

THE HARDENING OF PHARAOH'S HEART

BIBLE TEXT : Exodus 6:1-13; 7:1-13

LESSON 52 **Junior Course**

MEMORY VERSE: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise" (II Peter 3:9).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Exodus 6:1-13

1 Then the LORD said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.

2 And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I *am* the LORD:

3 And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by *the name of* God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.

4 And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.

5 And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and I have remembered my covenant.

6 Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I *am* the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments:

7 And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

8 And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I *am* the LORD.

9 And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they

Bible References:

Notes:

Delayed but not Denied

The Children of Israel were very much discouraged. After having had a hope of deliverance, their bondage seemed even more terrible than before. And the work they had to do was almost beyond human endurance. When Moses tried to encourage them with God's promises, they refused to listen.

God did not want His people to feel bad. He was mindful of His people, and was noticing their suffering. He had promised the land of Canaan to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and He would not go back on His word. If they could only wait upon the Lord a little longer, He would deliver them with a mighty hand; He would give them more than they had ever thought of having.

God wants us to wait upon Him. Perhaps we can see no reason for the trials we go through, but God has a purpose; and if we submit to His will, He will work out what is best for us, and what will bring glory to His name.

The Egyptians were going to know who was God before He got through with them. They worshiped many gods, but God was going to prove to them how much greater He was. It was to be a battle between the God of Heaven and all the false gods the heathen worshiped which would be defeated so ignobly that they would look ridiculous.

The LORD JEHOVAH

When God had appeared to the patriarchs, He had called Himself God Almighty; but He now tells Moses that He will be known by His personal name, Jehovah, to the Israelites. However, when the Children of Israel came to worship God, they stood so in awe of Him that they were afraid ever to speak aloud the name of Jehovah. Even when reading the Scriptures they substituted a word, which has been translated "the LORD" (all capital letters), in the King James Version of the Bible. You will notice where that was done in the Old Testament: "And the LORD said unto Abraham." "Is any thing too hard for the LORD?"

As an illustration, it was as though the people did not want to speak of King David by his given name, but in reverence spoke of him as the "king." Jehovah is the only God, therefore we have the word written LORD. When Jesus is spoken of as the Lord, only the first letter being capitalized, it refers to His position -- the Lord Jesus Christ. In Psalm 110:1, we have Jehovah speaking to Jesus: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

The True and the False

When the Children of Israel refused to hear Moses, God sent him to Pharaoh. Moses thought that if his people did not listen, why should Pharaoh? But God encouraged him to go, and said that Moses would be as a god to Pharaoh because he would have divine power to do many miracles. A superstitious people is quick to think that anyone who can perform extraordinary acts is a god. But we shall learn that the devil also has power to perform miracles, and we must be very careful to "try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1). Satan is the "prince of the power of the air," and he has power to work "signs and lying wonders." In our

hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.

10 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

11 Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land.

12 And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who *am* of uncircumcised lips?

13 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, and gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

Exodus 7:1-13

1 And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

2 Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land.

3 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.

4 But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, *and* my people the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments.

5 And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them.

6 And Moses and Aaron did as the LORD commanded them, so did they.

7 And Moses *was* fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh.

day spiritualists and other false religionists who deny the Blood of Jesus do work miracles, perhaps even heal sick bodies, but it is the work of the devil to deceive the people.

God's people can be thankful, however, that Satan can go only as far as God will let him. We see in the story of Job that the devil could do no more to him than the Lord allowed. Satan accused God of having a hedge around Job, which protected him. How thankful we are for God's hedge! Perhaps sometimes it may be removed for a little while, and we will be tried; but always remember that God is watching, and He will let no more come to us than we can bear.

There were many magicians in Egypt, some of whom were probably sleight-of-hand performers, but there were also those who were filled with evil spirits and could do miracles. We see that when Aaron threw his rod on the ground, it became a serpent. The magicians did the same with their rods, and they also became serpents. The devil can fool some people by offering them imitations of the truth. If he cannot lure them into sin he will give them a false religion which looks like the real thing; and because they do not love the truth they will believe the strong delusion, believe a lie, and lose their soul.

There was a difference in the serpents of the magicians and the one of Aaron, the servant of God. Aaron's rod swallowed up the other two rods. The magicians must have felt chagrined when the people saw their rods disappear. The names of the magicians were Jannes and Jambres, and Paul the Apostle tells us that their folly was made known to all people (II Timothy 3:8, 9). The time is coming when God will set Himself up as ruler over all the earth; and all false religions, and the people who believe a lie, will be brought low. The power of Satan will be broken. "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Peter 3:13).

Judgment to Follow

Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to listen to Moses and Aaron. This was only the beginning of a long contest between the children of God and the servants of the devil. God was going to bring judgment upon the Egyptians because of Pharaoh's refusal to the pleadings of Moses and Aaron; and the Egyptian nation was completely ruined by the time the Israelites made their exodus.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the first miracle performed before Pharaoh?
2. Did Pharaoh hearken unto Moses' and Aaron's appeal to let the people go?
3. What should we do when the answer to our prayers seems to be delayed?
4. What may be gained or accomplished by the trial of our faith?
5. Does God ever allow His people to be tempted beyond that which they are able to bear?

8 And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,
9 When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Shew a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and cast *it* before Pharaoh, *and* it shall become a serpent.

10 And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent.

11 Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.

12 For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.

13 And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.