

THE UNREPENTED HEART OF PHARAOH

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge but the fools despise wisdom and discipline.” (Proverbs 1:7)

How can a man keep his way pure? Every man is walking certain way that he thinks is right. Although some already know and acknowledge that they walk a way that is not pure in the sight of God but why they do not correct themselves; many do not accept that they follow ways that are impure before God. They are unaware of their faults, but they may turn away from their wrong ways when someone instructs them with the word of truth. Yet, others already know that what they are doing is wrong and the way they are following is impure but still they don't want to change and go back to the right way that God wants them to be.

The Bible speaks about the story of Pharaoh, how he resisted God and refused to listen to what the Lord had commanded him to do. The people of God were living in Egypt as slaves to the king or Pharaoh of Egypt. They were asked to do hard work in building cities and they were oppressed under the force labor. They were in miserable condition, and their suffering and cry had reached God who became concern to rescue them and save them from the heavy hands of their oppressor, the Pharaoh and his soldiers. Therefore God spoke to Moses and raised him as the prophets. God told Moses: ***“So now, go, I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people out of Egypt.” (Exodus 3:10)***

Moses in response to God's command, he went to Pharaoh and said to him, ***“This is what the Lord says, ‘Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert.’” (Exodus 5:1)*** But Pharaoh despised God's command and he answered to Moses, ***“Who is the LORD that I should obey him and let the people go? I do not know the Lord and I will not let His people go.” (Exodus 5:2)***

Indeed God gave Moses power and authority, and his missions to bring God's people out from Egypt were accompanied by many signs and wonders that happened in front of Pharaoh and his people. Moses threw his staff down before Pharaoh and it became a snake. Pharaoh asked his magicians to do the same; each one threw down his staff and became snake. But Moses' staff swallowed up their staffs. In spite of that Pharaoh's heart became hard and he did not listen to God to let the people go. The disobedience of Pharaoh to God's command and his hardened unyielding heart against God brought upon Him and on the Egyptians many disasters and plagues; the waters of Egypt turned to blood; the plague of frogs came from the rivers and filled the Palace and the people's houses. The plague of lice from the dust fall on Pharaoh and upon every people; the plague of flies filled the whole land of Egypt; the plague that killed all the livestock of the Egyptians; the plague of boils that fell on men and animals; the plague of heavy hailstorm that struck everything in the field both men and animals and plants were destroyed; the plague of the locusts that ate the remaining trees and plants after

the hailstorm; and the plague of darkness covered Egypt for three days. In these plagues Pharaoh was asking Moses to pray to God to remove them so that he would allow them to go, but after each answered prayer to remove the plague Pharaoh's heart was hardened and never allowed the people to go out of Egypt to worship God. Finally, God sent the last plague – the death of the firstborn. The death angel passed by and killed all the firstborn males in Egypt, including Pharaoh's son, and in every house there was a dead man. After that disaster, Pharaoh allowed God's people to go out of Egypt and worship God. After the people of God left Egypt, Pharaoh followed them with his army, but God saved His people when He opened the Red Sea and the people of God walked in the dry land to the other side. The Egyptian soldiers when they came in the mid of Red Sea the water rolled back upon them and the entire Pharaoh's army died.

The above is the model of unrepentant heart – Pharaoh and his attitude to resist God. His sin was the reason of continuous disasters that came to him and to his people. Every plague brought loss and suffering on Pharaoh and the Egyptians, in forms of material loss, land resources, and finally the loss of people's life. These were the outcome of sin and disobedience to God's command. For the wages of sin is death, and Pharaoh reaped what he sown.

The word of God described the hardened heart of Pharaoh with his endeavor to resist and despise God's commands. The above description of a hardened heart, would you have it but unaware of it? You do certain things and resist God's word that correct you. You tell lies, you boast, you don't forgive, you have pride, you like authority and the love to control and rule over, you indulge in immoral acts, worldliness, debauchery with alcohol, you revenge and desire to hurt others because they hurt you. “Do you fear God?” Do you know the Lord?” You continue to do these sins and alike and you fail to obey God's commands. Until when do you stop resisting God? Yet, the Lord gives you a chance to repent and to relent from your sinful acts and desire. ***“The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9)***

God has a great plan for every one of us. He sent His son Jesus who died for us on the cross to free us from sin and from death. We ought to respond to God's word, and be attracted to his great love for us. ***“As it just been said: Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.” (Hebrew 3:15)*** Let it be then that you will be convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit that you may repent from all the sins that you had commit against God and against His people; that you should turn away from sin toward God.

My dear and beloved: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Do not despise God's wisdom. God's word will free you from the bonds of sins, and will bring you once again in fellowship with the Lord. Personally start to speak to God in prayer: ***“Father God in heaven, I come to you in the name of Jesus. I thank you for your love and your patience for me. I thank You that You want me to come back to You. Forgive my sins _____, and give me the grace to resist temptation, and to walk in your ways. This is my prayer in Jesus' name.” Amen.***