The Spirit of Pharaoh Lives Today

God gave a direct command on nine occasions to Pharaoh of Egypt saying, "*Let my people go that they may serve me*" (see Ex. 5:1 – 10:4). After each command, Pharaoh would harden his heart and not obey God's command. The pride of Pharaoh precluded him from making the wise choice of following God's commands. Said spirit prevails in today's society.

God Hardens Pharaoh's Heart

Moses recorded in the Book of Exodus eleven instances where God stated that He hardened the heart of Pharaoh. God did not cause Pharaoh to sin on this occasion (cf. James 1:13). The Lord simply used the pride of Pharaoh's heart to accomplish His will (cf. Rom. 9:17). The more we study each of these eleven cases, the easier it becomes to determine How God hardened Pharaoh's heart.

Moses and Aaron first commanded Pharaoh to let God's people go at Exodus 5:1. Pharaoh responded by saying, "*Who is Jehovah, that I should hearken unto his voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, and moreover I will not let Israel go*" (Ex. 5:2). Seven plagues later, "*Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews,* ***How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me****? Let my people go, that they may serve me*" (Ex. 10:3). Pharaoh's pride would not allow him to submit to the Lord's commands. The conclusion is simple. God hardened Pharaoh's heart by way of commanding him to do something the king was not willing to do. Pharaoh was the king of a powerful empire. He was not going to be told what to do by anyone.

Practical Application

Many today are filled with the spirit of Pharaoh in that their hearts are stout with pride (Prov. 16:5). When the word of God commands them to discontinue a sin or exposes a practice to be sinful, they harden their hearts as did Pharaoh. Though they may not proclaim, "*Who is Jehovah that I should obey His commands*," their actions certainly make said spirit manifest (cf. Matt. 7:16).

Jesus used the same principle of hardening hearts by teaching in parables. When the disciples of the Lord asked Him why He taught in parables, the Lord told them that it was because many people's "*heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing...*" (Matt. 13:10-15). It did not matter how many signs God showed Pharaoh, and it did not matter how many signs Jesus showed the people during His days; they were not going to believe and obey (Lk. 16:31). The very words of Jesus hardened their hearts because it demanded something the people were not willing to do; i.e., obey God's commands. The apostle John recorded, "*But though he had done so many signs before them, yet they believed not on him: that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? For this cause they could not believe, for that Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and* ***he hardened their heart****; Lest they should see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and should turn, And I should heal them*" (cf. Jn. 12:37-40).

The spirit of Pharaoh lives today. Men and women who hear God's instructions yet reject His authoritative words voluntarily harden their hearts against Him (cf. I Cor. 1:18). Let us not get discouraged at the hard hearted masses but rather continue in faithful service to the Lord (cf. Jn. 7:7; 15:18ff). Rest assured that God dwells with those who humble themselves before Him and keep His commandments (cf. Isa. 57:15).