

The battle commences Exodus 6:28-7:13

Introduction

All these miracles, plagues take place over 7-12 months. It could be all at once but gracious God gives time for a nation to repent.

This process in destroying Egypt is

#1 to reach Pharaoh,

#2 to reach the Egyptians, looking at verse 7:5 “And the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord”. He wants the Egyptians to know He is going to destroy Egypt not because He is mad at the Egyptians but that they might know that He is Yahweh. Yahweh the personal God who makes personal promises and who keeps those promises. He wants the Egyptians to understand that He is a personal God not just to the Chosen People, although that is where the name Yahweh is directly attached, but He is a personal God who keeps His promises to anybody who makes Him their God. He is going to destroy the gods of Egypt; He is going to destroy the power of Egypt, and He is going to destroy Pharaoh, but he loves the Egyptian people. Many will eventually leave with the Israelites.

#3 to reach the pagan world outside of Egypt. He was particularly interested in the Canaanite civilisation that He was going to have to destroy 40 years down the road. A Canaan that was then under Egyptian control, was going to hear and subsequently to be taken by these Israelites of whom they had heard such fantastic stories.

#4 He wanted to remind the Israelites that God was the sovereign God. You can take the Jew out of Egypt, but you can't take Egypt out of the Jew. Egypt is security. It may be bondage, but it is security. And God wants them to walk by faith. So God is going to actually drive them out of Egypt because they won't go otherwise. They would learn that He is Mr. Big. Nothing and no one was too tough for Him.

Yahweh was always faithful. He would always be there so they didn't have to worry.

The battle is the Lord's, but they didn't understand that yet. But they will.

Hardening of Pharaoh

Why does God want to humiliate Pharaoh?

Doesn't God love Pharaoh?

Why does He insist on humiliating him?

What is the one thing that is killing Pharaoh?

What is the one thing that is going to put Pharaoh in hell?

Rebellious pride.

It is possible that this was one of the proudest Pharaohs of all Egypt, the most stuck on himself, and that sin is killing him. God doesn't want him to die.

Why did God insist upon hitting Pharaoh where it hurt the most? Pharaoh needs to be humble. God does not do it to get even. God doesn't have to get even. He is Mr. BIG. He doesn't want Pharaoh to go to hell.

Even though he is a boasting know-it-all windbag, and he doesn't know Yahweh.

Pharaoh is choosing to do what he wants, and if he can choose to sin, he can choose to repent

He is not beyond salvation because God hardened the hearts of both the courtiers and Pharaoh, and **the courtiers eventually repent**. Pharaoh could also repent but chose not to. None of the plagues softened his heart, even when he released them he demonstrates his lack of repentance and self-willed disobedience to God by pursuing them shortly after to the edge of the Red Sea.

God was deliberately going to humiliate Pharaoh in order to destroy his pride that he might repent and not be lost. But Pharaoh made the wrong choice.

As we go through these passages, we will see that God does harden Pharaoh's heart, but first Pharaoh always has the opportunity to believe. It isn't until plague number six that God hardens Pharaoh's heart first.

How many of us as parents, after giving our wisdom to our children, and seeing it rejected time and time again, end up only saying, OK, if that's what you want get on with it.

God never hardens a heart that is not already hardened against him. It is as if God stopped fighting Pharaoh and let him fall in the pit he had dug for himself. It is only the compassion of God that he did not hit him hard the first time.

God did not set Pharaoh up to fail. God was trying to help him come to belief by cutting him down to size.

If you end up in hell you have no one to blame but yourself
If you end up in heaven you have no one to thank but God.

Remember Moses was no better than Pharaoh was. Pharaoh is a stubborn, tough guy who will not yield in his pride. He has terrible problems of character, and it costs him everything.

But so does Moses. The great lawgiver, the great leader, the great prophet never gets into the Promised Land because of his temper. All that is going on here is achieved strictly by the grace of God.

The purpose of hardening Pharaohs heart? 10:1 “So that I (God) may perform these miraculous signs of mine among them”

11:9 “so that my wonders may be multiplied in Egypt.”

See **Romans 9:17-8**

The Prequel miracle

Those of us who grew up with Cecil B de Milne theology probably missed the fact that before Pharaoh is not just a repeat of the snake affair in the desert.

This translated is “long one” – it could be a long snake, a crocodile, even a dragon. Some suggest that it was the river lizard they worshipped.

Moses and Aaron were surprised! The Egyptians even more so! This makes an impression.

But oops, the magicians can do the same. Then Aaron's staff literally "gulps down" the other two. Pharaoh's attitude indicates he is committed to not believing.

The key here is Pharaoh wants just enough evidence to support himself and his position. He doesn't want any change. So God is not hardening the heart of a man who wants life, who wants truth, who wants to know. No, this man is committed to a course of action that is anti-God. So Pharaoh hardens his own heart.

If they had heeded the sign, then Egypt would not have been devoured by the plagues just as the magicians snakes had been.

If Pharaoh had yielded to God and let the people of Israel go free, Egypt would have retained its massive power. Pharaoh wouldn't even have had to give up his godship. That is the tragedy of this thing. God would have left him alone. If he had chosen simply to obey God as far as God had asked him to go; if he had let God's people go, he could have stayed on as god of Egypt. Unfortunately his pride wouldn't let him do that. Do you see what prides does? It enslaves

Conclusion

Let us beware the snare of pride and learn from Pharaoh errors. Obedience really is the easiest option in the long run.

God is patient and gracious, but not forever. No one is beyond hope. Pharaoh may not have repented but his advisors and courtiers did – eventually, and many Egyptian people came to know something of the one true living God, Yahweh.

2 Peter 3:8-14

Don't try to bargain with God. When he says, "This has got to go." I say, "Oh, no. I'll give you ten of these. Just let me keep this one." Why does God insist on hitting us where it hurts the most?

So what does God have to do? He has to kill that part of Pharaoh that is keeping Pharaoh from salvation, and He is going to do it.