



Hardening Pharaoh's Heart

- Exodus 4:21-23



Seems Unjust

It seems unethical for God to deny Pharaoh free will and then punish him for his actions.

Pharaoh deserves to be treated fairly.



ISRAELITES LABORING IN EGYPT.

The Beginning of the Exodus

- God hears Israel's cry and tells Moses that He will deliver them, Exodus 3:16
- God warns Moses that Pharaoh will not permit them to go without the plagues, Exodus 3:19,20
 - A reasonable prediction given Pharaoh's position of power
 - Moses is nothing more than a "turncoat Egyptian"

Understanding the Text

- The word “harden”

- 1. chazaq** (Heb.) - **Exodus 4:21**; 7:13,22; 8:19; 9:12,35; 10:20,27; 11:10; 14:4,8,1
 - a. "to strengthen, prevail, harden, be strong, become strong, be courageous, be firm, grow firm, be resolute, be sore" - BDB
 - b. "literally signifies to strengthen, confirm, make bold or courageous;" - Clarke
- 2. qashah** (Heb.) - Exodus 7:3
 - a. "to make hard, make stiff, make stubborn" - BDB
 - b. "harden, stiffen" - Strong
- 3. kabed** (Heb.) - Exodus 7:14; 8:15; 8:32; 9:7,34; 10:1
 - a. "hard, difficult, burdensome" - BDB
 - b. "heavy; figuratively...in a bad sense, severe, difficult... grievous, hardened" - **Strong**

Pharaoh Hardened His Own Heart

1. And Pharaoh's heart grew hard (**chazaq**), and he did not heed them, as the Lord had said. – **Exodus 7:13**
2. So the Lord said to Moses: "Pharaoh's heart is hard (**kabed**); he refuses to let the people go." - **Exodus 7:14**
3. Then the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments; and Pharaoh's heart grew hard (**chazaq**), and he did not heed them, as the Lord had said. - **Exodus 7:22**
4. But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened (**kabed**) his heart and did not heed them, as the Lord had said. - **Exodus 8:15**
5. Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." But Pharaoh's heart grew hard (**chazaq**), and he did not heed them, just as the Lord had said. - **Exodus 8:19**
6. But Pharaoh hardened (**kabed**) his heart at this time also; neither would he let the people go. - **Exodus 8:32**
7. Then Pharaoh sent, and indeed, not even one of the livestock of the Israelites was dead. But the heart of Pharaoh became hard (**kabed**), and he did not let the people go. - **Exodus 9:7**
8. And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had ceased, he sinned yet more; and he hardened (**kabed**) his heart, he and his servants. - **Exodus 9:34**
9. So the heart of Pharaoh was hard (**chazaq**); neither would he let the children of Israel go, as the Lord had spoken by Moses. - **Exodus 9:35**

In the first five plagues, and in the seventh, Pharaoh hardened his own heart

Then God Hardened Pharaoh's Heart

1. And I will harden (**qashah**) Pharaoh's heart and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. - **Exodus 7:3**
2. But the Lord hardened (**chazaq**) the heart of Pharaoh; and he did not heed them, just as the Lord had spoken to Moses. - **Exodus 9:12**
3. Now the Lord said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh; for I have hardened (**kabed**) his heart and the hearts of his servants, that I may show these signs of Mine before him," - **Exodus 10:1**
4. But the Lord hardened (**chazaq**) Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go.- **Exodus 10:20**
5. But the Lord hardened (**chazaq**) Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.- **Exodus 10:27**
6. So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the Lord hardened (**chazaq**) Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land. - **Exodus 11:10**
7. Then I will harden (**chazaq**) Pharaoh's heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord. - **Exodus 14:4**
8. And the Lord hardened (**chazaq**) the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued the children of Israel; and the children of Israel went out with boldness. - **Exodus 14:8**
9. And I indeed will harden (**chazaq**) the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them. So I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army, his chariots, and his horsemen. - **Exodus 14:17**

Not until the sixth plague did God begin to harden Pharaoh's heart

Understanding the Text

- The word “harden”

- 1. chazaq (Heb.) - Exodus 4:21; 7:13,22; 8:19; 9:12,35; 10:20,27; 11:10; 14:4,8,1**
 - a. "to strengthen, prevail, harden, be strong, become strong, be courageous, be firm, grow firm, be resolute, be sore" - BDB
 - b. "literally signifies to strengthen, confirm, make bold or courageous;" - Clarke
- 2. qashah (Heb.) - Exodus 7:3**
 - a. "to make hard, make stiff, make stubborn" - BDB
 - b. "harden, stiffen" - Strong
- 3. kabed (Heb.) - Exodus 7:14; 8:15; 8:32; 9:7,34; 10:1**
 - a. "hard, difficult, burdensome" - BDB
 - b. "heavy; figuratively...in a bad sense, severe, difficult... grievous, hardened" - Strong

Lessons for Me

- Guard against “confirmation bias”,
Confirmation bias is the tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms or strengthens one's prior personal beliefs or hypotheses. It is a type of cognitive bias. People display this bias when they gather or remember information selectively, or when they interpret it in a biased way.

Ezekiel 14:1-5

II Thessalonians 2:1-12



Lessons for Me

- Sin is as deceptive as the magician's snakes

Hebrews 3:12-19

II Corinthians 11:13

Proverbs 12:20

