



## 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**

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# 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

