

Is It Fair to Punish Pharaoh if God Hardened His Heart?

Importance of studying the Old Testament

1. Studying OT develops our understanding of God and how He works in the lives of mankind
2. If we ignore the OT because they don't pertain to us, then we lose our perspective when we touch on subjects like God's sovereignty - man's free will - predestination - why bad things happen to good people
3. These topics become hotly debated because we want to take Scriptures out of their context and stand on them alone instead of relying on the whole counsel of God's Word which begins in the book of Genesis and ends with the book of Revelation and every piece in between is important

If God is going to harden Pharaoh's heart so he won't let the people go - then why even send Moses?

Is it fair for Pharaoh to be punished for what God did to him?

Let's reason through these very important and fundamental questions to our understanding of how God works in the lives of people

- God desired to have fellowship with man - thus creating Adam and Eve and placing them in a perfect world
- They walked with God communing with Him in close fellowship
- God gave them all that was good with just one restriction - not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
 - Love is not love unless we choose to love
 - if we are made to love or have no choice in the matter then it is not love
 - love is in the choices that we make
 - will we love with enough conviction and trust
 - that it will overcome the lies and temptations of this world
 - That we will know that our loved one is watching out for us and doing what is for our best at all times
- Man chose to not trust/love God enough to be obedient to Him
 - they thought there was something better out there for them
 - They thought God was holding back on them
 - Trust and relationship were broken

- Sin separated man from the God who personally walked in the garden with them
- Man hid from God (God came pursuing man)
- Sinful man can no longer be in the presence of a holy God
- there has been a death to that relationship

BUT

- God still loves man and still desires that fellowship with him
- Man's shame of his actions causes him to hide from a holy God
- With a broken heart that comes with the betrayal of that trust - God reached down and killed an innocent animal to cover the shame that sin brought upon man

SINCE

- the one on one, face-to-face relationship is gone between God and man
- God still desires to speak with man
- God began raising up people (spokesmen) that would be His voice on earth
 - prophets
 - priests
 - kings
- even nations became God's mouth piece to speak to the world to bridge the great chasm that loomed between God and man

EVENTUALLY

God would send His Word - His Son - to be the final word needed to bridge the gap between God and man

Things to Remember When Satan Wants Us to Believe His Lies

Truths We Need to Constantly Rehearse in Our Minds in the Trials and Storms

1. God desires fellowship with mankind
2. God made a perfect world with perfect communion between Himself and His creation
3. Sin broke that perfect fellowship
4. God had a plan (before the foundations of the earth were laid) to restore that fellowship and bring back the perfect world He desired for us
5. God has always made a way for man to communicate with Him - those who seek, will find Him
6. God has always been involved in the lives of man and the activities of the world as He brings His plan to fruition
7. God's plan is a systematic way to rid the world of sin, to separate those whose hearts desire sin from the hearts who desire Him, and to bring back the perfect world where those who have chosen to love Him will dwell together for all eternity
8. Everything that happens in our world today is to bring about God's destruction of sin and salvation to all those who are truly His
9. We can follow that journey and how it being accomplished in God's Word
10. His ways are not our ways and His thoughts not our thoughts - He sees the big picture, we can only see a tiny piece and even then we can't see clearly - that is why we need to trust and follow His leading in our lives

With that understanding let's look at this idea of why God hardened Pharaoh's heart and dealing with the objection that people may have of saying but that's not fair

- God informs Moses about what He is going to do - these things are NOT going to just happen because - it's not coincidence or bad luck (Ex 4:21)
- God was going to harden Pharaoh's heart (4:22)
- Pharaoh was given warning what would happen if he refused to let the people go (4:23)

- 10 times God says that He will harden Pharaoh's heart (Ex 4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17)

- 10 times Scripture said that the king hardened his own heart (Ex 7:13, 14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 34, 35; 13:15)

- There is a balance in Scripture

- Romans 9:14-33; 11:11-36
 - There is personal responsibility

 - God's will and absolute power

 - Need to accept what is said - even when we may not understand it
 - God is omniscient and omnipotent - all powerful and all knowing

 - He has a perfect plan to bring about salvation to the Jews as well as to the Gentile nations (the whole world)

- Through this account we see God bringing deliverance for His people and judgment on the sinfulness of Egypt and her kings