

"The 10 Plagues upon Egypt"

Part 3

Exodus 7-12

**Introduction:** Last week in our study of the life of Moses we looked at the meeting between Moses, Aaron and Pharaoh.

**Notice Exodus 7:8-13**

Last week we looked at how Satan was able to counterfeit the miracle in order to cause confusion. But when the rods of the magicians became serpents, then Aaron's rod swallowed them up. This was a message for Pharaoh and his magicians. The rod speaks of government in the Bible and the fact that the rod turned into a serpent speaks of what had happened to the Egyptian government. It had turned serpentine and it was now under Satanic influence as it was used to afflict the people of Israel. For this reason, God was about to swallow up the enemies of Israel. This will happen in the Red Sea.

**Exodus 15:9-12**

<sup>9</sup> *The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.*

<sup>10</sup> *Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters.*

<sup>11</sup> *Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?*

<sup>12</sup> *Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.*

Now in the midst of the rods becoming serpents we briefly looked at Pharaoh's response, but we did not spend much time on this. To start out this evening I want to take you a little deeper into what happened here.

**I. The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart**

Let us remember that God had foretold that this was going to happen.

**Exodus 4:21**

<sup>21</sup> *And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.*

The hardening of Pharaoh's heart is something that many do not understand but as we looked at earlier this hardening was the result of sin in the life of Pharaoh. Many will say that Pharaoh hardened his heart before God hardened his heart but that is not what the Bible teaches. The Bible is very clear that it was God who hardened his heart first. Pharaoh would later harden his own heart. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart was the result of sin in Pharaoh's life. God made the sovereign choice to use Pharaoh for 2 purposes:

1. To show forth His power.
2. To warn others of the danger of rejecting God's grace.

**Romans 9:17-18**

*<sup>17</sup> For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*

*<sup>18</sup> Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*

Pharaoh would die and go into hell, but it would not be because God hardened his heart, but it would be because he was a sinner. The hardening was the result of years of rejecting the Truth of the One True God.

**Exodus 5:1-2**

*And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.*

*<sup>2</sup> And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.*

Let us remember that Egypt was polytheistic, meaning they worshipped MANY false gods. Pharaoh knew of the One True God for many of Israel would have spoke of Him and worshipped Him. There is yet another way in which Pharaoh would have known of God but in all the revelation given to him, he refused to acknowledge Him. We can clearly see what happened to Pharaoh in Romans 1.

**Romans 1:18-22**

*<sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*

*<sup>19</sup> Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.*

*<sup>20</sup> For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:*

*<sup>21</sup> Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

*<sup>22</sup> Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,*

This describes exactly what happened to Pharaoh and so God chose to harden his heart and make him an example to warn others of the consequences of rejecting God.

Now, I show you all of this because of something else which I want you to see in Exodus 7. I want you to see what Pharaoh was like.

### **Notice Exodus 7:10-12**

As we read these verses again, I want to raise a question for us to consider that will help us to better see into the heart of Pharaoh. The question is, "Why did Pharaoh call the wise men and the sorcerers?"

Here is the answer, "He did NOT want to believe in the God of Moses and Aaron." God made His existence very clear with the miracle but Pharaoh did not want to believe in Him so he called the wisemen and the sorcerers to perform a miracle so that he would (in his deception) justify rejecting the God of Moses and Aaron.

Let me show you some verses that will shine some extra light on what is happening here.

### **John 3:17-20**

*<sup>17</sup> For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

*<sup>18</sup> He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

*<sup>19</sup> And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

*<sup>20</sup> For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.*

Pharaoh was deep into idolatry and he hated the Light. He then suppressed the Truth presented to him and he looked for a reason to reject the God of Moses and Aaron. Now

let me raise another question here, "Why did God permit the magicians to perform this miracle?" God allowed this for two reasons:

1. To test Pharaoh.
2. To prove Pharaoh wanted nothing to do with Him.

Now let me show you the grace of God extended to Pharaoh.

**Notice Exodus 7:12**

God allowed the rod of Aaron to swallow the rods of the magicians, so Pharaoh was made aware of the power of the God of Moses and Aaron. But he still refused to acknowledge the True God. He had a heart of unbelief.

**Application:**

We see the same practice of unbelief in the hearts of many today. Let me give you a couple of examples.

**1. Salvation**

The Bible is very clear that salvation is by grace through faith plus NOTHING.

**Ephesians 2:8-9**

*<sup>8</sup> For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

*<sup>9</sup> Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

These verses are very clear. But there are many that will say faith is not enough and they ignore these verses and then they will maybe go to the book of James.

**James 2:14-20**

*<sup>14</sup> What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?*

*<sup>15</sup> If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,*

*<sup>16</sup> And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?*

*<sup>17</sup> Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*

*<sup>18</sup> Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*

<sup>19</sup> Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

<sup>20</sup> But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

They will point to a passage such as this and say that works are a part of salvation. They may also point to another text.

### Philippians 2:12

<sup>12</sup> Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling.

Others will tell you salvation is not complete unless a person is baptized. Let me show you the verse they will use.

### Acts 2:38

<sup>38</sup> Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

So, what they do is ignore the obvious to go to a text which they have pulled out of context to support their unbelief. Let me give you yet another example.

## 2. Eternal Security

The Bible is very clear that we are secure in Jesus Christ

### John 10:27-29

<sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

<sup>28</sup> And **I give unto them eternal life**; and **they shall never perish**, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

<sup>29</sup> My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

### John 3:16

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should **not perish, but have everlasting life**.

### Romans 8:28

<sup>28</sup> And we know that **all things work together for good** to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

These verses are very clear that we are secure in Christ but there are those who refuse to believe the obvious. They have hearts that cling to unbelief and they will point to other verses pulling them out of context. I have seen this through one individual in particular. Here is one of his favorite passages to use:

Matthew 6:9-15

<sup>9</sup> *After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*

<sup>10</sup> *Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

<sup>11</sup> *Give us this day our daily bread.*

<sup>12</sup> *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.*

<sup>13</sup> *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*

<sup>14</sup> *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:*

<sup>15</sup> **But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**

He points to verse 15 and states that if we do not forgive all who offend us then God will not forgive us. He refuses to see that the context here is PRAYER and NOT salvation. Let me show you two other verses that he uses:

Hebrews 2:6, 14

<sup>6</sup> *But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, **if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.***

<sup>14</sup> *For we are made partakers of Christ, **if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;***

These verses are not telling us how to be saved but they are telling us how we will live IF WE ARE SAVED. These are PROOFS of salvation.

Let me share with you the words of John Butler on this practice:

*"This practice of rejecting the obvious and clinging to that which is not obvious reveals a rebellious heart. Those with this kind of heart do not want to believe the obvious texts though they may say they believe the Bible. Therefore, when they do not like something in Scripture, they look diligently for some text that can be twisted to justify their rejection of the plain text. And those texts can be found, for opportunity for unbelief is provided*

*by God. That is, God tests mankind by providing them with some difficult and vague passages in Scripture which can be twisted to teach something opposite to the many clear passages of Scriptures (that is just one purpose of those passages, another purpose is to provide special blessings for those who will earnestly dig into these passages to find wonderful lessons in them). What man do with these texts really reveals their faith. Those anxious to junk the many plain texts for a twisted interpretation of a difficult passage reveal their rebellion against God. Their eagerness to turn away from the obvious to embrace the doubtful manifests their disobedient heart. God permitted the magicians to work a miracle, but He also showed His superiority in having Aaron's rod swallow up the magician's rods. The evidence was very plain as to who was superior. But Pharaoh had found his "text", and he clung to it while ignoring the plain text (the swallowing miracle) that showed God's superiority."*

**Conclusion:**

This helps us to see what caused God to harden Pharaoh's heart. He had continually rejected the God of Israel. Let us be very careful because our hearts are just as sinful as Pharaoh's. Many believers had ignored the obvious plain texts and twisted another text in order to attempt to justify sin in their lives.