

FROM FAITH TO FAITH

GRANBURY STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST

A Hardened Heart

D.J. Stucky

Anyone who has studied the Bible for very long has realized that all passages are not created equal. Some passages are simple to grasp. John 13:34-35 records a clearly understood command for God's people to love one another. Other passages are not so clear. Peter points this out when he says that Paul had written "...in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which some are hard to understand..." (2 Peter 3:15-16). Of course, difficult passages are not limited to the writings of Paul. Both the Old and New Testaments contain scriptures that men have struggled to understand. One such passage is Exodus 7:3-4.

God had fully prepared Moses and Aaron to demand that Pharaoh release Israel, and he sent them to fulfill that task. However, before they were sent, God knew the outcome. He told them, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh will not heed you..." (Exodus 7:3-4a). Many have wrestled with the idea of God hardening Pharaoh's heart. At the same time, there are other passages that say that Pharaoh hardened his own heart (Ex. 7:13, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 34-35). The question is this: Did God harden Pharaoh's heart, or did Pharaoh harden Pharaoh's heart? The answer is "yes".

We often hear people say things like, "You make me so angry!" A child who hits their sibling might say, "She made me do it!" Phrases like these are repeated often, yet they are not completely true. The reality is that we have full control of what we feel and do. A child may hit in reaction to the actions of another child. We may feel anger in reaction to what someone else says. But we cannot be forced to do anything. The same idea can be applied to God hardening Pharaoh's heart. God judges us according to our actions (2 Cor. 5:10). If God determined that we would sin, He could not be called a just God. Therefore, God could not have forced Pharaoh to respond a certain way. God simply made demands of Pharaoh, and Pharaoh chose to react maliciously.

We choose how we respond to God. The word of God is powerful and pierces the heart (Heb. 4:12). We can either be moved to repentance when confronted with His word, or we can harden our hearts against Him. God will not change His commandments, nor will He change His word (1 Pet. 1:23b, Matt. 5:18). Thus, the choice of whether our hearts are hardened remains fully with us. May we have the courage to set aside our pride and do whatever God demands so that we may be pleasing to Him.

Shepherds

Sid Carruth
Jeff Day
Kenneth Helm
Clark Lehtinen
Tim Norman

Deacons

Gary Barger
Ryan Cowan
Vince Grinnell
Justin Hewlett
Bill Hughes

Minister

Kevin Rhodes

Associate

Pat McIntosh
D.J. Stucky

Sunday

Bible Study
9:00 am
AM Worship
10:00 am
PM Worship
5:00 pm

Wednesday

Ladies Class
10:00 am
Bible Study
7:00 pm

Cleburne,
Texas

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Messianic Meaning

Kevin W. Rhodes

David's words recorded in Psalm 110 anticipate the Messiah so precisely that his prophetic utterances from this passage formed the foundation of inspired arguments multiple times in the New Testament. As such, they deserve even deeper consideration and explanation because the implications of this single psalm offer powerful testimony to the truth of Christianity in the midst of giving witness regarding Christ Himself. Almost exactly a millennium before their fulfillment, by inspiration the shepherd king of Israel pointed to a Superior and, in so doing, pointed to a superior way.

The opening words, "The LORD said to my Lord" (Psa. 110:1a), establish the Messianic nature of the psalm. David's acknowledgement of the lordship of another, while reigning as king, by Yahweh's own declaration, demands recognizing this Lord as his superior—not just a future descendant—as Jesus' question to the Pharisees demonstrated (Mark 12:36). Beyond that, the statement that follows demonstrates not only His Messianic nature but also His divine identity, for sitting at the right hand of Yahweh puts Him above David, above angels (Heb. 1:13), and in the position of Co-Regent with God (Acts 2:34-36), reigning with the glory of a great battle until He should secure the final victory (1 Cor. 15:25, 55-57). Thus David noted the coming Messianic rule, imbued with divine authority expressed through divine decree (Psa. 110:2; Matt. 28:18-20), calling out for volunteers to join the cause of the reigning Monarch (Psa. 110:3). However, despite the astounding promise of these first three verses, the next statement delivers an equally powerful prophecy, "The LORD has sworn And will not relent, 'You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek'" (Psa. 110:4). This simple combination created a whole series of problems for Jewish interpreters. The identity of the Messiah itself baffled them greatly, holding steadfastly to the Descendant of David due to other prophecies while ignoring His promised superiority. However, a descendant

of David would come from the tribe of Judah. Nevertheless, this Descendant would also be a priest, declared so in the strongest way possible, as the writer of Hebrews recognized (Heb. 5:5-11; 6:13-18). Yet, this—by necessity—required a change from the Law of Moses to something new since priests came from the tribe of Levi and the household of Aaron (Heb. 7:11-17). Therefore, God having given Him the roles of King, High Priest, and, by implication, Lawgiver, the Messiah would reign at the right hand of God until His will was fulfilled and the final foes' defeat came to fruition (Psa. 110:5-7).

Thus, this short psalm took the previous promises of the coming Messiah in an unexpected direction. The Messiah would indeed come from the Judaic lineage of David, but He would be greater than David, the founder of the dynasty, though He Himself was a descendant—an untenable position in the ancient mind unless the Son also preceded David, which He did as Deity (John 8:58). Moreover, He would serve as High Priest, consolidating the leadership of God's people by divine appointment with the implication, though missed, that His rule would also mark the end of the Mosaic Law's authority and the beginning of His own superior authority. This psalm therefore anticipated some of the most fundamental and foundational doctrines of Christianity regarding the identity of the Messiah, the consolidation of kingship and priesthood, the abolition of the Law of Moses, and the Messiah's authority to judge not only Israel but everyone.

This may seem rather mundane centuries after Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, but its prophetic power demonstrates that this was always God's plan, and Jesus lived it to perfection. Christianity hinges on every single one of these principles, and the Holy Spirit offered mankind clues of their coming one thousand years before their fulfillment. Thus, these doctrines of the New Testament are no invention of the apostles but rather an elaboration on the divine purpose, here proven by prophecy.



News and Notes

Prayer request...

- Amy Hackler is out of the hospital.
- Mary Collins, Tom Collins' mother, is in need of prayers.
- Royce Frederick, missionary to India, has skin cancer. He will have a total of thirty radiation treatments that are scheduled to be completed in June. Cards can reach him at West Freeway Church of Christ, 1900 S. Las Vegas Trail, Ft. Worth, TX 76108.
- Carol McGilvray, Gavin's grandmother, has been moved to rehab.
- Bill Massey, Melinda Norman's brother, is home from rehab. He continues to need prayers.

Please remember in prayer

Amy Hackler, Bill Massey (Melinda Norman's brother), Carol McGilvray, Brody Nelson, James Pike (Donna York's brother-in-law), Laura Stephens, Diane Sexton (Austin Habluetzel's mother), Larry Shirley (Betty Rutledge's brother)

Responses

Weldon and Donna York responded to the invitation Sunday. They need prayers for problems with family members that are causing trouble. Please pray that God will help them through this.

90th Birthday Celebration!

Bess Yates will be 90 years old on Saturday, May 26th. Everyone is invited to a celebration for her on Sunday, May 27th, after the morning worship service in the annex. There will be finger foods from 12:00-3:00 in the annex.

Please note...

- Wednesday, May 30th, we will have singing in the annex. There will be no classes.
- Sunday, June 3rd, is promotion day for the classes.
- Pat and Cheryl McIntosh will be leaving for the Ukraine on Thursday, May 31st. They will return on Saturday, June 9th. Please keep them in your prayers.

Centurion of Scripture Challenge 2018 (NKJV)

Matthew 5:39, 40

But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.

Those who Serve

Lords' Supper: 5/20

Front South

Larry McWilliams
Kenneth Helm
Vince Grinnell

Front North

J. D. Allen
Tom Collins
Logan Frasier

Back South

Perry Elkins
Royce Gorman
Sid Carruth

Back North

Jason Hackler
Wesley Hackler
Conner Hackler

Leading prayers:

Sunday AM

Gavin McGilvray

Sunday PM

Will Cammack

Tim Norman

Wednesday PM

Bill Cashion

Kyle Day

Announcements:

Sunday AM-PM:

Justin Hewlett

Wednesday

Ryan Cowan

Song leaders:

Sunday AM

Jeff Day

Sunday PM

Jeff Day

Wednesday PM

Sid Carruth

Foyer Personnel:

Sunday & Wednesday

James Hunt

Mike Hight

Collection Counting

Jeff Day / Paul Murphy

Beacon of Truth, Pat McIntosh's internet radio program will be on Monday thru Friday at 7:00 AM.

Expositions, Kevin's television program, airs on GBN every Monday night at 7:30 pm, every Thursday night at 6:00 pm, and every Saturday at 2:30 pm.



Sermons for Sunday

AM

The Joy of Heaven
D.J. Stucky

PM

Humility Begets Unity
Phil. 2:1-4

Calendar of Events



6/6-8/29 Granbury Street Summer Series

7/5-8/9 Family Summer Series

9/7-8 Marriage and Parenting Seminar
with Neal and Kathy Pollard

10/21-24 Gospel Meeting
with Todd Clippard



Our Records

Bible Class.....117

AM Worship.....191

PM Worship.....116

Wednesday Bible Class.....131

Contribution.....\$5,185

Granbury Street Church of Christ

1211 N. Granbury Street
Cleburne, TX 76033

817-517-7713 (Local) or 817-517-6515 (Metro)

FAX: 817-556-3822

granburystreet@aol.com

www.granburystreetchurchofchrist.com