

Title:           **“I WILL HARDEN PHARAOH’S HEART.”**  
Text:           Exodus 4:18-21  
Subject:       *The Hardening of Pharaoh’s Heart*  
Date:           Tuesday Evening — January 16, 2007  
Tape #          Exodus 34

**Introduction:**

The Lord God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and sent him to bring Israel out of Egypt (Exodus 3:1-4:17). In order to accomplish the work he sent him to perform, the Lord gave Moses miraculous powers (4:1-9). In addition to those miracles, the Lord promised to send Aaron with him, to be his spokesman to Pharaoh. Let’s pick up the story in Exodus 4:18.

(Exodus 4:18-21) “And Moses went and returned to Jethro his father in law, and said unto him, Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren which *are* in Egypt, and see whether they be yet alive. And Jethro said to Moses, Go in peace. (19) And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life. (20) And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand. (21) 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 Lord God said, with regard to Pharaoh, “I will harden his heart.” And he did so repeatedly. In judgment upon that wicked tyrant and in great mercy toward his chosen people, God hardened Pharaoh with a judicial, penal hardness. **Nineteen times** the in the Book of Exodus the Holy Spirit tells us about the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart. I presume he intends for us to sit up and pay attention. This is no light thing to consider. **Three times, we are told that Pharaoh hardened his own heart** (Exodus 8:15, Exodus 8: 32, and Exodus 9:34). **Sixteen times his heart is said to have been hardened by the just judgment of God** (Exodus 4:21; 7:3, 13, 14, 22; 8:19; 9:7, 12, 35; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17).

God hardened Pharaoh’s heart, giving him up to the hardness of his heart in judicial reprobation (Romans 1:28-32). Giving him no grace, the Lord God left Pharaoh to the corruptions of his own heart and nature and the power of

Satan, and sent him strong delusions to believe the lying miracles of his magicians.

**How do these things apply to us?** What are we to learn from the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart? What does the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart teach us about ourselves? — About our God? — About his grace? — About his judgment? These are the questions I hope to answer in this message.

### **HEART OF STONE**

The very first thing we learn from the picture God the Holy Spirit holds before us in this passage is the fact that the human heart is a heart of stone: dead and hard. How hard the heart of man is since the fall of our father Adam! Our Lord Jesus tells us that the law God gave by the hand of Moses was given because of the hardness of our hearts (Matthew 19:8; Mark 10:5). The heart of man is so hard that the only thing that keeps the unregenerate from performing all the evil that is in his heart is the utter terror of God’s law (1 Timothy 1:8-11). Believers are sweetly motivated and ruled by the love of Christ that constrains them (2 Corinthians 5:14). But the unbeliever’s wickedness is checked only by the terror of God’s law that is stamped upon his conscience by divine creation.

(1 Timothy 1:8-11) “But we know that the law *is* good, if a man use it lawfully; (9) Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, (10) For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; (11) According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.”

Though terrified of God and his wrath, though tormented in his conscience by the fear of everlasting damnation, though his very heart is horrified by the thought of hell, so hard is the heart of man that God the Holy Spirit declares of all, “after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God” (Romans 2:5).

**Nothing can ever change the heart of man except God himself.** If ever we are saved, it will be by God the Holy Spirit taking away our hard heart of stone and giving us a new heart by his grace (Ezekiel 11:19:36:26).

(Ezekiel 11:19) “And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh.”

(Ezekiel 36:26) “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.”

**In the new birth,** God gives chosen, redeemed sinners a new heart, here called “an heart of flesh,” that is to say, a soft, tender, penitent heart of faith, a sanctified, spiritual heart. This new heart of flesh is the heart of Christ formed in you by the Spirit of God, “the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:24). It is only by this mighty operation of God’s efficacious grace that we are enabled to trust the Lord Jesus Christ and love God and one another. It is only when Christ is revealed in us that our hearts are broken and made new by his grace (Zechariah 10:12).

(Zechariah 12:10) “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn”

(Zechariah 13:1) “In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”

My Heart, like flint, before Thy law  
Was hard and would not break;  
But when in Christ I saw Thy love,  
This heart began to ache.

Though Sinai’s wrath, like thunder, rolled  
And terror seized my soul,

I would not bend my stubborn will  
And yield to Thy control.

But mercy has my heart subdued,  
Thy grace has broken in:  
A bleeding Savior I have seen,  
And now I hate my sin.

Never was there a clearer picture of man’s hardness of heart than that which the Holy Spirit holds before us in the Book of Exodus in Pharaoh, the king of Egypt.

**Hard as man’s heart is toward all things good, it is a heart that burns with lust and enmity against God.** — “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Romans 8:7). **And nothing more quickly stirs the enmity of man’s corrupt, depraved heart against God than the declaration of his righteous judgment and absolute sovereignty.** Unless God himself, by his almighty grace, removes the enmity of a man’s heart against him, every renewed display of his justice and sovereignty increases the enmity and hardness of his heart.

**This fact is set before us in the increasing hardness of Pharaoh’s heart by the miracles Moses wrought before him by God’s command.** Each succeeding miracle was blessed of God to convince the children of Israel that the Lord was about to deliver them from Pharaoh’s hand and Egypt’s bondage. Yet, Pharaoh and the Egyptians were increasingly hardened by them, becoming more callous to conviction with each miracle Moses performed. So it is to this day. **The same heat that melts the wax hardens the clay** (Isaiah 6:9-10; Romans 1:28-32; 11:5-10; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12; Hebrews 3:12-13; Romans 9:14-18).

(Isaiah 6:9-10) “And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. (10) Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.”

(Romans 1:28-32) “And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; (29) Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, (30) Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, (31) Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: (32) Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”

(Romans 11:5-10) “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (6) And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. (7) What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (8) (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. (9) And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them: (10) Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.”

(2 Corinthians 4:3-4) “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: (4) In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

(2 Thessalonians 2:8-12) “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: (9) *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, (10) And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish;

because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. (11) And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: (12) That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

(Hebrews 3:12-13) “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. (13) But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

(Romans 9:14-18) “What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid. (15) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. (16) So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. (17) For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. (18) Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth.”

Like you and me, Pharaoh was born with a heart of stone, hard, cold, and dead. And the longer he lived in hardness, the harder it became. The more he despised God and his Word, the more his heart was hardened. We read in Exodus 7:14, — “Pharaoh’s heart hardened.”

(Exodus 7:14) “And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh’s heart *is* hardened, he refuseth to let the people go.”

Notice that the word “*is*” is in italics, because it was added by the translators. The text should read, “Pharaoh’s heart hardened.” We see this more clearly in verse 22.

(Exodus 7:22) “And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them; as the LORD had said.”

Here, the **New King James** translation reads, “Then the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments; and Pharaoh’s heart grew hard, and he did not heed them, as the LORD had said.”

### **JUDICIAL REPROBATION**

Now, learn this. Be sure you learn this. — Pharaoh’s heart was hardened by God in judgment, in judicial reprobation. It was not simply a thing that happened. Because Pharaoh refused to bow to Christ and his Word, as sent to him by his servant Moses, his heart grew hard (Exodus 7:3, 13-14).

(Exodus 7:3) “And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.”

(Exodus 7:13-14) “And he hardened Pharaoh’s heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said. (14) And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh’s heart *is* hardened, he refuseth to let the people go.”

Throughout the Scriptures God’s judgment is presented to us as that which comes upon the ungodly because of what they do. His judgment is always a matter of justice. It is never arbitrary, capricious, or without cause. Just as Adam’s heart was hardened in spiritual death because of his sin, Pharaoh’s heart was hardened because of his unbelief.

Why is this point so important? It is important for two reasons:

1. *First*, **let it be clearly understood that God is not the author of sin** (James 1:13-14).

(James 1:13-14) “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: (14) But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”

**The Lord God did not cause Pharaoh to disobey his Word.** The hardening of Pharaoh’s heart required no positive action on God’s part. All the Lord has to do to harden the hearts of men in reprobation is leave them to the corruption of their nature. If God leaves a sinner alone, he is forever damned! As surely as the removal of the sun would result in the seas being

hardened into ice, so the removal of God’s grace in Christ results in the hardening of that man’s heart.

**In hardening Pharaoh’s heart, our Lord did not harden a heart that otherwise might have become soft toward him.** Pharaoh’s hard-heartedness is emphasized from his first appearance in Scriptures (Exodus 1:8-22). And we told that he continued to harden his own heart (Exodus 8:15, 32) before the Lord hardened it (Exodus 9:12).

(Exodus 8:15) “But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.”

(Exodus 8:32) “And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.”

(Exodus 9:12) “And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had spoken unto Moses.”

When the Lord God hardened Pharaoh’s heart, he simply gave him what he wanted. He left him to himself. He did not violate Pharaoh’s will. Rather, he granted Pharaoh’s desire.

2. *Second*, this is a matter of tremendous importance because **God still hardens the hearts of those who refuse to bow before his sovereign throne and trust his Son.**

Pharaoh’s heart was hardened as the just penalty of his willful, obstinate rebellion against the Son of God. God almighty, ever just and true, hardens even to everlasting damnation those who despise him, and his Word, his law, his gospel, and his Son. Just as Moses’ word wrought faith in Israel while hardening Pharaoh’s heart, the gospel of God’s free grace in Christ melts the hearts of his elect, and hardens the hearts of those who despise it (Proverbs 29:1; 2 Corinthians 2:14-16).

(Proverbs 29:1) “He, that being often reprov’d hardeneth *his* neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.”

(2 Corinthians 2:14-16) “Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of

his knowledge by us in every place. (15) For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: (16) To the one *we are* the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?”

In other words, — If you go to hell it will be your own fault, and your own fault alone. — “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23; Proverbs 1:23-33).

(Proverbs 1:23-33) “Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. (24) Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; (25) But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: (26) I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; (27) When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. (28) Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: (29) For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: (30) They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. (31) Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. (32) For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. (33) But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.”

## **GOD’S PURPOSE**

Having said all that, let no one imagine that the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart was contrary to the will, purpose, and decree of God. I cannot explain the mysteries of divine predestination, and will not attempt to do so. The secret things belong to God; and I am completely happy to leave secret things secret. But those things that are revealed belong to us. And these things are clearly revealed in the Book of God...

- **God purposed the fall of the first Adam**, that he might show forth the glory of his grace in saving his elect by the last Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:14-17; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 45).

(Romans 5:14-17) “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. (15) But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. (16) And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification. (17) For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)”

(1 Corinthians 15:21-22) “For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. (22) For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

(1 Corinthians 15:45) “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit.”

- **God raised up Pharaoh and purposed the hardening of his heart** that he might show forth the glory of his grace in bringing Israel out of Egypt (Romans 9:14-18), typically showing forth the glory of his grace toward his elect in Christ.

(Romans 9:14-28) “What shall we say then? *Is there* unrighteousness with God? God forbid. (15) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. (16) So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. (17) For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh (**in Exodus 9:16**), Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. (18) Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth. (19) Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? (20) Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus? (21) Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump

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to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? (22) *What* if God, willing to show *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: (23) And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, (24) Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? (25) As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. (26) And it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are* not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. (27) Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: (28) For he will finish the work, and cut *it* short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.”

The hardening of Pharaoh’s heart and the deliverance of Israel out of Egyptian bondage was **precisely according to the sovereign will and purpose of God**. And the everlasting ruin of the damned as well as the everlasting salvation of his elect is precisely according to the sovereign will and purpose of our God (Romans 11:5-12, 25-26, 33-36).

(Romans 11:5-12) “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. (6) And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. (7) What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (8) (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. (9) And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them: (10) Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. (11) I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather* through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. (12) Now if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?”

(Romans 11:25-26) “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. (26) And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:”

(Romans 11:33-36) “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! (34) For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? (35) Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? (36) For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.”

## **THE METHOD**

How did God harden Pharaoh’s heart? As we have already seen, he left Pharaoh to himself. Yet, he did something more. Because Pharaoh refused to receive his Word, because Pharaoh would not receive the love of the truth, the Lord God sent him a strong delusion that he should receive a lie and be damned by it. Every time Moses performed a miracle before Pharaoh, Pharaoh’s preachers, his magicians, entertained him with a miracle. We have an obvious and striking parallel to this in the New Testament (2 Thessalonians 2:7-12).

(2 Thessalonians 2:7-12) “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. (8) And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: (9) *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, (10) And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. (11) And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: (12) That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

**God’s stated purpose**, his plainly revealed design, in all that he did with Pharaoh and Egypt was the salvation of his people and the glory of his name (Exodus 6:7; 7:5; 14:4).

(Exodus 6:7) “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.”

(Exodus 7:5) “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.”

(Exodus 14:4) “And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the LORD. And they did so.”

Even so, God’s stated purpose, his plainly revealed design in all things is the salvation of his elect and the glory of his own great name (Ephesians 1:3-14).

(Ephesians 1:3-14) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) **To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.** (7) In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; (8) Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; (9) Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: (10) That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him: (11) In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: (12) **That we should be to the praise of his glory,** who first trusted in Christ.

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(13) In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (14) Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, **unto the praise of his glory.**”

**And just as the Lord God accomplished his purpose in Pharaoh, Egypt, and Israel, getting himself the glory, he is accomplishing his purpose in heaven, earth, and hell. When all things in time are finished, all God’s Israel shall be saved, and “God shall be all in all!”**

(Exodus 14:30-31) “Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. (31) And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.”

(Exodus 15:1-2) “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. (2) The LORD *is* my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he *is* my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father’s God, and I will exalt him.”

(Revelation 15:2-4) “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. (3) And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous *are* thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true *are* thy ways, thou King of saints. (4) Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for *thou* only *art* holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.”

**A Difference**

But did not the children of Israel harden their hearts repeatedly against the Lord? Indeed, they did, murmuring against his Word, his providence, and his servant again and again. In fact, it appears to me that they were even

more guilty than Pharaoh. They sinned and hardened their hearts against far greater light than God gave to Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Why, then, did God not harden the hearts of the children of Israel? Only one answer can be given; and that is the answer God himself has given. — “The LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel” (Exodus 11:7).

“For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 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. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth” (Romans 9:15-18).

We who believe, whose hearts the Lord God has refused to harden, to whom he has given a new heart and a new spirit, ought never cease to praise him and give thanks to him for his boundless, sovereign and free grace bestowed upon us in Christ Jesus. The only difference between you and me, and sinners forever damned under the wrath of God’s holy justice is the difference grace has made, because “the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.” — “For who maketh thee to differ *from another*? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it*?” (1 Corinthians 4:7).

Therefore...

(2 Thessalonians 2:13-14) “We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: (14) Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

“What shall we then say to these things? — If God be for us, who can be against us?”

Hallelujah! and Amen!