

## **Question: Does God harden hearts**

### **Answer:**

‘And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD.’ And they did so. Exodus 14:4

God sent Moses to Pharaoh with the demand that Pharaoh should let God’s people go to worship. He was to let them all go. They were to take all their possessions with them. But Pharaoh did not want to do this. Even after the final plague sent by God (the death of the firstborn) Pharaoh still rebelled. Instead of complying he tried to bargain with Moses; but he was really bargaining with God.

“Then Pharaoh called Moses and said, “Go serve the Lord, your little ones also may go with you; only let your flocks and your herds remain behind.” Exodus chapter 10 verse 4

But God is not in the business of compromise. Repentance is a complete turning away from sin, from being outside of God’s will; and a complete turning towards God and being in His will.

Like Pharaoh we often resist, we want to hold onto some of the pleasures of sin. The more we focus on sin instead of on God, the harder it gets for us to turn, to repent; and God is not going to make our choice easier; He is not going to offer a compromise. Instead, He offered His son. He wants all of us or none of us. One might even say that because He offers no compromise. God makes it harder for us to choose to turn from living “our way” to living His way. He lets us choose to do whatever we want to do.

The New Testament text of Romans chapter 1 verse 28 puts it this way: “And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done”. And in the words of the Old Testament text of Exodus chapter 14 verse 4, one might say, “God hardens the heart”.