

The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart Sunday AM 02/16/20

Introduction:

Our text today tends to be one of controversy. **Exodus 4 & 5** gives us the account of Moses going back to Israel and Pharaoh's response. A number of times we read of Pharaoh's heart being hardened and even God saying that he would harden Pharaoh's heart, **Exodus 9.12**. Then other times we read of Pharaoh hardening his heart, **Exodus 8.15**. The controversy is whether Pharaoh had freedom of choice in this matter, or how his heart was hardened.

I) General Observations

A) The meaning of "hardening his heart"

1. Not a medical condition where the human heart could not function.
2. Pharaoh by all accounts was in good health.
3. A set of mind, to make up one's mind and not be persuadable.
4. To have one's emotions past feeling, conscious being seared.

B) Said to be done by God. **Exodus 10.1**

1. Isaiah refers to the Jews heart being hardened by God, **John 12.38-14**
2. Paul's preaching in the synagogues of Ephesus had different results, **Acts 19.8-9**. Some heard, believed, obeyed, and some rejected the Gospel.
3. **Romans 9.18** God is not one to show partiality. All can

come to God through Christ.

- a. Just like today, some can hear a sermon and be amazed by it while others will be turned off by it.
- b. It is not the difference in message but the person hearing the message.

II) How Did God Harden Pharaoh's Heart? *Exodus 9.12; 8.15*

A) Sent messengers Pharaoh did not respect.

1. *Exodus 5.1* the Israelites were slaves, Moses and Aaron were leaders of slaves.
 - a. Not ambassadors from another country, dressed in fine clothes, they wore slave clothes.
 - b. Moses had been a fugitive for 40 years and suddenly reappears.
 - c. All Pharaoh cared about was labor, *Exodus 5.4-5*.
2. Did God miraculously harden Pharaoh's heart? No, He sent messengers Pharaoh did not respect.
3. The same for the Jews as many did not respect a common carpenter's son being the messenger of God, *John 8.24*.
4. The same today as the do not believe Jesus is the only way to God, *John 14.6*.
 - a. They do not respect the Bible as the word of God.
 - b. They do not respect Jesus as the Son of God.

B) They presented a message Pharaoh did not like

1. He did not care what the message was, *Exodus 5.2*.

- a. Did not care for the Israelites being special.
 - b. He did not want to release his slaves.
2. The same today as the Bible contradicts a lot of accepted teachings and practices today.
- a. Moral issues and how to live a godly life, **1 Corinthians 6.9-10**
 - b. Sacredness of marriage and the sin of divorce, **Matthew 19.9.**
 - c. Modesty and lust, **1 Timothy 2.9-10**
 - d. Creationism as taught in the Bible as opposed to evolution, **Genesis 1.1-2.**
 - e. There is one church Jesus established as opposed to denominationalism.
 - f. Roles of men and women as opposed to non-binary thought today.

C) God gave Pharaoh the ability to harden his heart

- 1. Called freedom of choice.
- 2. Test of the serpents. **Exodus 9.7-12**
 - a. Aaron's rod became a serpent.
 - b. The magician's rods also became serpents.
 - c. But Aaron's rod swallowed up the other serpents. Proving it was superior.
 - d. Pharaoh had to choose which one he would accept. He made the wrong choice.

3. God gives us the ability to choose, **2 Thessalonians 2.11-12**
 - a. We can choose to live in sin or live in Christ.
 - b. Accept truth or falsehood.

D) God gave Pharaoh commands he did not want to obey

1. God sent the plagues and there were times Pharaoh wanted relief.
2. But he did not want to accept the terms. **Exodus 8.15, 32; 10.22-27**
 - a. Pharaoh had no problem understanding the Lord's commands.
 - b. But they was not what he wanted to do.
3. The same today "What must I do to be saved? The message is simple, **Mark 16.16**.
 - a. Some want to be saved by faith only, or grace only, or some other method of salvation.
 - b. God will not change the Gospel. We must either obey or our hearts will be hardened.

E) God punished Pharaoh

1. Each plague was a punishment with real cost. Even his people got the idea, **Exodus 10.7**.
2. He could have repented but did not and eventually cost him, his army, **Exodus 14.28**
3. Today the cost of sin is death, **Romans 6.23a**.

- a. Spiritual death is to be separated from God and have no hope when this life is over.
- b. Some will harden their hearts and live with no hope.
- c. Others will obey God, ***Romans 6.23b***.

Conclusion:

Let us all have tender hearts, willing to hear, believe, and obey God.