

## **A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON THE BOOK OF HEBREWS**

### **A CONTRITE HEART, O GOD, YOU WILL NOT DESPISE**

Hebrews 3:7-8 “. . . the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts . . .”

God sent Moses to Pharaoh to tell Pharaoh to permit the Children of Israel to leave Egypt so they could go to the promised land God would provide them. God sent Moses ten times and ten times Pharaoh “hardened his heart.” Even though God sent nine plagues and then the worst of all, the tenth one where all the first-born Egyptians died, Pharaoh still called his army together to pursue Israel with every intent to capture and force them back into slavery.

The writer to the Hebrews exhorts, “. . . if you hear His (Yahweh’s) voice, do not harden your heart(s).” Can you really harden your heart when God speaks to you as He did to Pharaoh? There are many ways to turn off your heart to God speaking to you such as failing to follow His commands or Jesus’ invitation to follow Him. A cold heart for sure and perhaps one that is hard chooses consciously to decide not to attend worship services knowing full well God is calling you into His presence there to speak with you, hear your confession, announce to you His forgiveness, and encourage you in your spiritual journey.

It is a “broken and contrite heart” that God does not despise. (Psalm 51:17) God yearns for you to pour out to Him from the bottom of your heart your confession of sins. It is His desire to hear your confession and to forgive everyone of your sins for the sake of the life, death, and resurrection of His Son Jesus. God treasures your words of love for Him that flow from your grateful heart.

Pharaoh’s hard heart cost him, his army and nation greatly. The cost was more than lives, money, or power. It was a cost that was eternal. They died physically, but worse yet they were condemned to eternal death because of their hard hearts. God is calling to you today and everyday to recognize your sins, confess and repent of them. For Jesus’ sake, He longs for you to ask Him to forgive you every sin you commit. “A broken and contrite heart He does not despise.”

Prayer: Holy Spirit, open up my heart to the voice of God calling me to repent and receive His forgiveness for Jesus' sake. In Jesus' name. Amen.

As rebels, Lord, who foolishly have wandered Far from Your love—  
Unfed, unclean, unclothed—  
Dare we recall Your wealth so rashly squandered,  
Dare hope to glean that bounty which we loathed?

Still we return, our contrite words rehearsing,  
Speech, that within Your warm embrace soon dies;  
All of our guilt, our shame, our pain reversing  
As tears of joy and welcome fill Your eyes.

A feast of love for us You are preparing;  
We who were lost, You give an honored place!  
“Come, eat; come, drink, and be no more despairing—  
Here taste again the treasures of My grace.”  
(LSB 612)