesus was referring to the fact that after one had been to the bath he would, on returning from the bath to his house, need only to **wash the dust of the road from his sandaled feet**. He used this cleanness as figurative of spiritual cleanness.

.. Walking

- Another illustrative expression is **to walk**, meaning to follow a certain course of action, as Noah **walked** with the true God.
- This is the history of Noah. Noah was a righteous man. He proved himself faultless among his contemporaries. Noah **walked** with the true God. (Genesis 6:9)
- And after his fathering Methuselah Enoch went on **walking** with the true God three hundred years. Meanwhile he became father to sons and daughters. (Genesis 5:22)
- Those **walking with God** followed the life course outlined by God and found his favor. The **Christian Greek Scriptures**, using this same expression, picture the two contrasting courses of action pursued by one before and after becoming a servant of God.
- In which you at one time **walked** according to the system of

things of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit that now operates in the sons of disobedience. (Ephesians 2:2)

- For we are a product of his work and were created in union with Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared in advance for us to **walk** in them. (Ephesians 2:10)
- This, therefore, I say and bear witness to in the Lord, that you no longer go on **walking** just as the nations also **walk** in the unprofitableness of their minds. (Ephesians 4:17)
- And go on **walking** in love, just as the Christ also loved you and delivered himself up for you as an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling odor. (Ephesians 5:2)
- In a similar manner **running** is used to symbolize a course of action.
- Because you do not continue **running** with them in this course to the same low sink of debauchery, they are puzzled and go on speaking abusively of you. (1 Peter 4:4)
- God said that the prophets in Judah **ran** though not sent by him, meaning that they took the prophetic course falsely, unauthorized.
- **I did not send the prophets**, yet they themselves **ran**. I did not speak to them, yet they themselves prophesied. (Jeremiah 23:21)
- Paul describes the Christian course in terms of **running**. He likens it to a race that a person must **run** according to the rules in order to win the prize.
- Do you not know that the **runners** in a race all **run**, but only one receives the prize? **Run** in such a way that you may attain it. (1 Corinthians 9:24)
- But I went up as a result of a revelation. And I laid before them the Good News which I am preaching among the nations, privately, however, before those who were outstanding men, for fear that somehow I was **running** or had **run** in vain. (Galatians 2:2)

- You were **running** well. Who hindered you from keeping on obeying the truth? (**Galatians 5:7**)