

FA13. Praying with Lifted Holy Hands.

We are to pray with lifted holy hands.

This precept is derived from His Word (blessed is He):

Key New Testament Scriptures

1 Timothy 2:8

Therefore, it is my wish that when the men pray, no matter where, they should lift up hands that are holy- they should not become angry or get into arguments.

Additional New Testament Scriptures

Luke 24:50

2 Corinthians 7:1

1 Timothy 1:5

2 Timothy 2:22

1 Peter 1:15-16

Revelation 10:5-6

Related New Testament Mitzvot

FA14 Not Becoming Angry or Arguing While in Prayer

Supportive Tanakh Scriptures

Nehemiah 8:6

Ezra blessed ADONAI, the great God; and all the people answered, "Amen! Amen!" as they lifted up their hands, bowed their heads and fell prostrate before ADONAI with their faces to the ground.

Psalms 141:2

Let my prayer be like incense set before you, my uplifted hands like an evening sacrifice.

Lamentations 3:41-42

Let us lift up our hearts and our hands to God in heaven and say, "We, for our part, have transgressed and rebelled; you, for your part, have not forgiven."

Additional Scriptures on Lifting Hands in Prayer

Exodus 17:11

Leviticus 9:22

Deuteronomy 32:40

1 Kings 8:22, 54

Ezra 9:5

Nehemiah 8:6

Psalms 28:2, 63:4(3), 119:48, 134:2, 141:2

Lamentations 3:41-42

Comment

1 Timothy 2:8 speaks of “the” men (presumably of the congregation) lifting up their “holy” hands during prayer. This suggests three questions: (1) Is the Scripture directing the lifting up of hands as the appropriate posture for prayer? (2) Is the Scripture only addressing men of holy character, faith, and *shalom*? And (3) Is the Scripture equally applicable to women?

I am of the opinion that 1 Timothy 2:8 does not prescribe, but recognizes the raising of hands as an appropriate and customary posture for prayer. It does not limit prayer to only those men of the community who are reputed to be holy, but is saying that, when we pray, we should do so in personal holiness and with holy attitudes – not, for example, in the midst of being angry or argumentative (see *Mitzvah* FA14).

As for whether this *Mitzvah* is equally applicable to women – I do not see why it is not other than the likely assumption that they are the men of the community who are the community leaders and are therefore responsible for the community’s public prayer.

Related Mitzvot in Volumes 1 & 2

A13 Being Pure in Heart

A14 Aspiring to God’s Perfection & Holiness

A24 Being Clean of Spirit as Well as of Body

G08 Serving, Worshiping, Praising, & Praying to God

G10 Approaching God While Unrepentant

G19 Praying in Faith & Having Faith for That Which We Pray