

THE HARDENING OF PHARAOH'S HEART

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

LESSON 52 **Senior Course**

MEMORY VERSE: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

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.

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I God's Reassurance to Moses and Israel

1. God reassures Moses, telling him again that Israel will be miraculously delivered from Egypt, Exodus 6:1.
2. God reveals Himself under the name of Jehovah, Exodus 6:2, 3;

Exodus 3:14

¹⁴ And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

Genesis 17:1

¹ And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

Genesis 35:11

¹¹ And God said unto him, I *am* God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;

Isaiah 52:4-6

⁴ For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

⁵ Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day is blasphemed.

⁶ Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore *they shall know* in that day that I *am* he that doth speak: behold, it is I.

Jeremiah 16:21

²¹ Therefore, behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know mine hand and my might; and they shall know that my name is The LORD.

3. God renews the covenant promised to Moses, having heard **the prayers** of oppressed Israel,

Exodus 6:4-5

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.

Exodus 2:23-25

²³ And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage.

²⁴ And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

²⁵ And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto *them*.

Exodus 3:7

⁷ And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

Exodus 4:30

³⁰ And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people.

Exodus 4:31

³¹ And the people believed: and when they heard that the

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

LORD had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.

4. God commands Moses to repeat His promises to Israel, Exodus 6:6-8;

Numbers 23:19

¹⁹ God *is* not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do *it*? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

1 Kings 8:56

⁵⁶ Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

Romans 4:21

²¹ And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

5. The crushed spirit of the depressed Israelites causes Moses to feel his need of more help from God, Exodus 6:9-12;

Psalm 73:2

² But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped.

II The Renewal of the Command to Moses and Aaron

1. God renews His charge to Moses, Exodus 6:13;

Acts 7:35

³⁵ This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send *to be* a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

Isaiah 49:13-16

¹³ Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.

¹⁴ But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.

¹⁵ Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.

¹⁶ Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands; thy walls *are* continually before me.

2. Aaron is made the spokesman for Moses, as God promised, Exodus 7:1, 2,

Exodus 4:14-16

¹⁴ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, *Is* not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.

¹⁵ And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do.

¹⁶ And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

3. God tells Moses again what Pharaoh's attitude will be, Exodus 7:3, 4;

Exodus 3:19

¹⁹ And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

Exodus 3:20

²⁰ And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.

4. God tells Moses that because of Pharaoh's attitude all the Egyptians will know about the God of Israel, Exodus 7:4, 5.

III The Appearance before Pharaoh and Supremacy of Israel's God

1. Moses and Aaron obey God's command, Exodus 7:6, 7.

2. A proof is given to convince Pharaoh of God's power, Exodus

Pharaoh.

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.

7:8-10.

3. Satan uses his emissaries, Jannes and Jambres, to confuse the Egyptians, but Israel's God is supreme, Exodus 7:11, 12;

2 Timothy 3:8-9

⁸ Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

⁹ But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as theirs also was.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

³ 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 2:7-12

⁷ 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.

Matthew 24:24

²⁴ For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Revelation 13:12-13

¹² And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

¹³ And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

Revelation 16:13-14

¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

¹⁴ For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

4. Pharaoh's heart is hardened against God, Exodus 7:13, 3;

Exodus 8:15

¹⁵ But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

Exodus 8:19

¹⁹ Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This *is* the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

Exodus 8:32

³² And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.

Exodus 9:7

⁷ And Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

Exodus 9:12

¹² And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had spoken unto Moses.

Exodus 9:34-35

³⁴ And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his

heart, he and his servants.

³⁵ And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go; as the LORD had spoken by Moses.

Exodus 10:1

¹ And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him:

Exodus 10:20

²⁰ But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.

Exodus 10:27

²⁷ But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go.

Exodus 14:8

⁸ And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel went out with an high hand.

Exodus 14:17-18

¹⁷ And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

¹⁸ And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

Proverbs 28:14

¹⁴ Happy *is* the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.

Proverbs 29:1

¹ He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth *his* neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Hebrews 3:13

¹³ But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

NOTES:

God had a purpose for the manner in which He delivered Israel from Egypt and its bondage. The captivity had been a long one and very severe, and it finally caused the Israelites to groan and cry to God for deliverance. When their prayers reached God He answered, sending Moses to lead them to Canaan. We can say then that the hard and difficult captivity was good for the Israelites because it drew them nearer to God. The miracles and plagues were to show to Israel, and to the world, the great power of the Almighty God and His concern and care for His people.

God, in renewing His charge to Moses, instructed him to tell Israel that they were to be a special people to the Lord Jehovah, with Him as their God. This extraordinary privilege was given because of the covenant with Abraham, and because God had chosen Israel as a nation through which He would give His law to the world at large; and, in addition, through whom He might send His Son, the Messiah, Who would complete the plan of redemption for all mankind.

The deliverance from Egypt was to take place in such a way that no man would receive glory and honour for it. By a high and mighty hand God was going to deliver Israel in His own way which would be a testimonial of the power of God, not only to the Israelites, but to the whole world as well.

One of the steps in the unfolding of God's revelation of Himself and His power to the Israelites at this time was a more complete manifestation of His sacred name. God had been known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to the world at large, as God Almighty and as God the Creator; but here He revealed Himself to Moses and the Israelites as Jehovah, which is a name more expressive of His moral attributes than any other of the many

names by which He is known in Scripture.

There is great significance in the names of God and the manner in which they are used. And here, as is the case with all Scripture, there is no detail that is handled carelessly or inserted without cause. The deliberate way in which God's different names are used shows a divine plan and purpose, the depths of which we shall never be able to explore fully, but each excursion we make into that field gives us richer blessings and a deeper conception of the great love of our God. By the way the divine names are used, it is also easy to see the unity of authorship of the numerous books of the Bible.

The first use of the name of God in the Bible occurs in the first verse of Genesis. "In the beginning **God** . . ." This is translated from the Hebrew word **Elohim** which is used 2,570 times in the Old Testament. It is in the plural form, thereby proving the doctrine of the Trinity but its use with singular verbs and adjectives displays a unity of action in the plural personality. (Read I John 5:7.) Its significance is that of greatness, might and strength. It further signifies the glory of God, showing creative and governing power, omnipotence, and sovereignty, and the power and ability to make and sustain a covenant relationship.

El Shaddai is the next name by which God was known to the world, and this is translated **God Almighty**. This is the name used in the first portion of Exodus 6:3, the name by which God was known to the patriarchs. It does not necessarily signify the omnipotence of God as it might seem, for the name **Elohim** does that; but rather, it signifies the One Who sheds forth and pours out sustenance and blessing, the all-sufficient One and the all-bountiful One. It shows the inexhaustible stores of His bounty, the riches and fullness of His grace, and the God from Whom comes every good and perfect gift.

We now see that (God was known to the nations of the world by these two names, but at this time particularly He began to call His people apart and pour upon them special manifestations of His favour. He does this by showing them more of Himself and by revealing to them more of His eternal and moral qualities. It is significant to notice that this is done, not at times of great blessing and apparent spiritual or temporal prosperity, but at a time of adversity and oppression, on the eve of that awesome and terrifying manifestation of God's power and holiness on Mount Sinai. It is not on flowery beds of ease that we are "carried to the skies"; but instead, it is through the toils of the road and the pain and stress of battle that God draws nearer to us.

The name **Jehovah**, which is translated **LORD** in the Old Testament (all letters capitalized, as distinguished from the Hebrew name **Adonai**), is the name which God revealed to Moses at this time of Israel's great trial in Egypt. It was given specifically and exclusively at that time for Israel's benefit. This name is used 6,823 times in the Old Testament and signifies the One Who is self-existent, possessing in Himself essential life and eternal existence. It expresses the personality or person of God -- and Him alone -- and is the proper name of the true God; but it is never used with the word true, as in the case of **Elohim**, for **Jehovah** is never used for any but the true God, the one and only God. All the moral and spiritual attributes of God are expressed as belonging to Jehovah.

The name was considered so sacred and holy by the Jews that they feared to pronounce it, and to this day the name Jehovah is never read in the synagogue nor uttered by them. The name **Adonai**, or another Hebrew word meaning simply **The Name**, was substituted for **Jehovah** in their services. Thus the original pronunciation of the name we call Jehovah was lost, and orthodox

QUESTIONS

1. By what name was God known to Abraham?
2. What name did God give by which He was to be known to Israel?
3. Had God heard the prayers of the Israelites?
4. Had God forgotten His covenant with Abraham?
5. Why did God want to deliver Israel Himself and not give credit to man for doing it?
6. Why was Israel slow in responding to the words Moses spoke to them?
7. What miracle did God perform through Moses before Pharaoh?
8. What was the purpose of this miracle?
9. What happened when the miracle was performed?
10. What was Pharaoh's attitude toward this miracle?

Jewry regard as a sign of Messiahship the one who can truly pronounce it.

The other principal name of God in the Old Testament is **Adonai**, translated **Lord** (in small letters). It is used 300 times in the Old Testament and appears mostly in plural form because of the plurality of the Godhead. It signifies complete ownership or mastership in the one to whom it is applied, and implies willing obedience and submission in the one using it. A few times in the Old Testament it is used in singular form; and these, too, are valuable proofs of the doctrine of the Trinity. Psalm 110:1 is a striking example of this usage. "The LORD [**Jehovah**] said unto my Lord [**Adonai**]." In Matthew 22:44 and Hebrews 1:13 we read that Jesus is the One to Whom the LORD Jehovah is speaking. Here the word **Adonai** is used in the singular form since it refers, not to the Trinity, but to Jesus Christ Himself as an individual.

Elohim, El-Shaddai, and Jehovah relate particularly to the person of God. In **Elohim** it is to the power and glory of His Being. In **El-Shaddai** it is as the beneficent and bountiful Bestower of powers, gifts, blessings, and fruitfulness for service. In Jehovah it is of Himself as a God of righteousness, holiness, love, and redemption. But **Adonai** takes up another phase of our relationship with God and makes or demands a definite claim upon our obedience and service more than any of the others.

It is interesting -- and soul-thrilling -- to note the deliberate use of the two names **Elohim** and **Jehovah** throughout other portions of the Old Testament beyond Exodus 6:3. The strong theocratic and historical books which are addressed particularly to Israel, such as Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, use chiefly **Jehovah**. The universalistic books, such as Ecclesiastes, Daniel, and Jonah, use Elohim almost exclusively. Psalms 42 through 84 almost exclusively use **Elohim**, while the other Psalms use, for the most part, **Jehovah**. This is absolutely a matter of diction and not merely the result of the styles of different authors, for the Psalms in both of the above sections are ascribed to David. It is a difference of divine purpose and plan.

God's purpose in all His dealings with mankind is to draw each one to Himself. He reveals Himself in various ways to accomplish devious ends and win the hearts of even the most sinful and degenerate. God's purpose in both the giving of the plagues and their removal, was to cause Pharaoh to repent, Israel to draw near to God, and the whole world to know that He was a God of power -- **the only True God!**

God performed miracles through Moses to demonstrate His power to the Egyptians. The magicians of Egypt, too, showed they had supernatural power -- though it was not of, or from, God. But God was supreme, for the serpent that sprung from Aaron's rod swallowed up all the others before it was changed back to the rod again. There remained no excuse for doubting the power of God or His ability to work in and through men, but Pharaoh hardened his heart against the God of Israel. If a man rejects mercy he becomes hardened. The same Sun of Righteousness that melts the icy heart, which has not previously felt the warmth of its cheering rays, will harden the heart of clay and make it as hard as stone. Such was the case with Pharaoh, who hardened his heart against God so many times that even the wonderful, far-reaching, and boundless mercies of Almighty God could not reach him.

