

Can you comment on how God had said that he would harden Pharaoh's heart, prior to Moses meeting Pharaoh (Exodus 7:1–5)?

So then he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. (Romans 9:18)

And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. (Exodus 7:3)

In reading Exodus, you will notice that God told Moses long before anything happened that God would eventually harden Pharaoh's heart. The question is, when did God actually harden his heart? The King James Version will give you the impression that God hardened Pharaoh's heart earlier than in fact God did. It is an inadequate, not to say mistaken, translation. Read other translations and you will find that they are different. The point at which God himself steps in, and it says explicitly in Scripture that God hardened his heart, is to be found in Exodus 9:12. It is not said explicitly that God hardened his heart before that occasion.

Because God foresees all things, he announced to Moses (Exodus 7:3) that eventually he would harden Pharaoh's heart. After that you will read two different phrases: 'Pharaoh hardened his heart' (Exodus 8:15, 32; 9:34); and, 'Pharaoh's heart was hardened' (Exodus 7:22; 8:19)—by whom it doesn't say. So the first time you actually read that God hardened his heart is only later on when Pharaoh had rejected God's persistent offer of evidence (Exodus 9:12, and again in Exodus 10:20, 27; 11:10).

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