Just a Thought

The Finger of God

A finger may seem a small thing. Yet Scripture uses that image in moments that reveal the power, holiness, and mercy of God.

In Egypt, Pharaoh's magicians had imitated some of the signs performed through Moses and Aaron. But when the dust became lice, they could go no further. "This is the finger of God," they told Pharaoh. They recognized a power beyond their own. Pharaoh, however, hardened his heart. Recognizing God's work and yielding to Him are not always the same thing.
Exodus 8:16–19

At Sinai, the finger of God wrote His commandments on tablets of stone. These were not suggestions shaped by human preference. God was making His will known. The words carried the authority of the One who wrote them, calling His people to order their lives according to His holiness.
Exodus 31:18; Deuteronomy 9:10

In Babylon, fingers appeared and wrote upon a palace wall while Belshazzar feasted. He had honored gods that could neither see nor hear, while failing to honor the God who held his very breath. The writing announced that his kingdom had been numbered, that he had been weighed and found wanting, and that his rule would end. That night, it did. The hand that interrupted the feast exposed how fragile human greatness becomes when it forgets God.
Daniel 5:5, 22–30

Centuries later, Jesus spoke of the finger of God as He confronted the power of demons. If He cast them out by the finger of God, He said, then the kingdom of God had come upon those watching. Here was divine authority bringing deliverance. What held people captive could not withstand Him.
Luke 11:20

Then there is the scene of Jesus stooping to write on the ground with His finger.

A woman accused of adultery stood before Him. Her accusers invoked the law and demanded an answer. Jesus wrote, but Scripture does not tell us what He wrote. We need not fill that silence with our own explanation.

What Scripture does tell us is enough.

Jesus challenged the one without sin to cast the first stone. One by one, the accusers departed. He then spoke to the woman: "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

He did not call her sin harmless. Neither did He join those who had brought her forward as a means of trapping Him. His words held mercy and a call to a changed life together.
John 8:3–11

These passages do not all use the exact expression "the finger of God." Yet together they invite us to consider the One whose authority reaches every part of life. Even the heavens are described as the work of His fingers.
Psalm 8:3

His power exceeds our abilities. His law challenges our preferences. His judgment exposes our pride. His kingdom confronts what enslaves us. His mercy calls us to turn from sin.

We may be tempted to stand at a distance and marvel at these accounts. But they bring a question close to home.

When God makes something clear to us, what do we do with it?

Pharaoh recognized the evidence and resisted. Belshazzar knew enough to humble himself, but did not. We, too, can acknowledge God with our words while guarding some part of our lives against His authority.

The God who holds our breath also knows our hearts. We can trust Him enough to stop defending what He exposes, receive the mercy He offers, and follow where He leads.

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John L. Wheeler

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