

Week 14 January 25, 2025

Shabbat Message

Va'era / And I Appeared / ואֶרָא

Exodus 6:2-9:35

My Way or Yah's Way

The Heart of the Matter

Introduction

In this portion we see the beginning of the 10 plagues where Yehovah brings judgement upon Egypt and also upon the Egyptian gods. This shows that Yehovah does care about what happens to the nations and how they relate to Yehovah. They are also expected to stay the course and do what they are supposed to do. There are sheep nations and there are goat nations according to Matthew 25. Which nation are we going to be in the judgement of the last

days? Only time will tell how we are going to be treated. Right now the trajectory we are going toward is a trajectory of divine judgement. We need to really pray for our country and intercede for it just as Moses interceded for Israel. What is an intercessor? To be an intercessor is to have one of the highest jobs in the Kingdom of Yehovah because we get to constantly behold the face of Yehovah and pray for everyone.

Exodus 7:3-5

1. Elohim promised to harden Pharaoh's heart (4:21), this time using a word that also describes the oppression that Pharaoh inflicted on the Israelites.
2. Pharaoh had made their slavery "difficult" or "hard" (1:14; 6:9; Deut 26:6), and in return his heart would become "hard".
3. This way it would be clear that when the Israelites left Egypt it was to because of the persuasiveness of Moses or the wise leadership of Pharaoh. Early Elohim had said that as a result of His actions, the Israelites would know Him as Yehovah their Elohim (6:7). The Egyptians will also know Yehovah is Elohim.

Exodus 7:6

1. The formal notice that Moses and Aaron did as Yehovah commanded them introduces a refrain with later parallels.
2. We see really in the account of the construction of the tabernacle.

3. Examples are (Exodus 12:28, 50; 38:22; 39:1,32, 42-43; 40:16).

Exodus 7:8-13

1. Seeing this miracle did Pharaoh no good, since he did not respond with faith and obedience (Hebrews 3:13-4:6).
2. A rod (sometimes called a scepter) as a symbol of power and authority has had widespread currency (Ps. 110:2; Isa 10:5,24; Ezek. 19:10-14).
3. Both rods and serpents were prominent in Egyptian art. The kings of Egypt are pictured wearing crowns that display a menacing cobra as a symbol of protection for the king and danger for his enemies.

Exodus 7:14

1. The word hardened (lit "heavy") represents a Hebrew figure of speech. In English to have a "heavy heart" typically means to be troubled or sad. But the Hebrew term for "heavy" could describe a mouth and tongue that did not speak well (4:10, eyes that did not see (Gen 48:10) and ears that did not hear (Isa. 6:10; 59; Zech. 7:11).
2. In both Egyptian and Hebrew, the heart (like the mind)-as the center of mental, emotional, and volitional activity was supposed to listen and respond appropriately (Deut 30:17; 1 Kings 3:9; Solomon asked to be given a "hearing heart"), Pharaoh was failing to respond as he ought.

3. Pharaoh's heavy heart registered another problem, because according to Egyptian belief, gods would weigh a person's heart after death to determine his destiny in the afterlife.
4. Elsewhere in the Tanakh sin is spoken of as heaven and as making the heart heavy (Gen 18:20; Ps 38:4; Isa. 1:4; 24:20), and Yehovah is the One who weighs hearts, which makes Him the ultimate Judge of all, including Pharaoh and other kings (1 Samuel 2:3; Prov 16:2; 21:2; 24:12; Dan 5:25-28).
5. Yehovah's assessment of Pharaoh was also important because Pharaoh was also important because Pharaoh and his heart were thought to be responsible for maintaining order throughout Egypt.
6. Order was to be thought to be the essential expression of wisdom (in contrast to the essence of wisdom in Ps. 111:10; Prov 1:7; 9:10; 15:33; Dan 2:20)
7. During the plagues Pharaoh could not maintain order; he failed by other Yehovah's standards and his own.

Take Away

1. Pharaoh's heart was hardened as other people's hearts can be hardened as well.
2. Moses and Aaron did everything Yehovah commanded them opposite of Pharaoh.
3. A hard heart can also mean a heavy heart which in the Hebraic term means an obstinate heart.

Application

1. I will have a humble heart and not a hard heart before Yehovah.
2. I will do as Yehovah commanded me just as Moses and Aaron did as well.
3. I will maintain the order of Yehovah in my life but not like Pharaoh but like Moses and Aaron as I follow Torah.

Beth Ohr Messianic Congregation

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