

EXODUS 4:18-23 (ISRAEL IS MY SON; MY FIRSTBORN)

Introduction: How many of you have heard some Bible teacher or preacher use the term "Slaying the giants in your life"? It's catchy isn't. Sure makes you feel good to know that just like David prevailing over Goliath, you too can prevail over your own giants. Hooray! Type in that phrase on You Tube and you'll have a list of sermons that goes on and on.

It's used as a motivational tool to tell you that you too can defeat any obstacle in your life, no matter how big, just like little David did. But there is a problem with looking at the Bible that way. This same young boy who defeated Goliath spent much of his life running away from other, often less formidable foes.

He ran from Saul, he ran from his son Absalom, and he even ran from God's word and into the arms of another man's wife. Elijah, the great prophet of Israel, defeated the 400 prophets of Baal and then.... ran from a woman named Jezebel.

The secret to strength isn't found in catchy phrases or clichés that people throw out in church on Sunday morning. The secret to strength which will defeat any foe is found in trusting the Lord. And this trust in the Lord doesn't mean that our business will be a success.

It doesn't mean that our home won't be foreclosed on. Nor does it mean that the cancer which affects our body has no right to be there. That is a really crummy way of interpreting the Lord's presence in our lives. What it means is that no matter what does happen to us, the promises of the Lord are greater than the afflictions we face.

Text Verse: The Lord is on my side;
I will not fear.
What can man do to me?
7 The Lord is for me among those who help me;
Therefore I shall see my desire on those who hate me.
8 It is better to trust in the Lord
Than to put confidence in man. Psalm 118:6-8

Moses was weak concerning confidence in himself. But eventually, the Lord got him straightened out and he is now ready to depart from Midian and head back to Egypt. He knows that the Lord is on his side and that He will be with him through whatever they face.

He also knows that as a token to him, he has the promise that he will return again to the mountain of God with the people that are delivered from Egypt. In this, he can place his confidence. And the same is true with us. Slaying the giants isn't about homes, finances, sicknesses, or bad marriages.

Slaying the giants is a transcendent thought. It says that no matter what I do face, God's word says that I am secure in Him despite those things. Jesus assured us that in this life we would have trouble, but He also promises to deliver us from this life to a new and better one someday.

It is the word which tells us these things and it is the word in which we can place our trust. Moses has his trust in the word of the Lord as he heads out and we should have our trust in the word as well. It was spoken by the Lord and so it is really the Lord that we are trusting when we trust the word. So let's turn to that precious word once again and... May God speak to us through His word today and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. Permission to Leave (verse 18)

18 So Moses went and returned to Jethro his father-in-law,

Moses took the flock to the west of Horeb where he saw the burning bush and had his encounter there with the Lord God. In verse 3:1, the flock was mentioned twice and yet it has not been mentioned again since then, nor will it be mentioned again. The focus went quickly from them to Israel and Moses' task of freeing them from the bondage of Egypt.

After the lengthy discussion with the Lord who spoke from the bush, the narrative abruptly ends and takes on a new direction. There was no recorded ending to the conversation as so often happens in the Bible. For example, when God departed from Abraham after their conversation in Genesis 17, it said -

"Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham." Genesis 17:22

Nothing like that is recorded here. Rather, we begin these verses with the need to insert our own thoughts about what may have happened. Did the bush just stop burning? Did the Lord excuse Moses and tell him everything would be ok? All we can do is speculate because all it says is "So Moses went and returned to Jethro his father-in-law."

But there is more than just a return here. The name Jethro isn't spelled the same as it was in Exodus 3:1 or even as it will be spelled later in this same verse. Rather, instead of yitro, it is spelled yetter.

The name yeter is spelled just the same as the word meaning "rest" or "remnant," as well as the word meaning "more" or "better." As we saw in Exodus 3:1-6, the rapture of the church was perfectly pictured. The rapture implies then that the church is gone and that anyone left will be on only one of two sides.

They will either be a remnant of people who are willing to forsake all for the hope of eternal life, or they will be of the innumerable people who will trade eternity for their temporary existence. The spelling of the name, yeter, is showing us this. Abarim says this about the notion of a remnant as found in the Bible -

"It seems that the most fundamental idea of the Biblical remnant is that a remnant is not simply an anonymous sample of the larger collective it's a remnant of, but rather a designated selection that kept the collective together in the first place. ... And it certainly indicates in what grave danger the world is, and how possible the events foreseen by rapture theology — which we here at Abarim Publications generally refute — might come to pass." Abarim Publications

It's worth note that Abarim wrote this, even though they refute the idea of a rapture. In other words, their words perfectly explain the picture of the rapture, and then a world divided by a remnant, and yet they don't believe in the rapture. They are completely unbiased in their analysis then, which fully supports what they refute, so they aren't making stuff up to fit their opinion about the rapture.

The different spelling of the name of Jethro to Jether is given to show us that the only thing that will save the complete annihilation of Egypt is the Hebrew people and the mixed multitude who stick with them. In picture, only the faithful Jews and Gentiles of the end times, who are willing to call out to Christ, will save humanity from complete annihilation.

I believe that one simple name, spelled differently, shows us all of this. The name Jether, representing the remnant, or the "better part" which is saved through trials of whatever type, means "Excellence." It is an excellent picture of those who are favored by the Lord who saves. Each name, Reuel, Jethro, and Jether, have been given to show us a relationship of people to Christ.

18 (con't) and said to him, "Please let me go and return to my brethren who are in Egypt, and see whether they are still alive."

Having been adopted into the family of Reuel by marriage to Zipporah, and having stayed for forty years in the land, Moses asks permission to depart from the clan. His reason is "to return to my brethren who are in Egypt."

The word translated as "brethren" can mean literal brothers, extended family, and also countrymen. He is asking to return to Egypt (meaning the land of double-distress) in order to return to his people. Though he doesn't tell Jether this, it is a return in order to deliver them.

Notice how Moses says nothing about the account from the bush. An entire chapter and a half are recorded concerning the talk between the Lord and Moses, and yet it is never mentioned when he returns to ask leave of Jether.

This is normally attributed by scholars to Moses' humility and not wanting to be a braggadocio about the great task on which he was being sent. However, Adam Clarke adds in an interesting concept which fits well with the next verse and also with what will occur during the tribulation period of the future. His words say -

"...if once imparted to the family of his father-in-law, the news might have reached Egypt before he could get thither, and a general alarm among the Egyptians would in all probability have been the consequence; as fame would not

fail to represent Moses as coming to stir up sedition and rebellion, and the whole nation would have been armed against them. It was therefore essentially necessary that the business should be kept secret." Adam Clarke

Clarke's thinking is mostly correct. The plagues that are coming in Egypt will come upon an unsuspecting nation, and the plagues that are coming in the tribulation period will come upon an unsuspecting world. One must wonder how this could be possible when the Bible is written and it tells exactly what will occur.

But the Bible also tells us in 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 that -

"The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

The plagues will be by the hand of God, but neither Pharaoh of the past, nor the anti-Christ of the future will accept that. Utter ruin will come upon those who have utterly rejected the Lord.

18 (con't) And Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace."

His response to Moses is lek le'shalom which is exactly translated as "Go in peace." The approval is given and Moses has been granted his leave to return to Egypt, the land of double-distress. But now, at the end of the same verse that we have been looking at, the name changes to Jethro from Jether.

Though Jethro carries much the same meaning as Jether, the two names have been used to give us a clue concerning the end times. There will be a remnant and there will be a time when the remnant is ready to be delivered. Just as God knew the perfect time for Moses to return to Egypt, He will know the perfect time to accomplish His deliverance of the tribulation saints.

Someday Christ will resolve to return
Once again to His people Israel
To be with them, His heart does yearn
As the words of Scripture to us do tell
And when they call on Him in Spirit and in truth
He will be there to give them aid and strength
They will be like a man of vigor in his youth
When He returns to them in due length
May it be soon oh wayward Israel
That you call out to God to remove your heavy chains
He will return to you as when the tide on the shore does swell
When you cry out to Jesus, "Yes, our God reigns!"

II. The Rod of God (verses 19 & 20)

19 Now the Lord said to Moses in Midian,

Again, Yehovah is introduced into the narrative. He spoke to Moses at Horeb and gave him directions concerning the duties which lay ahead of him, but now he speaks once again to Moses in Midian the "Place of Judgment."

Each word is given to show pictures of Christ. If it weren't so, it would have said in the previous verse that Moses returned to Jethro his father-in-law in Midian. But it waited until now to mention Midian.

The order of the introduction of the names and places is perfectly selected to show an intricate set of steps is being followed. There is the church age which happened after Israel rejected Christ. Then the people of Israel cry out to "the God" and He in turn remembers His covenant with them.

After that, there is the rapture of the church. Then God purposes to deliver His people, and after that He sends forth the directive to deliver them. Step by step the order of this account of the past is given to show us the order of what will again come about.

19 (con't) "Go, return to Egypt; for all the men who sought your life are dead."

These words take us right back to Exodus 2:23 which said, "Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage."

The narrative of the burning bush followed immediately after those words. But, it doesn't necessarily follow that the actual account of the bush followed after the words of Exodus 2:23. They could have happened before, simultaneously with, or afterwards. So when the king of Egypt died in chapter 2, it may be what the Lord is referring to here in chapter 4.

From this verse, it appears that the king of Egypt died after the account of the bush, but the order is given in Scripture to show a logical sequence of events

which will come about in the greater picture of redemptive history, not necessarily a chronological account.

That's why it's important look for phrases like, "after that time" or "on the next day." Those tell us that things are chronological. If they're missing, then it's possible they're not. In the New Testament, especially in the gospels, this is important so that we can tell what Jesus did and when.

God is looking for people to research His word. In return, He gives us all the assurance we need to feel that everything is under control. When people email you or call you about a question concerning a verse, it's because they have a need.

Sometimes it's a need to be reassured about God's goodness. Sometimes, people want to know if what they heard from the pastor is wrong. And sometimes, a person might need to be reassured that what they are reading isn't a contradiction of something else in the Bible.

If someone thinks there is an error or a contradiction, then the Bible no longer has the same value in their eyes that it once did. To know the details is to be sound in one's faith. All the squishy words in a sermon about how much God loves you really means nothing if the Bible has errors. If there are, then how do we know that one of them isn't the verse about God's love for us?

20 Then Moses took his wife and his sons and set them on a donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt.

In contrast to the horse and the mule which are associated with kingly rule and periods of war, the donkey is associated with both humility and peace. Here

Moses is returning to deliver the people of Israel from the hand of Pharaoh, and yet he is coming to them after having placed his wife and sons on a donkey.

The contrast couldn't be more striking. He has abided by the words of Jethro to "Go in peace." Also, in the Hebrew it says "the donkey" rather than "a donkey." It is probable that it is worded this way to show that it is his personal donkey upon which he sets them. While they ride, he will lead them on foot.

Notice here too that it mentions both his wife and his "sons" in the plural. But so far only one son, Gershom, has been mentioned. It won't be for another 14 chapters that the name of the next son, Eliezer, is given.

The name Eliezer which means "God of help" is explained by Moses in chapter 18 when he says, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh." Unlike Gershom, despite him being alive, there is no record of his birth or name to this point.

It is things like this that show us that when a name is given, it is given for a reason and a picture of something else. There was no reason to mention either the birth or naming of Eliezer and so the Bible doesn't bother with it. Every word is selected to show us Christ or the plan of redemption. If something would interfere with that, it isn't mentioned.

This is why Jesus could say in John 5 to the leaders of Israel that the words of Scripture testify to Him. Because they do. Every word has been selected more carefully than the finest implements of the most precise watch or the most complex computer. The Bible is the most marvelous and precious treasure we could ever possess.

20 (con't) And Moses took the rod of God in his hand.

The phrasing here is precise. It says he "took the rod of the God in his hand." The Bible is specially pointing this out for emphasis. It is a set of words that would otherwise be completely unnecessary unless it is showing us something specific. When he gets to Egypt and does the miracles, he will use this rod. Therefore, it would be obvious he brought it along.

Saying this here is actually no different than saying that he took along his sandals, unless it is asking us to focus on the significance of the rod. The rod of "the" God is a picture of the power of the Lord. It will be the implement by which the wondrous works of God will be wrought.

But it isn't the mere rod which accomplishes the miracles. Rather it is the power of God of which the rod is emblematic. The definite article is intended to show us that this rod is set in contradistinction to the rods of the false gods of Egypt. This is the rod of "the" God.

Think of it! Moses is crossing the wilderness with a wife, and his children on his only donkey, and he is carrying a shepherd's rod in his hand. And yet, in this unlikely appearance is found the one person who will issue forth all the great miracles of God which have been discussed and analyzed for 3500 years.

And in this seemingly humble rod is found all of the power and authority to effect those great miracles. It is truly astonishing. As Keil says -

"Poor as his outward appearance is, yet he has in his hand the staff before which Pharaoh's pride and all his power must bow." Carl Friedrich Keil

The rod of God filled with power and might
Imagine the terrors, and each awesome sight

The power of God is like a double-edged sword
It cuts to destroy in some, while others it does save
Great and terrible is the display of the Lord
And the judgment is rendered on how we behave

For those who are the redeemed, the wonders are great indeed
To see God's hand in such an awesome display of power
But for those who reject Him, He will finally proceed
To come after them with terrors in the final judgment hour

III. I will Harden His Heart (verses 21-23)

21 And the Lord said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you do all those wonders before Pharaoh which I have put in your hand.

In chapter 3, Moses was given three signs to do for the elders of Israel. Those signs are not what the Lord is telling Moses about here. They were given for the purpose of validating his call before Israel, not to convince Pharaoh of anything. The wonders He speaks of here were mentioned later in chapter 3, in verse 20 -

"So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst; and after that he will let you go." Exodus 3:20

The word for "miracles" comes from the Hebrew word *mopheth* which speaks of something out of the ordinary course of nature. This corresponds to the Greek word *terata* which means portent. These portents would then be unusual phenomena, either natural or supernatural, which cry out for an explanation.

It is these which have been granted to Moses to accomplish, but the Lord says that they are wonders which He has "put in your hand." The hand holds the rod and the rod is emblematic of the power of God. Therefore, it is the granting of authority, symbolized by the rod in his hand.

21 (con't) But I will harden his heart,

"I will harden." What does that mean? It is one of the most controversial subjects to be found among scholars and its meaning will affect one's overall theology concerning the work of Christ in a person's life. Does God choose people for salvation apart from their will, or is free-will a consideration in one's salvation?

The I is emphatic, "I will harden his heart." But even that has to be considered against the effect of the wonders which are wrought. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart is ascribed in a variety of ways during the next six chapters. Sometimes, it says "The Lord" hardened Pharaoh's heart.

At other times it is ascribed to Pharaoh directly. And at other times it is ascribed to the action of the heart of Pharaoh itself. In this, the hardening of Pharaoh's heart is ascribed to Pharaoh himself ten times, and it is ascribed to the work of God ten times.

Therefore, this is telling us something about human nature in relation to the work of God. They are synonymous in the sense that they are one in the same operation being viewed from a different perspective. To understand this, we can think of the effects of heat on two different substances - say wax and clay.

When heat is applied to wax, it softens. When it is applied to clay, it hardens. The source of the heat may be the sun, a metaphor for God. The heat itself would then be a metaphor for the miracles that are performed. And the wax and the clay would be metaphors for either a receptive heart or a non-receptive one.

As will be seen in the coming account of the plagues, it is Pharaoh's self-determined will which has the priority throughout the wonders and therefore, the Lord's hardening influence presupposes the non-receptive, self-willed state of Pharaoh.

This is no different than a person in a union refusing to take out the garbage at work because it's not in his job description, and yet willingly taking it out at home. He is married, and so whether it is in his job description or not doesn't matter. He'd do it for his sweetheart anyway.

But at work, the more pressure he receives from his boss, the more he hardens himself. In the end, and even though he is only harming himself towards his boss, he simply becomes more obdurate and more bullheaded.

The fact is, that the Lord doesn't come into humanity and zap a heart, making it hard. Rather, he allows us to follow our own perverse course and path, even if it harms us. Paul explains this exactly in Romans 1. First in verse 18, he shows how man willingly suppresses the truth -

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness..."

Eventually because of a result of that, God gives them over to themselves fully as Paul notes in verse 28 -

"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting..."

As man sins, God withdraws the light of revelation from the mind because this is how we have been constructed. In the same way, when we withhold any natural affection, such as compassion, eventually that affections completely dies away. If something doesn't soften the heart, it will by default harden it.

And this is exactly what we see in Pharaoh. The first miracles are lesser miracles, even things that Pharaoh's magicians can do. By the time the greater miracles come, Pharaoh is so willingly hardened against the Lord, that it is said that the Lord hardens him. The reason is because the Lord continues to throw more at him in his already self-hardened state.

This same Hebrew word, which is khazaq, is used in a positive sense many times. A memorable one is from Joshua 10:25 -

Then Joshua said to them, "Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for thus the Lord will do to all your enemies against whom you fight."

Nobody would even think that the Joshua is telling the people, "be hardened." Rather, he is saying, "be hardy" and he is telling them as an encouragement, not as an active action. The Lord isn't making them hardy. Rather, the Lord's words through Joshua are encouraging them to be hardy.

The hardening of Pharaoh's heart is a self-inflicted wound which was known would happen before it happened. As Clarke says, "God gave him up to judicial blindness, so that he rushed on stubbornly to his own destruction." And there is a reason why God chose to allow this...

21 (con't) so that he will not let the people go.

The hardening of Pharaoh's heart had a purpose, and that purpose was so that Pharaoh wouldn't let the people go. And by not letting the people go, there would be more glory revealed. And in that revelation, there would be yet more hardening which would bring about more glorious action. This is stated explicitly in Exodus 7:3 -

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

As all of this pictures judgment on the unrepentant world and false gods of the end times, all we need to do is look around the world now to see how deserved it is. The world is a cesspool of enmity towards Christ and towards the love of God found in Christ.

It is ripe for judgment and as judgment comes, the world will see His marvels displayed, but they won't repent. For each rejection, He will be seen all the more righteous in their final judgment and condemnation. This is exactly stated in Revelation 16:9 -

"And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory."

God will either receive glory actively from us in voluntarily worship, or He will receive it passively through the judgment of those who voluntarily refuse to worship Him. Either way, God will receive the glory He is justly due from His creatures.

22 Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord: "Israel is My son, My firstborn.

This statement, which is being said to Pharaoh, would be perfectly and completely understood by him. The office of Pharaoh and the person who held that office was known as the "son of Ra," or the "son of the sun." To Pharaoh, the sun was a god and he believed he was the son of this god.

This alone would be enough to bring about an immediate hardening of Pharaoh's heart, and the Lord knew it. Thus, even though it is Pharaoh's choice, the Lord can say rightly, "I will harden his heart."

The son-ship of Israel is something that permeates the Bible. It is used literally as well as pictorially. In Hosea 11:1, it says -

"When Israel was a child, I loved him,
And out of Egypt I called My son." Hosea 11:1

This was literally fulfilled at the exodus and it is also cited by Matthew as a parallel and picture of Christ who was taken to Egypt after His birth to save Him from the wrath of Herod.

Too many scholars though say that the words "Israel is My son, My firstborn" means that Israel was as dear to the Lord as a son. But this isn't what it says. It says that "Israel is my son." It then designates Israel as His firstborn.

This is a divine son-ship which is spiritual in nature. However, it came about through a purchase. This is seen in Deuteronomy 32:6 where Moses tells the people that it is the Lord who bought them. It is a national purchase of a people

to be His own special treasure, which is exactly what they are called in Deuteronomy 14.

But in these words is something else that is normally overlooked. By saying that Israel is the Lord's firstborn, it presupposes that more sons will come. This is dealt with in immense detail in the New Testament. As a people Israel was admitted into the work of Christ in advance of His coming. As a people we are admitted into the work of Christ after the completion of His work.

Each, whether from Israel or from the nations, is still saved individually by faith, but all fall under the right of admittance because of the work of Christ. When faith is exercised, then one becomes a child of God through adoption.

23 So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me.

A contrast to Israel's son-ship will now be made. But before it is made, a reason is given that Pharaoh should let him go. It is that Israel may serve the Lord. The word for "serve" has several meanings. It can mean to worship and so some translations say it that way. But it also means to work.

This is how it is used to describe the labors of the Israelites under the Egyptians in Exodus 1. And so a contrast is being made. In essence the Lord is saying, "You will let him go from his service under you so that he can come and serve Me."

But the service is a form of worship as we will see in the chapters ahead. And it is this which man was and is called to do. At the beginning, the Bible says that "the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it."

However, based on the context, those words "tend and keep" have a more accurate meaning, which is to "serve and worship." This is the intent of Scripture.

It is to show how God has developed a plan to free man from bondage and to return him to the state he once was in when he was placed in the Garden of Eden.

On the last page of the Bible, this is realized. There in Revelation 22, it is noted that man will both serve and worship the Lord God for all eternity. This verse here is a stepping stone along that path. The Lord has a plan to deliver Israel for this purpose, and is using it as a greater picture of man's deliverance from the bondage of sin and the devil to once again serve and worship Him.

***23 (con't) But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn.'"**

The contrast is now made. "If you refuse, your penalty will be commensurate with the request I have made. A son for a son is the offer." But this isn't recorded as having been spoken to Pharaoh until Exodus 11:5. By then Pharaoh's heart will be so hard, that he will refuse, even at the high cost which is stated.

Each plague was designed to build upon the next, further hardening Pharaoh's heart in order to lead to this final, terrible plague. But when the Lord accomplishes something, He makes sure that it is complete. If we can then equate this to the end times, the judgment upon the world will be absolute.

But, and this is personally important to each of us, if we harden our own hearts, we are the ones who will suffer because of it. Some of us are saved, but we allow a root of bitterness to enter into our walk with Christ.

When this happens, we lose heart, we lose joy, and we lose fellowship. And in the end, we will lose eternal rewards when we come before Him for judgment.

But some of us aren't saved. We haven't yet called out to Christ for His healing hand in our lives. We hear the call and we say, "Maybe later." Eventually, we just ignore the words completely. Our heart has become so calloused that the Spirit's wooing no longer stirs us.

Before that happens, I would hope that you would soften your heart and allow Christ to come in to you and save you. Please let me tell you what you need to do in order for this to happen...

Closing Verse: "Happy is the man who is always reverent,
But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity." Proverbs 28:14

Next Week: Exodus 4:24-31 (A Husband of Blood and a Divine Visitation) (13th Exodus Sermon)

At the end of David's life, he faced a time of terrible trial. The Bible tells us that even when covered, he couldn't get warm; he was cold all the time. David didn't get up and slay the giant of his affliction. Instead, he trusted in the greater provisions of the Lord, the eternal promises of which he would someday partake.

Let's be sure to follow the examples of great men like Abraham, Moses, and David who kept their hearts soft and trusted the word of the Lord through affliction and through great difficulties which presented themselves before them.

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. Even if a deep ocean lies ahead of You, He can part the waters and lead you through it on dry ground. So follow Him and trust Him and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

Israel is My Son, My Firstborn
So Moses went and returned to Jethro
His father-in-law, and to him said
"Please let me return, let me go
To my brethren who are in Egypt, among whom I was bred
And see whether they are alive still
And Jethro said to Moses, "Go in peace, as you will."
Now the Lord to Moses in Midian said
"Go, return to Egypt
For all the men who sought your life are dead
Then Moses took his wife and his sons
And set them on a donkey, as we understand
And he returned to Egypt the land
And Moses took the rod of God in his hand

And the Lord said to Moses
"When you go back to Egypt the land
See that you do all those wonders before Pharaoh
Which I have put in your hand
But I will harden his heart as you know
So that he will not let the people go
Then you shall say to Pharaoh
"Thus says the Lord
Israel is My son, My firstborn

This is my spoken word
So I say to you, let My son go
That he may serve Me, I do warn
But if you refuse to let him go even so
Indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn
The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart it is true
But it was done by Him in a passive way
When Pharaoh refused the Lord's word to do
His heart grew hard, and harder each day
Such is how sin affects our lives
It ruins the person that we should be
It affects our families, our children, our wives
And it also affects us each personally

And so don't let your heart grow hard towards the Lord
But rather draw near to Him and He will draw near to you
Walk closely with Him and keep in His word
This is the thing that He wills for us to do
Such is the nature of our gracious God
That He will run to us when sin we do eschew
And we will be content and joyful on the road we trod
Because He is ever Faithful and True

Hallelujah and Amen...