
HARDNESS MAKES IT HARDER

EXODUS 7



One of the most serious spiritual conditions to have is a hardened heart. That can happen if, instead of listening to and learning from God's Word, God's power, and God's judgments, we are deaf to them and dismiss them.

As we can see in Exodus 7, when Pharaoh hardened his heart to God's Word, God's power, and God's judgments, God punished him with more hardening, the hardening got worse and worse, so that he was eventually as sensitive as a stone to suffering. Let's see the alarming impact of a hardened heart with a view to ensuring the opposite happens to us.

- **A HARD HEART DISMISSES GOD'S WORD (1-7)**
- **A HARD HEART DISMISSES GOD'S POWER (8-13)**
- **A HARD HEART DISMISSES GOD'S JUDGMENTS (14-25)**

LEARNING

A HARD HEART DISMISSES GOD'S WORD (1-7)

Having commissioned Moses to speak God's Word to Pharaoh, God confirms Moses's fear that Pharaoh will not listen. Yes, says God, **I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and...Pharaoh will not listen to you** (3-4). That's exactly what happened (6-7). God's Word was dismissed.

**GOD'S WORD NEVER LEAVES US THE SAME.
IT EITHER SOFTENS US OR SETS US.**

"OK, he won't listen to the Word of God, but surely he'll listen to the wonders of God?" Nope, God says, my signs won't do it either.

A HARD HEART DISMISSES GOD'S POWER (8-13)

When God's power is demonstrated in the wonder of the staff becoming a serpent, Pharaoh's magicians did the same with the devil's power (8-12). The result? **Still Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said** (13). God's power was dismissed.

GOD'S POWER EITHER STRENGTHENS OUR FAITH
OR STRENGTHENS OUR SIN.

"Yes, but if he could see a judgment, he would listen and soften." Let's see what happens.

A HARD HEART DISMISSES GOD'S JUDGMENTS (14-25)

God judged the Nile by turning it into blood, so that all the fish died, the water stank, and the people couldn't drink it (14-21). This will do it, surely. Nope. The magicians did a devilish duplication and **Pharaoh's heart remained hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said. Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he did not take even this to heart** (22-23). God's judgment was dismissed.

Pharaoh was hardened not just to God's voice but to human suffering. For the next seven days the thirsty **Egyptians dug along the Nile for water to drink, for they could not drink the water of the Nile** (25).

IF WE'RE HARDENED TO GOD,
WE'LL BE HARDENED TO PEOPLE.

Do you see how hard the human heart can become? A hard heart dismisses God's Word, God's power, and God's judgments.

LOVING

When we see how hard the human heart can become, how thankful we should be that God has softened, sensitized, and tenderized our hearts. As I look back on my teens and early twenties, I see myself hardening my heart to God's Word, God's power, and God's judgments. I was steely cold to God and others. But God, in his massive mercy, broke through my thick layers of unbelief and melted my heart. I'm sure many of you have similar stories of grace. Let's sing songs to the Sinner-Softener.

LIVING

Be sensitive and responsive to God's Word, power, and judgments to soften and sensitize your heart to God's voice and human suffering.
