

# Pharaoh Hardened His Own Heart

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Source: Original (Steve Fink)

*"Who is mighty?" Not one who can conquer his enemies but "One who can conquer himself." [Pirkei Avot 4:1]*

איזה הוא גיבור הכובש את יצרו

Many things influence us: our genes, our parents, our early childhood, our race, creed, culture, class, and the persuasions and pressures of our environment.

But influence is not control.

Judaism is in general, and Pesach is specifically, a tutorial in Freedom: in the ability to say *"No"*; to conquer instinct by conscience.

**Pharaoh was born free but became a slave to his own passions.**

Once a person has chosen a path of good habits or evil habits, he tends to continue along that path, and it becomes harder and harder to change his course.

We have *bechira* (free-will) to accept or refuse to accept *the yoke of Heaven*.

First we are Free. Don't blame others, or chance, or ill-fortune. *The Choice Is Yours; The Responsibility Is Yours*