

Sermon Outline

THE CONFRONTATION | Geoff Lin

Readings: Exodus 4:19-23; Exodus 5:1-21; Exodus 7:8-13

1. Spoiler alert! (4:19-23)

- "I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go" (v21)

2. The initial skirmish (5:1-21)

- "it's not like Israel was any better or more deserving than the Egyptians"

Ex 3:18 The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, "The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God."	Ex 5:1 Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ' Let my people go , so that they may hold a festival to me in the wilderness.'" 2 Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go." 3 Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, or he may strike us with plagues or with the sword. "
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3. The staff-into-a-snake sign (7:8-13)

- "Pharaoh's heart became hard and he would not listen to them, just as the LORD had said" (v13)

4. The first 9 plagues (7:14-10:29)

1. Blood in the Nile (7:14-24): "Pharaoh's heart became hard" (v22)
2. Frogs (7:25-8:15): "he hardened his heart" (v15)
3. Gnats (8:16-19): "Pharaoh's heart was hard" (v19)
4. Flies (8:20-32): "Pharaoh hardened his heart" (v32)
5. Livestock (9:1-7): "his heart was unyielding" (v7)
6. Boils (9:8-12): "the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart" (v12)
7. Hail (9:13-35): "He and his officials hardened their hearts/Pharaoh's heart was hard" (vv34-5)
8. Locusts (10:1-20): "the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart" (v20)
9. Darkness (10:21-29): "the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart" (v27)

Some theological reflections:

Q. Did Pharaoh really have a choice?

Ex 9:34 When Pharaoh saw that the rain and hail and thunder had stopped, he sinned again: **he and his officials hardened their hearts.** 35 So **Pharaoh's heart was hard** and he would not let the Israelites go, just as the LORD had said through Moses. 10:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for **I have hardened his heart and the hearts of his officials** so that I may perform these miraculous signs of mine among them ..."

"The Bible teaches that both of the following propositions are true:

1. God is absolutely sovereign, but his sovereignty never functions in such a way that human responsibility is curtailed, minimized, or mitigated.
2. Human beings are morally responsible creatures - they significantly choose, rebel, obey, believe, defy, make decisions, and so forth, and they are rightly held accountable for such actions; but this characteristic never functions so as to make God absolutely contingent ...

The view that both of these propositions are true I shall call *compatibilism*." (D Carson, *How Long O Lord: Reflections on Suffering and Evil*)

Acts 4:27 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. 28 They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.

Q2. Did the Egyptians really deserve all this?

Q3. Are there any signs of God's grace?

5. So what, for us?

1. Our choices ARE real (so make them joyfully!)

2. It's not too late ... yet!

2 Pet 3:8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

EXPLORE