



**A NEW KIND OF YOU**  
*"A New Freedom"*

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**February 11-12, 2012**

1. Open in prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to increase your understanding of what it means to be redeemed.
  
2. Read Ephesians 1:6-10.
  - As a faithful Jew, the Apostle Paul, when speaking of redemption, would've thought of Israel's single greatest event, the Exodus.
  
  - Read Exodus 2:23-25 and 4:21-23.
    - What was Israel's purpose?
  
    - What was preventing Israel from living out their purpose as God's people?
  
  - Read Exodus 4:21-23\*, Exodus 6:6 and Genesis 12:1-3.
    - What is God's motivation for redeeming Israel out of slavery in Egypt?
  
    - What are you in slavery to that you need to be redeemed from?
  
    - By what means does God use to redeem you from whatever you're in slavery to? (See Ephesians 1:7)
  
3. Pray for one another to trust in Jesus' blood that redeems us.

NOTE: Please understand, our passions for the things that enslave us may never go away, but the Spirit's power will enable us to have self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

**Soul-tattoo:**

Enter into Christ, God the Father's Beloved.

Commit to living free by participating in the 5 Paths of Freedom (Worship, Connect, Serve, Give, Invite).

\*Many people have questions surrounding the passage of scripture Exodus 4:21. Read and discuss the following excerpt from Dr. Norman Geisler and Dr. Thomas Howe’s book on Bible difficulties.<sup>1</sup>

**EXODUS 4:21—If God hardened Pharaoh’s heart, how can Pharaoh be held responsible?**

**PROBLEM:** The Bible quotes God as saying, “I will harden his [Pharaoh’s] heart, so that he will not let the people go.” But if God hardened Pharaoh’s heart, then Pharaoh cannot be held morally responsible for his actions, since he did not do it of his own free will, but out of constraint (cf. 2 Cor. 9:7; 1 Peter 5:2).

**SOLUTION:** God did not harden Pharaoh’s heart contrary to Pharaoh’s own free choice. The Scripture makes it very clear that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. It declares that Pharaoh’s heart “grew hard” (Ex. 7:13), that Pharaoh “hardened his heart” (Ex. 8:15), and that “Pharaoh’s heart grew hard” the more God worked on it (Ex. 8:19). Again, when God sent the plague of the flies, “Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also” (Ex. 8:32). This same or like phrase is repeated over and over (cf. Ex. 9:7, 34–35). In fact, with the exception of God’s prediction of what would happen (Ex. 4:21), the fact is that Pharaoh hardened his own heart first (Ex. 7:13; 8:15, 8:32, etc.), and then God hardened it later (cf. Ex. 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27).

Furthermore, the sense in which God hardened his heart is similar to the way the sun hardens clay and also melts wax. If Pharaoh had been receptive to God’s warnings, his heart would not have been hardened by God. But when God gave Pharaoh a reprieve from the plagues, he took advantage of the situation. “But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not heed them [Moses and Aaron], as the Lord had said” (Ex. 8:15).

The question can be summarized as follows: does God harden hearts?

**GOD DOES NOT HARDEN HEARTS**

Initially

Directly

Against free choice

As to their cause

**GOD DOES HARDEN HEARTS**

Subsequently

Indirectly

Through free choice

As to their effect

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<sup>1</sup> Geisler, N. L., & Howe, T. A. (1992). *When Critics Ask: A Popular Handbook on Bible Difficulties* (65–66). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.