Dig-a-bit Month 2 Episode 2
The Hand of God: Hand Delivery
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God's Hand in the Phylacteries?

Good morning. I hope that this one isn't too long, because I'm just really engrossed in this study right now of Exodus when we're reading 7 through 15. Remember we talked about Steven last time and how he was recounting much of what he recounted was from the book of Exodus and from that deliverance from Egypt. And as I went back and read those chapters, I really wanted to focus for a minute this morning on Exodus chapter 13.

If you've made your list in number seven of month two, God's Hand of Deliverance is a prominent biblical theme. Every year we try to take some lessons from Genesis or Exodus, simply because these two books are primary in the foundation for the scheme of redemption. You really can't appreciate fully God's deliverance from sin until you understand God's deliverance from Egypt.

You can't really understand fully how that he, the lamb, washes our sins away unless you have read about the Passover. So these are foundational truths that are found about his hand. Back in Exodus 7-15. We listed every time it spoke about the hand of God, and we talked about how that this is a part of the deliverance story that Steven rehearsed and the one that cost him his life.

So we listed every reference that we found, and I won't list those right now. We may do that on the big podcast, but I did want us to look at Exodus 13. And of course, we have three really big references there to the deliverance of the right hand of God.

Specifically speaking of the strength in his hand regarding the Passover, actually, it's for Exodus 13:3, Exodus 13:9, Exodus 13:14, and Exodus 13:16. Let's just take the time right now to read those verses together.

Exodus 13:3 says, Moses said to the people, remember this day, the day in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage, for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place, and there shall no leavened bread be eaten. Strength of hand. There in verse three is the yad of God.

And then verse nine, and it shall be for a sign on your hand, and a memorial between your eyes, that the Lord's law may be in your mouth. For with a strong hand the Lord brought you out of Egypt. Again, same phraseology, same Hebrew word.

14— and it shall be when your son asks you in time to come —I love this one— What is this? Then you shall say to him, by strength of hand —they're talking about when you're killing these animals in subsequent years, that the Passover and your children say, what are you doing?—

Then you will say, by strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage. And of course, this was going to open up a whole family Bible time in those Jewish homes, because they were explaining what the Passover was, just as we do today to our children in regard to our Passover, Christ and the Lord's Supper. When they ask, we tell them what the significance of this is, and it affects their eternal impressions, their salvation.

Verse 16, and it shall be for a sign on your hand, and for frontlets between your eyes. For by strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt every time here it is the yad. Now when we get over to Exodus 15, and they're singing the praises of the mighty deliverance of God, it's going to be the yamin, the right hand in Exodus 15: 6, 12, & 17.

I want us to take just a minute to look at verse 16, where God tells them to put this token on their hands, and for frontlets between their eyes, and this is also mentioned elsewhere. It is mentioned in Deuteronomy six, when…You're familiar with that passage, when God says, Here, oh Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, I'm going to turn over there really quickly because it mentions the same binding in Deuteronomy six.

And we're reading about how that if we want our children and our children's children to walk in the ways of the Lord, we're going to love him first with all of our heart, soul and might. That's verse five. And teach them diligently. Converse diligently with our children when we when we're sitting in a house, when we're walking by the way, and when we're lying down, and when we're rising up all times of the day and all postures except maybe a handstand there.

We are, talking to our children about the Lord. In verse eight there the same phraseology as we read in Exodus 13, You shall bind them for a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. So I wanted to park here just for a minute, and talk about some of the direct ways, the literal ways that the Jews begin to practice that commandment of the binding.

And we call that today phylacteries. And the passages that they put in these little rolled up scrolls that they were on, their bodies were here they are. And two of them were in our reading today, Exodus 13, (there were four) Exodus 13:2-10, Exodus 13, then 11-16. So we have all the way from some scholars tell us beginning in verse two, and some say beginning in verse one, but we have all the first half of…

Yeah, we have a lot of Exodus chapter 13. We have verses 1 or 2 through verse 16 that they really rolled up and put on their bodies and wore on their bodies. And if you go over to Israel today, you will still see those people who are wearing the name of Orthodox Jew still doing that today. And you will… if you fly from, say, New York over to Tel Aviv, you will probably see them doing that when you wake up in the morning on the plane.

So they're binding these passages on their bodies still today. And of course, that is not what God's will for them is today. So they use Exodus 13:2-10, Exodus 13:11-16. They also put Deuteronomy six, where we just went and it said, bind as frontlets between thine eyes and on

your hands. Deuteronomy 6:4-9, and Deuteronomy 11:13-21 These are the passages that they roll up and tie to their bodies.

I was reading from Adam Clarke this morning about that, and he says that those that were for the head, they would write on four slips of vellum or parchment, and roll up each one by itself and put them in four little compartments. And you can still see that today.

And they would join them together in one piece of skin or leather. And those that were designed for the hand were just one piece of parchment. And they wrote the four portions of Scripture in four columns, and they rolled up that one piece from one end to the other. He says that these were all…they had to all be in Orthodox Judaism.

They had to all be completely correct from the mosaic text without one extra or one missing letter. And if they had one extra or one missing, they were not allowed to be used. Now, of course, this is not God's command. This is not what we read in the mosaic text. But this is what the Jews, by the time of the Pharisees had bound upon the people, had bound upon themselves regarding their phylacteries.

And we know that Jesus condemned them for not having the law in their heart, but having it on Broad phylacteries, big things, on their head and on their hands for people to see while it was missing from their heart. So we we can save that for another day. But we do remember that that was Jesus condemnation.

Now, I wanted us to also notice, well, the way they placed them. Adam Clark says he had one in front of him while he was writing his commentary on Exodus, and he said it was a piece of fine vellum, and it was about 18in long and 1 in 1 fourth inches wide. If you can imagine that little pouch.

And the letters were very well formed, but they were the one he had was written from obviously German Jews, and the first compartment was from Exodus 13:2-10. The second little compartment was Exodus 13:11-16, and the third compartment was Deuteronomy 6:4-9, and the fourth compartment was Deuteronomy 11:13-21, and that one had originally served, and this one that he was holding had originally served for the hand or the arm.

Now, I wanted us to notice just for a minute, because this does relate to hand the reasons that became focal, the reasons that became important to Jews as the years went by, as they wore these little compartments that contained our text today, three reasons they wore them. One was the commanded reason as a sign or remembrance. That was the original design that we just read in Exodus 13 and Deuteronomy 6.

The second reason was to show other nations that their God was the God to, sort of put in the faces of the people around them, the heathen, the importance that they placed in following God. They wanted people to see that they were set apart Jews. They got this from some extra biblical

Jewish writings like Berachot chapter one, this is not in the Bible, but it says, whence is it proved that the phylacteries or tefillin are the strength of Israel?

And then it has the answer from what is written in Deuteronomy. And then he has chapter 28, verse ten, all the people of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of thee. So they actually, extrapolated that passage in Deuteronomy on over to the phylacteries to say, we're going to wear these phylacteries and show them to all the heathen nations.

And then in verse… the third reason, rather,... they use them as amulets, good luck charms to drive away the evil spirits. And this is the interesting one that has to do with the hand of the Lord. They would put the factory on their left hand, and then sometimes put their left hand under their head as they were sleeping, or as they were resting, and they would say, God's left hand is under my head.

It was sort of an amulet, a charm, a driver away of evil spirits. Here's a quote from the Targum extra biblical. Again, the congregation of Israel has said, I am elect above all people because I bind my phylacteries on my left hand and on my head, and the scroll is fixed to the right side of my gate, the third part of which looks to my bedchamber, so that demons may not be permitted to injure me.

So they actually, whereas we are studying the protective hand of God, they took it to the extreme and said, I'm going to have his left hand under my head as I sleep, so that no one can injure me so that no evil spirits or enemies can come upon me. I just thought that that was interesting. And it's very, concerning too, that we can take something that God says often as human beings, even about his hand, and we can make it so outwardly focused, so external, while ignoring what's supposed to be on the inside of our hearts.

Obviously, Jews today are wearing phylacteries and they're putting God's quote left hand, as it were, under their head to be protected from evil. But yet they're not doing the commandment that was right there in Exodus 13. They're not keeping the commandment of slaying animals at the Passover, and they shouldn't be, because the Passover now is Christ, but neither are they claiming the blood of Christ.

They have no blood. They're wearing this left hand, as you will around for an outward sign or show. While they don't have the blood applied to their hearts, the blood of any blood, they don't have blood because they've rejected Christ—Our Passover, the true blood, has been rejected. So I wanted to us to see those things.

And then I wanted us to see in Exodus 15 verse 17 and in Exodus 15, I need to get out of the commentary and now get back in the Bible in Exodus 15. And the Bible is always the most important, by the way. It is ultimately infinitely more important than anything we read from man, or the Targum or Baracoth or any of those things.

But when we read Exodus 15, we read a couple of passages that are truly about the right hand of deliverance of God. Verse 6— Your right hand, O Lord, has become glorious in power. Your right hand, O Lord, has dashed in pieces the enemy. Verse 12, you stretched out your right hand, and the earth swallowed them. 17 you shall bring them in.

Now this one's different, and place them in the mountain of your inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which you have made for thee to dwell in, in the sanctuary, Lord, which your hands have established. And I don't know how these hundreds of years before the mountain in Jerusalem was established, that prophetically here the Song of Moses tells us that God's hand is going to bring them in.

And to this mountain thou shalt bring them in, and place them in the mountain of your inheritance, in the place of the Lord, which you have made to dwell in, in the sanctuary which your hand has established. Here the hand is going to establish this mountain, and it's going to be the place of the sanctuary in the King James Version, sanctuary's uppercase.

But this is going to be the place of the sanctuary, which is the mountain of God's inheritance which his hands have established. And the following verse says, the Lord shall reign forever and ever. Well, when I'm reading Adam Clark, what he says about that is that obviously Judaism is going to come out of Jerusalem forever and ever, and that is the sanctuary that the Lord's hand has made in Jerusalem.

Well, I don't believe that's what this verse is talking about. I do believe it's prophetic, and I do believe it is talking about David's throne in Jerusalem and the sanctuary that was going to be built there by Solomon for the Jews. But I also believe it is referring to the forever and ever part is referring to the Zion that is the church and the Zion that we read about in the book of Revelation that is heaven.

And that's where the Lord will reign for ever and ever. When we're talking about the right hand of God here in Exodus 13, we go to Zion. His right hand ends up in Zion in Jerusalem. And he procures with his right hand a mountain.

And we talked about that mountain even in month one. And we identified that mountain as Zion in Jerusalem, Mount Zion. And here in Exodus chapter 15, we have him again, the prophecy. We have Moses prophesying that God's going to get a mountain, he's going to get a mountain in Zion, and he's going to establish it with his hand.

I love that, and next time we're going to talk about in the next, dig a bit. And I hope, I hope that you are listening to all these dig-a-bits, because sometimes I feel like the richest part of the study is something that maybe we come across after we've written the text of our study, which is our book, The Hand of God.

But as I'm studying, I'm saying, oh, his right, his hand here is establishing a mountain. He's making a mountain in Jerusalem. It's Zion. And it's going to be not just for Judaism, it's going to

be for ever. And then we read in the New Testament what his right hand is doing for us today in that very Zion. So we'll get to that next time.

I hope you can listen and I hope you have a great day. Hope you get to study some today, because every day with Bible study is better. All right. See you next time.