

# EXODUS 5

Written and compiled by Gary Kukis

**Exodus 5:1–23**

**Moses Confronts Pharaoh/Work Requirements Increased**

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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Links to the [word-by-word](#), [verse-by-verse](#) studies of **Exodus** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) (that is what this document is). This incorporates 2 previous studies done in the book of Exodus. However, much of this material was thrown together without careful editing. Therefore, from time to time, there will be concepts and exegetical material which will be repeated, because there was no overall editing done once all of this material was combined.

There is a second, less complete set of weekly lessons of Exodus ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Every word of that study can be found in the word-by-word, verse-by-verse studies.

This study makes reference to a wide-range of sources. There are quotations from doctrinal teachers, of course; but from Catholic commentaries and from other sources as well. Wherever I found relevant truth, I quoted from it or was inspired by it. Even though it is clear that some churches have a better concept of our reason for being here, that does not mean that there is no truth to be found anywhere else. So, from time to time, I will quote from John Calvin, even though I do not subscribe to 5-point Calvinism; I will quote from some Catholic sources, even

though I believe that they are very wrong regarding Mary, the pope, apostolic succession and other such doctrines. The intention is for this to be the most thorough and accurate study of Exodus available anywhere.

Also, **it is not necessary that you read the grey Hebrew exegesis tables**. They are set apart from the rest of the study so that you can easily skip over them (based upon the suggestion of a friend). However, if you ever doubt the translation of a word, phrase or a verse, these translation tables are then available.

**Preface:** Moses and Aaron go before Pharaoh and call for a time of worship for the sons of Israel. Pharaoh refuses and increases the work requirements of the Hebrew slaves. The Hebrew foremen complain to Moses and Aaron and Moses takes their complaint to God.

*Bible Summary: Moses and Aaron told Pharaoh to let the Israelites go into the desert to worship. Pharaoh refused and increased their workload instead.<sup>1</sup>*

There are many **chapter commentaries** on the book of Exodus. This will be the most extensive examination of Exodus 5, where you will be able to examine in depth every word of the original text. Every attempt has been made to make this both a complete and self-contained study. Therefore, all references, vocabulary, and related concepts should be found within this extensive study. Easy access links to more in-depth studies of some vocabulary words, concepts and doctrines are also provided.

## Quotations:

### Outline of Chapter 5:

#### Introduction

vv. 1–5	<b>Moses and Aaron Speak to Pharaoh</b>
vv. 6–11	<b>Pharaoh Increases the Workload of His Hebrew Slaves</b>
vv. 12–14	<b>The Slaves Are Unable to Complete the Required Work</b>
vv. 15–19	<b>The Hebrew Foremen Unsuccessfully Appeal to Pharaoh</b>
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#### Chapter Summary

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### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines:

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Introduction	<b>The Big Picture (Exodus 3–6A)</b>
Introduction	<b>Paragraph Divisions of Modern Translation for Exodus 5</b>

<sup>1</sup> From <http://www.biblesummary.info/exodus> accessed July 10, 2017.

Introduction	<b>Changes—additions and subtractions (for Exodus 5)</b>
v. 1	<b>Chiasm of Exodus 5:1–23</b> (by Hajime Murai)
v. 3	<b>The Term <i>Hebrews</i></b>
v. 3	<b>Moses in Hollywood</b>
v. 4	<b>Application—Socialism, Communism and Christianity</b>
v. 5	<b>A Review of Exodus 5:1–4</b>
v. 7	<b>Slaves Making Bricks in Egypt</b> (a graphic)
v. 7	<b>God Produces Good from Man’s Free Will, Man’s Sin, and Divine Discipline</b>
v. 8	<b>A Review of Exodus 5:1–7</b>
v. 8	<b>God Produces Good from Man’s Free Will, Sin, and Failures</b>
v. 8	<b>Conflicts Across the Globe</b> (a map)
v. 20	<b>Exodus 5 is the human viewpoint approach to the first meeting</b>
v. 23	<b>We need to think as God thinks; we need to see things from God’s view</b>
Summary	<b>A Set of Summary Doctrines and Commentary</b>
Summary	<b>Why Exodus 5 is in the Word of God</b>
Summary	<b>What We Learn from Exodus 5</b>
Summary	<b>Jesus Christ in Exodus 5</b>
Summary	<b>Shmoop Summarizes Exodus 5</b>
Summary	<b>Edersheim Summarizes Exodus 5</b>
Addendum	<b>Josephus’ History of this Time Period</b>
Addendum	<b>A Complete Translation of Exodus 5</b>
Addendum	<b>Doctrinal Teachers Who Have Taught Exodus 5</b>
Addendum	<b>Word Cloud from a Reasonably Literal Paraphrase of Exodus 5</b>
Addendum	<b>Word Cloud from Exegesis of Exodus 5</b>

<b>Chapter Outline</b>	<b>Charts, Graphics, Short Doctrines</b>	
<b>Beginning of Document</b>	<b>Doctrines Covered or Alluded to</b>	<b>Chapters of the Bible Alluded to</b>
<b>Definition of Terms</b>	<b>Introduction and Text</b>	<b>Addendum</b>
<a href="http://www.kukis.org">www.kukis.org</a>	<b>Exegetical Studies in Exodus</b>	

<b>Doctrines Covered or Alluded To</b>			
		<b>Socialism</b>	<b>Socialism and Communism</b>
Additional doctrines and links are found in <b>Definition of Terms</b> below.			

<b>Chapters of the Bible Alluded To and/or Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter</b>			

Many who read and study this chapter are 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob’s contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. Also, I have developed a few new terms and concepts which require definition as well.

In addition, there are other more traditional yet technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

Sometimes the terms in the exegesis of this chapter are simply alluded to, without any in-depth explanation of them. Sometimes, these terms are explained in detail and illustrated. A collection of all these terms is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

### Definition of Terms

<p><b>Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob</b></p>	<p>Every person with the genes of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is considered to be a racial Jew. Abraham is considered to be the first Jew; and God made many promises to Abraham, most of which applied to the people who would come from him.</p> <p>Abraham had two sons—Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael is a gentile (an Arab) and Isaac is a Jew (Hebrew). Isaac had twin sons: Jacob and Esau. Esau is a gentile (an Arab) while Jacob is a Jew. Technically, everyone descended from Jacob is a Jew.</p> <p>The key is regeneration and foreknowledge. Many believe that Ishmael and Esau were both unbelievers. I disagree; I believe that both men believed in the Revealed God. However, they simply did not consistently pass down the heritage of that faith to their sons and grandsons. Despite their many failings, Jacob and his 12 sons consistently passed down this spiritual heritage. God knew who would and who would not.</p>
<p><b>Bible Doctrine</b></p>	<p>Bible doctrine is the information found in the Old and New Testaments which God wants all believers to know. We live in the Church Age, where there is no additional Scripture being written; and therefore, there is no direct teaching by God to man. All that we need to know is found within the pages of the Bible. See the <b>Importance of Bible Doctrine</b> (<a href="#">HTML</a>) (<a href="#">PDF</a>) (<a href="#">WPD</a>).</p>
<p><b>Church Age</b></p>	<p>The Church Age is the period of time in history where God works through the body of believers, also known as the church. This age began on the Day of Pentecost, following our Lord's resurrection and ascension, and continues today. See the <b>Three Dispensations: The Age of Israel, the Age of the Hypostatic Union and the Church Age</b> (<a href="#">HTML</a>) (<a href="#">PDF</a>) (<a href="#">WPD</a>). See the doctrine of <b>Dispensations</b> (<a href="#">HTML</a>) (<a href="#">PDF</a>) (<a href="#">WPD</a>).</p>
<p><b>Divine Viewpoint</b></p>	<p>Divine viewpoint is how God thinks. This is very different than how man thinks. <a href="#">The Lord says, "My thoughts are not like yours. Your ways are not like mine. Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts."</a> (Isa. 55:8–9; ERV) See <b>Human Viewpoint Versus Divine Viewpoint Thinking</b> (<a href="#">HTML</a>) (<a href="#">PDF</a>) (<a href="#">WPD</a>).</p>
<p><b>Exodus</b></p>	<p>The word <i>exodus</i> describes the time when Israel left Egypt. They had been slaves in Egypt for 400 years; and God called them out of Egypt and would given them the Ten Commandments in the Sinai desert soon thereafter.</p>
<p><b>Fellowship (with God)</b></p>	<p>Fellowship means that we enjoy a current, active relationship with God. This is a real state of being; but it does not mean that we feel it. We lose fellowship with God by sinning; and we regain that fellowship by naming our sins to God (also known as, <i>rebound</i>; as explained in 1John 1:9). R. B. Thieme, Jr. called the naming of your sins and the resultant restoration to fellowship as <i>rebound</i>. See <i>Rebound and Keep Moving!</i> (<a href="#">R. B. Thieme, Jr.</a>) <a href="#">Rebound</a> (<a href="#">Kukis</a>).</p>

Definition of Terms	
<b>Gospel , Gospel Message, Gospels</b>	There are at least 3 ways to understand the word <i>gospel</i> : (1) It is a synonym for the truth, or the real truth. (2) The gospel of Jesus Christ refers to the revelation of the means of salvation to unregenerate man: “ <b>Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.</b> ” There are other things which may be included in the gospel, such as a reference to the cross, to Jesus dying for our sins, to Jesus being resurrected, etc. The new believer never hears the entire gospel message; he hears a portion of it and believes that and is saved. Then, as a believer, he may learn the rest of it (depending upon whether he has positive volition towards doctrine after salvation). (3) The gospels refer to the 4 biographies of Jesus the Messiah.
<b>Human Viewpoint</b>	Human viewpoint is man’s thinking apart from Bible doctrine and apart from divine establishment thinking. See <b>Human Viewpoint versus Divine Viewpoint (HTML) (PDF) (WPD)</b> .
<b>Israel</b>	Israel can refer to a number of different things: (1) <i>Israel</i> is the name given to Jacob; and sometimes, these two names contrast his character and spiritual growth. (2) <i>Israel</i> can refer to the people descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (3) <i>Israel</i> can refer to the nation made up of the people descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (4) <i>Israel</i> can refer specifically to the northern kingdom, after the nation under Solomon split into a northern and southern nation (the southern nation being called <i>Judah</i> ). Context determines which thing is meant.
<b>The Law of Moses, The Law</b>	<p>The Mosaic Law (often referred to as <i>the Law</i>) is the Law which God gave orally to Moses, which Moses wrote down. It is found at the beginning of Exodus 20 and continues through the book of Numbers (with some narrative integrated into the text of the Law). The book of Deuteronomy summarizes and reviews much of the Mosaic Law and adds in some additional applications (Deuteronomy is actually a series of sermons given by Moses to the people of Israel—Moses himself wrote these sermons).</p> <p>Often the words <i>the Law</i> refer back to the books specifically written by Moses (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). See also (the Spokane Bible Church on the <b>Mosaic Law</b>.) (Maranatha Church on the <b>Mosaic Law</b>).</p>
<b>Levi, Levite, Levites, Levitical</b>	Levi, one of the tribes of Israel, was entrusted with the spiritual responsibilities of Israel. One branch of Levites, the descendants of Aaron, would make up what is called the Levitical Priesthood. When obeying the mandates of Scripture, the Levitical worship is legitimate. After the Lord’s burial, resurrection, and ascension, Levitical worship is no longer of God. See the <b>Priesthoods of God and the Priesthoods of Man (HTML) (PDF) (WPD)</b> .
<b>Metonym, Metonymy</b>	A metonym is where one word stands in for another word (or for several words). The headline which reads: <i>California Elects Jerry Brown</i> actually means <i>the voters of California elect Jerry Brown</i> . In Exodus 12:21, the Israelites are instructed to kill the <i>Passover</i> . However, what they are to kill is the <i>Passover lamb</i> .
<b>Negative Volition</b>	There are three kinds of truth in this world: divine establishment truth; the gospel of Jesus Christ; and Bible doctrine. When you reject any of these, you are exercising negative volition toward what you have rejected. The <b>Laws of Divine Establishment (HTML) (PDF) (WPD)</b> . <b>Salvation (HTML) (PDF) (WPD)</b> . The <b>Importance of Bible Doctrine (HTML) (PDF) (WPD)</b> .

Definition of Terms	
<b>Pastor, Pastor-teacher</b>	The pastor (or pastor-teacher) is the highest spiritual gift with regards to authority. He has the authority over a single church. He is given one level of authority when he is called by the church into service; and then he develops a higher level of authority by teaching the Word of God. This is not, however, the authority to run the lives of individuals at the church. The pastor can teach the Word of God with near complete accuracy, yet members of his congregation might do the exact opposite. Grace Notes' Pastor-Teachers in the Church Age ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ); Jack Ballinger ( <a href="#">Pastor-teacher</a> ); Roy Cloudt ( <a href="#">pastor-teacher</a> ).
<b>Religion, Religious</b>	Strictly speaking, <i>religion</i> is man attempting to earn God's approbation through man's efforts, works and/or piety. This is the basis of all religions. <i>Christianity</i> is a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. We are saved because we stand upon the merit of Jesus Christ; not because of any good thing in us. See the <b>Doctrine of Religion</b> ( <a href="#">Philip. 1:21</a> ) ( <a href="#">Chart from Middletown Bible Church</a> ) ( <a href="#">Christian Ministries International</a> ).
<b>The Revealed God (or, the Revealed Lord), the Revealed Member of the Trinity</b>	<p>We do not look within ourselves or do we build up some concept of God based upon our own experiences, but we first understand God as He has revealed Himself. Throughout the lives of the saints who have gone before us, God revealed Himself through the written Word and sometimes through direct contact. Once a foundation is laid, then we can see how God is understood through various experiences in our lives. I often refer to Him as <i>the Revealed God</i>.</p> <p>We do not look within to find God and we do not go out and search for God. He will reveal Himself to us. Those who look to other gods are simply worshiping that which others have defined as <i>God</i>; or, in many cases, they incorporate their own norms and standards into their belief of the God they choose to believe in. Essentially, such a person is making God in his own image.</p>
<b>Signs and Wonders</b>	These are unusual and observable acts which take place, often involving a change of one thing into another. God primarily employs signs and wonders during history-changing events (such as, the removal of Israel from Egypt, the incarnation of Jesus Christ, or the establishment of the Church Age). Most believers in the Church Age will never see any signs and wonders. See the Doctrine of <b>Signs, Miracles and Healings</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ).
<b>Sin unto Death</b>	The phrase "sin unto death" describes the final stage of divine discipline in which God removes from the earth the person who is totally alienated from God. The "sin unto death" is not a particular sin; but it is, rather, a mental attitude of total indifference to and rebellion against the will and purpose of God. This is the point at which harsh discipline is no longer working on the believer, so God takes the believer out of this world in a very painful way. Such a believer often stops using the rebound technique. For more information, see the <b>Doctrine of the Sin unto Death</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ).
<p>Some of these definitions are taken from</p> <p><a href="http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/">http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/</a></p> <p><a href="http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf">http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d">http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/terms-and-definitions/">http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/terms-and-definitions/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.theopedia.com/">http://www.theopedia.com/</a></p>	



## An Introduction to Exodus 5

**Introduction:** In Exodus 5, Moses and Aaron speak to Pharaoh and call for their people to go for a 3-day journey into the desert-wilderness in order to worship their God. Pharaoh not only refuses but he increases the burden on the Israelite slaves, no longer providing them straw for making bricks, but requiring them to find the straw (or a substitute for straw) and to make the same number of bricks as before. When the Israelite slaves could not make their quota, their foremen, who were also sons of **Israel**, were beaten. These foremen go in before Pharaoh, to try to reason with him, but he is intractable. If they have time to think about worshipping their God and if they have time to send in representatives to call for the worship of their God, then they obviously have too much time on their hands, and, hence, their work requirements are increased. These men complain to Moses and Aaron and Moses takes this complaint to God.

In this chapter, Moses and Aaron will go before Pharaoh. God has told Moses already that Pharaoh will not let the Jews go immediately; that **signs and wonders** will be required (Ex. 4:21). In fact, Yahweh has told Moses that He will have to go so far as to threaten the first-born of Pharaoh (Ex. 4:23). So, as God has promised, Pharaoh does not allow the children of Israel to go (the first request would be to go to the mountains and make sacrifices to God). Chapter 5 ends with Moses complaining to God that He has brought more harm to the people of Israel than good; and that Pharaoh did not let them go.

### Fundamental Questions About Exodus 5

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[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

It is important to understand what has gone before.

### The Prequel of Exodus 5

Exodus 5 will begin with

[Chapter Outline](#)

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We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

### The Principals of Exodus 5

**Characters**

**Commentary**

Characters	Commentary

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We need to know where this chapter takes place.

### The Places of Exodus 5

Place	Description

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### By the Numbers

Item	Duration; size

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### Timeline for Exodus 5

Legend	
Birth or death	God speaks with Abraham
Historical incidents (most of which are related to Abraham)	
Parenthetical dates (2065 B.C.) simply refer to taking the date assigned by the chronologist and using Scripture to determine the next date.	
The entire <b>Abrahamic Timeline</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ). The entire <b>Patriarchal Timeline</b> ( <a href="#">HTML</a> ) ( <a href="#">PDF</a> ) ( <a href="#">WPD</a> ).	
Much of the commentary on the far right came from others' works (like Brent MacDonald).	



Brent MacDonald	Steve Rudd	Age of Moses	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Event/Description
1805 B.C.	1806 B.C.		1606 B.C.	Gen. 50:26 Exodus 6:1	Joseph dies at age 110
			1625 B.C. (1620 B.C.)	Num. 26:58	Birth of Amram (Levi's grandson, Moses' father).
			1590 B.C. (1584 B.C.)		The death of Levi (age 137)
Reese occasionally supplies 2 dates in his Chronological Bible; the first is his and the second is Klassen's.					
			1606–1462 B.C.	Gen. 47:27 Exodus 1:7	From the Patriarchs to the Exodus.
1783 B.C.	1656 B.C.				Hyksos begin ruling in Egypt (Semite kings).
	1556 B.C.				Defeat of Hyksos dynasty
1570 B.C.	1557–1532 B.C.				Ahmosé reign (wife Nefertiri); beginning of the 18 <sup>th</sup> Dynasty in Egypt.
1546 B.C.	1532–1511 B.C.				Amuntotep reign
			1580 B.C. (1542 B.C.)	Exodus 1:8–14	Egyptian bondage and oppression increases.
	1526 B.C.				Amuntotep kills children
1522 B.C.	1526 B.C.	0		Exodus 2:2	Birth of Moses
1522 B.C.	1526 B.C.			Exodus 2:5	Hatshepsut, age 15, adopts baby Moses.
1526 B.C.	1511–1498 B.C.				Thutmose I reign (wife Ahmosé)
1514 B.C.	1498–1485 B.C.				Thutmose II – Hatshepsut (his half-sister and co-ruler) Pharaohs of Oppression
1504 B.C.					Hatshepsut continues reign with Thutmose III
	1466 B.C.			Num. 11:29 Ex. 33:11	Birth of Joshua

Brent MacDonald	Steve Rudd	Age of Moses	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Event/Description
1482 B.C.				Exodus 2:11-15 Acts 7:23	Moses flees to Midian to escape the wrath of Thutmose III. Pharaoh Thutmose III now rules Egypt alone, subsequently destroying most traces of Hatshepsut.
1450 B.C.					Egypt - Pharaoh Amenhotep II (alt. Amenophis II). He was not the oldest son of Thutmose III. Bloodthirsty; liked hand to hand combat, led troops into battle with howls of rage.
1446 B.C.				Ex. 4:18-5:1 1Kings 6:1	Egypt - Moses returns and confronts Amenhotep II.
1446 B.C.	1446 B.C.			Ex. 12:40-41	Moses leads people out of Egypt; the beginning of the exodus. <b>note 3</b> . Scripture does not state that Pharaoh was killed at this time (read about it <a href="#">here</a> ).
					Sinai (Marah, Elim, Rephidim, Mount Sinai, etc.) - Israel in wilderness 40 years (Exodus 16:35). A timeline of stops on the Exodus is <a href="#">here</a> .
1424 B.C.					Egypt - Pharaoh Thutmose IV (alt. Tuthmosis IV) reigns, son of Amenhotep II and lesser wife Tiaa. He was not the oldest son. Had dream at the sphinx that he would rule - recorded on stele there.
1414 B.C.					Egypt - Pharaoh Amenhotep III (alt. Amenophis III). The cossi of Memnon are all that remains of his temple near Thebes.

Brent MacDonald	Steve Rudd	Age of Moses	Reese's Chronology Bible	Scripture	Event/Description
1402 B.C.				Deut. 1:1, 5	Israel - Moses writes and teaches the book of Deuteronomy in land of Moab.
1402 B.C.		120		Deut. 34:7	Moses dies at Mount Nebo at 120 years old
	1406 B.C.				Joshua crosses Jordan River.
1401 B.C.					Israel - Conquests of Joshua in Promised Land begin. Battle of Jericho.

<b>Bibliography</b>
<p>MacDonald's timeline is from: <a href="http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63.htm">http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63.htm</a> accessed January 29, 2016.</p> <p>See <a href="http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63dating.htm">http://www.bibleistrue.com/qna/qna63dating.htm</a> for his justification of his timeline.</p> <p>Steve Rudd from <a href="http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-route-date-1440bc.jpg">http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-exodus-route-date-1440bc.jpg</a> accessed January 29, 2016.</p> <p><i>The Reese Chronological Bible</i>; KJV translation; Editor: Edward Reese; ©1977 by Edward Reese and Klassen's dating system ©1975 by Frank R. Klassen; ©1980 by Bethany House Publishers, South Minneapolis, MN; pp. 18–19, 54–74.</p>

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Here is what to expect from Exodus 5:

### A Synopsis of Exodus 5

Like all chapters of the Word of God, you need more than just the simple plot outline to understand what God wants us to know.

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[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

### Outlines of Exodus 5 (Various Commentators)

## Outlines of Exodus 5 (Various Commentators)

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

The ESV; capitalized is used below.

## Synopsis of Exodus 5 from the Summarized Bible

<b>Contents:</b>	Moses' first contest with Pharaoh.
<b>Characters:</b>	Moses, Aaron, Pharaoh, taskmasters.
<b>Conclusion:</b>	God, in coming toward His people in mercy may sometimes employ strange methods so that people will think themselves ill-treated. God suffers it to be so that we may learn to cease from man and cease depending on second causes.
<b>Key Word:</b>	Burdens, Exodus 5:4 <a href="#">But the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people away from their work? Get back to your burdens."</a>
<b>Strong Verses:</b>	Exodus 5:3 <a href="#">Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."</a>
<b>Striking Facts:</b>	Those called to public service for Christ may expect to be tried, not only by the proud threats of enemies, but the unjust, unkind censures of friends who judge by outward appearances.

Keith L. Brooks, *Summarized Bible; Complete Summary of the Bible*; ©1919; from e-Sword, Ex. 5.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

It is helpful to see what came before and what follows in a brief summary.

## The Big Picture (Exodus 3–6A)

### Scripture

### Text/Commentary

Exodus 3

When Moses is out in the desert-wilderness of Midian, God (manifested as a burning bush) calls upon him to deliver the Jewish people. God carefully tells Moses what he is going to do, speaking first to the elders of Israel and eventually leading the sons of Israel out of Egypt to the Land of Promise. God also tells Moses how he will appeal to Pharaoh, and God indicates that Pharaoh is going to be negative towards this whole idea from the beginning.

### The Big Picture (Exodus 3–6A)

Scripture	Text/Commentary
Exodus 4A	<p>Moses complains to God that no one would listen to him, so God gives him two miracles to perform. Then God begins to tell Moses what he will do when those miracles are not considered. However, Moses complains that he is not a public speaker and would be unable to do what God is asking him to do. God tells Moses that he is going to meet his brother Aaron, and that Aaron would do the talking for him.</p> <p>Moses tells his father-in-law that he is going to return to Egypt, but does not tell him about his encounter with God, instead saying that he is going to go see his family, to find out if they are still alive.</p> <p>Along the way, God meets Moses and tells him that he must circumcise his sons before they proceed, which he does; and which greatly upsets his wife.</p>
Exodus 4B	<p>In this half of the chapter, God tells Moses what the first and last signs (judgments, plagues) will be.</p> <p>Moses meets Aaron and they go and speak to the elders of Israel, who believe what they say and therefore, they prostrate themselves before God.</p>
Exodus 5	<p>Moses and Aaron go and speak directly to Pharaoh, and ask that they be able to lead the Hebrews a 3-day journey into the desert-wilderness to worship their God. Pharaoh says <i>no</i> and increases the workload of the Hebrew slaves, requiring them to find the straw on their own in order to make bricks (something which they did not have to do before). The Israelite foremen appeal to Pharaoh, who accuses them of being lazy and sends them out with no relief, requiring of them an impossible workload. These foremen complain to Moses and Aaron; and Moses then complains to God.</p>
Exodus 6A	<p>God tells Moses that Pharaoh will eventually cooperate, but it will be under strong compulsion. God tells Moses of the promises which He has made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and that He will now begin to fulfill those promises. Moses, armed with this information, speaks to the sons of Israel, but they do not buy into it this time. Moses again complains to God, telling God that he is not a persuasive speaker—in fact, he is unable to even convince his own people of that.</p>

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

The first chapter heading sometimes does double duty, giving an overall view of the chapter and/or telling what the first section is about. I make an attempt to find 5 translations with very different divisions.

Paragraph Divisions of Modern Translations for Exodus 5				
Amplified Bible	Tree of Life V.	Expanded Bible	NKJV	New Living Trans.
Israel's Labor Increased	Pharaoh Will Not Let <i>Israel</i> Go	Moses and Aaron Before Pharaoh	First Encounter with Pharaoh	Moses and Aaron Speak to Pharaoh
	v. 1	v. 1	v. 1	v. 1
	v. 2	v. 2	v. 2	v. 2
	v. 3	v. 3	v. 3	v. 3

Paragraph Divisions of Modern Translations for Exodus 5				
Amplified Bible	Tree of Life V.	Expanded Bible	NKJV	New Living Trans.
vv. 1–9	vv. 4–5	vv. 4–5	vv. 4–5	vv. 4–5
				Making Bricks without Straw
	vv. 6–9	vv. 6–9	vv. 6–9	vv. 6–9
		Moses Complains to God		
vv. 10–14	vv. 10–14	vv. 10–14	vv. 10–14	vv. 10–12 vv. 13–14
	vv. 15–16	vv. 15–16	vv. 15–16	vv. 15–16
vv. 15–21	vv. 17–18	vv. 17–18	vv. 17–19	vv. 17–18
	vv. 19–20	vv. 19–21		vv. 19–21
	v. 21		vv. 20–21	
			Israel's Deliverance Assured	
vv. 22–23	vv. 22–23	vv. 22–23	vv. 22–23	vv. 22–23

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[Chapter Outline](#)

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The NET Bible: *The enthusiasm of the worshipers in the preceding chapter turns sour in this one when Pharaoh refuses to cooperate. The point is clear that when the people of God attempt to devote their full service and allegiance to God, they encounter opposition from the world. Rather than finding instant blessing and peace, they find conflict. This is the theme that will continue through the plague narratives. But what makes chapter 5 especially interesting is how the people reacted to this opposition. The chapter has three sections: first, the confrontation between Moses and Pharaoh (vv. 1-5); then the report of the stern opposition of the king (vv. 6-14); and finally, the sad account of the effect of this opposition on the people (vv. 15-21).*<sup>2</sup>

**Changes—additions and subtractions (for Exodus 5):** Very often, when I begin a new chapter, I have either discovered a new translations, a new commentary; or have decided to leave out a particular translation or commentary. Sometimes, I make a minor formatting change. I have always placed such comments before the beginning of the first verse. So one formatting change is, *the addition of this more formal approach to changes, giving it a section of its own.* Many times, if I like a change a lot, I will occasionally go back and make that change in previous chapters.

Previously in the weekly study of Genesis, I used the Modern KJV translation (this is the second set of original notes placed in the chapter-by-chapter study of Genesis). For the book of Exodus, I will use the New King James Version (unless otherwise noted), which is a superior (but not perfect) translation. Therefore, an unnamed translation of Exodus will either be the NKJV or it will be one of the three original translations developed for each chapter.

I am leaning toward removing the Awful Scroll Bible from my list. Even though it is nearly always different from every other translation, it is not different in a way that is helpful or insightful, for the most part.

The New American Bible (2002) used to be posted at the Vatican site; it appears to no longer be posted there. It was a very good translation, as is their sister translation, the New American Bible (2011).

<sup>2</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.

There will be 3 formatting changes beginning with this book is (1) I will skip two lines after the translation of any portion of a verse; (2) when a verse is complete, I will also include the mostly literal translation of that verse; and (3) at the end of the passage, I will include both the mostly literal translation for that passage as well as the Kukis paraphrase.

I have added the Christian Standard Bible, which can be found on [Gateway](#) (I think this is the same as the HCSB; so I may not be adding it); the Unlocked Literal Bible (e-sword from [Bible Support](#)); and the New Standard Bible, which can be found at [Katapi](#).

I have begun to quote Victor Alexander's translation of the Aramaic. [Exodus](#) links are found here. The language and punctuation are all updated—more than the George Lamsa version (which is not too dated).

I am also using Charles Thompson's [translation](#) from the Greek Old Testament (which would be the Septuagint).

The chapter divisions in the book of Exodus are quite poorly done. The Bible is inspired of God; but the chapter and verse divisions took place at another time. Most of the divisions are natural ones; however, there were many problems with chapter divisions near the end of Genesis; and we have worse problems with those early on in Exodus. For instance, Moses, at the end of this chapter, voices a complaint to God about how his going to Pharaoh made things worse, not better. God answers Moses in Ex. 6:1. Quite logically, Moses' question/complaint should have been placed together in the same chapter as God's answer. Many translations agree with this and, in their formatting, make it clear that these passages belong together.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Moses and Aaron Speak to Pharaoh

God got Aaron and Moses together and sent Moses to Egypt to free his people. They have already gone to the elders of Egypt, shown them some signs, and the people are behind them (for the time being). Next stop, is the palace of Pharaoh (I am making this assumption that their meeting takes place in a building).

At this point, God has given Moses his marching orders. Moses has met up with his brother Aaron in the Midian wilderness; and soon thereafter, they came to Egypt and spoke to the elders of Israel. The elders of Israel, at this point, are on board with God's plan. Next step is for Moses and Aaron to go before Pharaoh.

#### First Encounter with Pharaoh

There are some interesting parallels in this chiasm.

#### Chiasm of Exodus 5:1–23 (by Hajime Murai)

A(5:1-2) Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh  
 B(5:3-5) "otherwise he will punish us with pestilence or the sword" (5:3) (ברחב)  
 C(5:4-5) "Off to your labor" (5:4)  
 D(5:6-9) "You shall no longer supply the people with straw" (5:7) (ונבת)  
 E(5:10-14) Persecutions by the taskmasters  
 D'(5:15-16) "No straw is supplied to your servants" (5:16) (ונבת)  
 C'(5:17-19) "Off to work, then!" (5:18)  
 B'(5:20-21) "you have put a sword in their hands to slay us" (5:21) (ברח)  
 A'(5:22-23) "Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has maltreated this people of yours" (5:23)



From [http://www.bible.literarystructure.info/bible/02\\_Exodus\\_pericope\\_e.html](http://www.bible.literarystructure.info/bible/02_Exodus_pericope_e.html) accessed October 18, 2017.

The key to understanding Exodus 5 is, this is the **human viewpoint** of Moses and Aaron's first meeting with Pharaoh. We will actually go back and revisit this meeting in Exodus 7, but takes God's perspective at that time.

As always, 3 separate translations will be produced for each verse. The slavishly literal translation attempts to preserve word order and number, making it more literal than Young's translation (however, I do not preserve the consistency of the translation that Young does). The moderately literal translation may add or delete a definite article, change the number of a noun to correspond with the English sense of thinking, and the order is often changed in order to better represent our English sentence structure. The paraphrase is an attempt to give a thought-for-thought interpretation of what each verse tells us.

Kukis slavishly literal:

**And after have gone Moses and Aaron and so they say unto Pharaoh, "Thus has said Y<sup>e</sup>howah, an Elohim of Israel: 'Send away My people and so they will celebrate a feast to Me in the desert-wilderness.' "**

Exodus  
5:1

Kukis moderately literal:

**Later, Moses and Aaron went in and spoke to Pharaoh, [saying], "Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the Elohim of Israel, 'Send out My people so that they [may] celebrate a feast to Me in the desert-wilderness.' "**

Kukis not-so-literal paraphrase:

**Afterwards, both Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they said, "This is the command of Jehovah, the God of Israel: 'You will send My people out of Egypt so that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the desert-wilderness.' "**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac (= Aramaic) and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation<sup>3</sup>; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles' Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

<sup>3</sup> I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use [www.latinvulgate.com](http://www.latinvulgate.com).

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

The comparisons which I do are primarily between the English translations which are taken from the ancient tongues. For the most part, the variances are so minor that I rarely investigate them any further than that.

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

I will only list the translation from the Dead Sea Scrolls if it exists and if it is different from the Masoretic text.

The Targum of Onkelos is actually the Pentateuchal Targumim, which are The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel. On the Pentateuch With The Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum From the Chaldee by J. W. Etheridge, M.A. From [http://www.becomingjewish.org/texts/targum/onkelos\\_Exodus.html](http://www.becomingjewish.org/texts/targum/onkelos_Exodus.html) and first published in 1862.

Occasionally, there is an obvious error in the English translation, and I correct those without additional mention or footnoting. For instance, the online version of the Targum of Onkelos which I use has *gorund* in Ex. 4:9; I simply corrected the text. This may occur once or twice in a chapter.

I attempt to include translations which are different in their vocabulary and phrasing. On many occasions, I may include a translation which is not substantially different than another listed translation.

The very fact that we have ancient Greek, Latin, Syriac and Arabic translations of the Bible testifies to its accuracy. There may be a difference word or phrase here or there; the Greek may have a singular where the Hebrew has a plural, but there is no set of doctrines in the Latin Bible which are any different from those found in the Greek Bible or the Syriac Bible. These different cultures when they chose to translate the Bible chose to translate it as accurately as possible. Where human viewpoint would expect to find doctrinal differences between the Bible of the Hebrews, of the Greeks or of the Romans, no such differences exist.

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And after have gone Moses and Aaron and so they say unto Pharaoh, “Thus has said Y<sup>e</sup>howah, an Elohim of Israel: ‘Send away My people and so they will celebrate a feast to Me in the desert-wilderness.’ ”

Dead Sea Scrolls

Targum (Onkelos)	And afterward Mosheh and Aharon went in, and said to Pharaoh: Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Let My people go, to solemnize a feast (yechagun) before Me in the desert. Translation for Onkelos and Pseudo-Jonathan by J. W. Etheridge, M.A. (1862).
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And after this Mosheh and Aharon went in unto Pharaoh, and said, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: Release My people, that they may make unto Me a festival in the wilderness.
Jerusalem targum	.
Revised Douay-Rheims	After these things Moses and Aaron went in, and said to Pharaoh: Thus said the Lord God of Israel: Let my people go that they may sacrifice to me in the desert.
Douay-Rheims 1899 (Amer.)	.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	Afterward Mosha and Aaron came, and said to Pharaoh, "This is what Mar-Yah, God of Yisrael, says, 'Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.'"
Peshitta (Syriac)	AND afterward Moses and Aaron went into the palace and told Pharaoh, Thus says the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	And after that, Moses and Aaron went in and said to the Pharaoh, "This is what the Lord God of Israel said, 'Send my people that they may perform [their duties] to me in the wilderness.'"
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	And after this Moses went in with Aaron to Pharaoh and they said to him, Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel, Let my people go that they may keep a festival for me in the wilderness.
Septuagint (Greek)	Moses and Aaron before the Pharaoh. Ex.5.1-21 And after this went in Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh, and they said to him, These things says the Lord God of Israel, Send my people away, that they may keep a feast to me in the wilderness.
NETS (Greek)	.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:<sup>4</sup>

Bible in Basic English	And after that, Moses and Aaron came to Pharaoh, and said, The Lord, the God of Israel, says, Let my people go so that they may keep a feast to me in the waste land.
Easy English	<b>Moses and Aaron speak to Pharaoh</b> After this, Moses and Aaron went to visit Pharaoh. They said to him: 'Listen to what the Lord says. He is the God of Israel. He says, "Let my people go. Let them prepare a party for me in the desert." '
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	.
God's Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Moses and Aaron before the King of Egypt Then Moses and Aaron went to the king of Egypt and said, "The Lord, the God of Israel, says, 'Let my people go, so that they can hold a festival in the desert to honor me.'"
International Children's B.	.
The Message	Moses and Aaron and Pharaoh

<sup>4</sup> Many of these Bibles fall into 2 or more categories. The CEV, for instance, is **approved** by the Catholic Church, it is a limited vocabulary Bible, and it is a paraphrase, for the most part.

After that Moses and Aaron approached Pharaoh. They said, "God, the God of Israel, says, 'Free my people so that they can hold a festival for me in the wilderness.'"

Names of God Bible

### Moses and Aaron Confront Pharaoh

Later Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what **Yahweh Elohim** of Israel says: Let my people go into the desert to celebrate a festival in my honor."

NIRV

New Simplified Bible

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible

### First meeting with Pharaoh

Afterward, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what the LORD, Israel's God, says: 'Let my people go so that they can hold a festival for me in the desert.'"

Contemporary English V.

Moses and Aaron went to the king of Egypt and told him, "The LORD God says, 'Let my people go into the desert, so they can honor me with a celebration there.' "

The Living Bible

After this presentation to the elders, Moses and Aaron went to see Pharaoh. They told him, "We bring you a message from Jehovah, the God of Israel. He says, 'Let my people go, for they must make a holy pilgrimage out into the wilderness, for a religious feast, to worship me there.'"

New Berkeley Version

New Century Version

### Moses and Aaron Before the King

After Moses and Aaron talked to the people, they went to the king of Egypt and said, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go so they may hold a feast for me in the desert.'"

New Life Version

### Moses and Aaron Talk to Pharaoh

After this, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "The Lord, the God of Israel, says this: 'Let My people go, that they may have a special supper to honor Me in the desert.'"

New Living Translation

### Moses and Aaron Speak to Pharaoh

After this presentation to Israel's leaders, Moses and Aaron went and spoke to Pharaoh. They told him, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Let my people go so they may hold a festival in my honor in the wilderness."

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible

Well after that, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, 'This is what Jehovah the God of IsraEl, said: *Send My people away, so they can hold a feast to Me in the desert.*'

Beck's American Translation

International Standard V

### **Pharaoh Refuses to Let the People Go**

After Moses and Aaron arrived, they told Pharaoh, "This is what the LORD God of Israel says: 'Let my people go so they may make a pilgrimage for me in the desert.'"

New Advent (Knox) Bible

After this, Moses and Aaron obtained audience with Pharaoh, and said to him, We have a message to thee from the Lord God of Israel, Give my people leave to go and offer me sacrifice in the desert.

Today's NIV

Translation for Translators

### **The king refused to let the Israeli people go after Moses and Aaron talked to him**

Then Aaron and Moses/I went to the king and *one of them/us* said, "Yahweh God, whom we Israeli people *worship*, says this *to you*: 'Let my people go *to the desert*, in order that they may have a feast to *honor me!*' "

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Awful Scroll Bible	Afterwards, Moses and Aaron were to come in, and were to say to Pharaoh: Jehovah, he of mighty ones of Isra-el, is to have said: My people was you to let loose; they were to hold a feast in the wilderness.
Conservapedia	After this, Moses and Aaron entered the court of Pharaoh [Pharaoh = Neferhotep.] and said, "The LORD God of Israel has said, 'Dismiss My people, that they may hold a celebration for Me in the wilderness.'"
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Then Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh; — "Thus says the EVER-LIVING God of Israel; ' Send out My People that they may hold a festival to Me in the desert.' "
God's Truth (Tyndale)	Then Moses and Aaron went and told Pharaoh, thus says the Lord God of Israel. Let my people go, that they may keep holy day unto me in the wilderness.
HCSB	<b>Moses Confronts Pharaoh</b> Later, Moses and Aaron went in and said to Pharaoh, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: Let My people go, so that they may hold a festival for Me in the wilderness."
Jubilee Bible 2000 Lexham English Bible	. <b>Pharaoh Rejects Yahweh's Authority and Makes Israel's Troubles Worse</b> And afterward, Moses and Aaron went, and they said to Pharaoh, "Thus says Yahweh the God of Israel, 'Release my people so that they may hold a festival for me in the desert.'"
NIV, ©2011 Tree of Life Version	. <b>Pharaoh Will Not Let Israel Go</b> Afterward, Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, "This is what Adonai, God of Israel, says: Let My people go, so that they may hold a feast for Me in the wilderness."
Urim-Thummim Version Wikipedia Bible Project	. And afterwards, Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh: "Thus said Yahweh, the God of Israel: Send my people off, and they will celebrate to me in the desert."

**Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

Christian Community (1988)	Moses speaks with Pharaoh After this Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel says: 'Let my people go, that they may hold a feast for me in the desert.'"
The Heritage Bible	.
New American Bible (2002)	.
New American Bible (2011) <sup>5</sup>	<b>Pharaoh's Hardness of Heart.</b> Afterwards, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Let my people go, that they may hold a feast* for me in the wilderness." <b>Hold a feast:</b> the Hebrew verb used here, hagag ("to celebrate a feast or a festival"; see 12:14; 23:14), refers to a community celebration marked above all by a procession to the sanctuary. It is used especially of three major feasts: Unleavened Bread, Pentecost (in 23:16, "the Feast of Harvest," but customarily "the Feast of Weeks" [Shavuot]), and Succoth/Sukkoth (in 34:16, "the Feast of Ingathering," but more frequently "of Booths, or Tabernacles," as in Dt 16:13, 16; 31:10; Lv 23:34; Zec 14:16; passim) and—along with the related noun hag—the Passover in 12:14. See 23:14–18; 34:18–25.
New English Bible	<b>Moses and Aaron before the Pharaoh.</b>

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<sup>5</sup> Also called the revised edition.

After this, Moses and Aaron came to Pharaoh and said, 'These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: "Let my people go so that they may keep my pilgrim-feast in the wilderness." '

New Jerusalem Bible

After this, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, 'This is what Yahweh, God of Israel, says, "Let my people go, so that they can hold a feast in my honour in the desert." '

New RSV

Revised English Bible

After this, Moses and Aaron came to Pharaoh and told him, "These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: Let my people go so that they may keep a pilgrim-feast in my honour in the wilderness."

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

**(vii)** After that, Moshe and Aharon came and said to Pharaoh, "Here is what Adonai, the God of Isra'el, says: 'Let my people go, so that they can celebrate a festival in the desert to honor me.'"

The Complete Tanach

And afterwards, Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, "So said the Lord God of Israel, 'Send out My people, and let them sacrifice to Me in the desert.' "

**And afterwards, Moses and Aaron came:** But the elders slipped away one by one from following Moses and Aaron, until they had all slipped away before they arrived at the palace. [They did so] because they were afraid to go, and at Sinai, He punished them, [as it is written:] "And Moses shall draw near alone, but they shall not draw near" (Exod. 24:2). He sent them back. — [from Exodus Rabbah 5:14; Tanchuma, Shemoth 24]

exeGesés companion Bible

### MOSHEH AND AHARON AT THE FACE OF PAROH

And afterward Mosheh and Aharon go in and tell Paroh,  
Thus says Yah Veh Elohim of Yisra El:  
Send my people away,  
to celebrate to me in the wilderness.

Hebraic Roots Bible

Israeli Authorized Version

JPS (Tanakh—1985)

Judaica Press Complete T.

Kaplan Translation

### *First Confrontation with Pharaoh*

Moses and Aaron then went to Pharaoh and said, 'This is what YHVH, God of the Hebrews, declares: 'Let My people leave, so they can sacrifice [(Ibn Ezra; Radak, Sherashim; Ralbag). Or, 'celebrate a festival to Me' (Targum Yonathan). In the Talmud both opinions are cited (Chagigah 10b).] to Me in the desert.' ' The Kaplan Translation, particularly in Exodus through Deuteronomy, takes note of historic rabbinic opinions.

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And afterward Moshe and Aharon went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith Hashem Elohei Yisroel, Let My people go, that they may hold a chag (feast) unto Me in the midbar.

*The Scriptures* 1998

And afterwards Mosheh and Aharon went in and said to Pharaoh, "Thus said יהוה Elohim of Yisra'el, 'Let My people go, so that they keep a festival to Me in the wilderness.' "

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

*The Amplified Bible*

The Expanded Bible

### Moses and Aaron Before Pharaoh

After Moses and Aaron talked to the people, they went to the king of Egypt [Pharaoh] and said, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people



go so they may hold a feast [celebrate a festival; or make a pilgrimage] for me in the desert [wilderness].”

The Geneva Bible  
Kretzmann's Commentary

**Verses 1-9**

The Taskmasters Instructed to Burden the People

And afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let My people go that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness. Moses and Aaron here acted not only as representatives of the children of Israel, who had acknowledged their commission from God, but as the ambassadors of the Lord Himself. Their question distinctly stated by whose authority they were acting, namely, by that of Jehovah, the God of Israel.

NET Bible®

*Opposition to the Plan of God*

Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, “Thus says the Lord [Heb “Yahweh.”], the God of Israel, ‘Release<sup>3</sup> my people so that they may hold a pilgrim feast<sup>4</sup> to me in the desert.’” When it comes to making an actual material change to the text, the NET Bible® is pretty good about indicating this. Since most of these corrections will be clear in the more literal translations below and within the Hebrew exegesis itself, I will not continue to list every NET Bible® footnote. Language footnotes will be placed in the Hebrew exegesis. Some footnotes will be quoted elsewhere in this document.

Syndein/Thieme  
The Voice

Not long after, Moses and Aaron confronted Pharaoh.

**Moses and Aaron:** The Eternal, Israel's God, has a message for you: “Release My people, so that they may go and celebrate a feast in My honor in the desert.”

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Brenner's Mechanical Trans. ...and afterward, "Mosheh <sup>Plucked out</sup> and "Aharon <sup>Light bringer</sup> came, and they said to "Paroh <sup>Great house</sup>, in this way "YHWH <sup>He Is</sup> the "Elohiym <sup>Powers</sup> of "Yisra'el <sup>He turns El aside</sup> said, send my people and they will hold a feast to me in the wilderness,...

Concordant Literal Version Afterward Moses and Aaron entered and said to Pharaoh: Thus says Yahweh the Elohim of Israel, Dismiss My people that they may celebrate to Me in the wilderness.

Context Group Version

Darby Translation

*Emphasized Bible*

English Standard Version

Green's Literal Translation

And afterward Moses and Aaron came in and said to Pharaoh, So says Jehovah the God of Israel, Send away My people, and they shall feast to Me in the wilderness.

Modern English Version

**Bricks Without Straw**

And afterward Moses and Aaron went in and said to Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.’”

NASB

**Israel's Labor Increased**

And afterward Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness.’”

New European Version

**Moses and Aaron Meet Pharaoh**

Afterward Moses and Aaron came, and said to Pharaoh, This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says, ‘Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness’.

New King James Version

**First Encounter with Pharaoh**

Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.’”



Niobi Study Bible

**First Encounter with Pharaoh; Let My People Go**

And afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: `Let My people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness.'" .

Owen's Translation

Restored Holy Bible 6.0

[Bricks without straw].

And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh,

Thus says the LORD, God of Israel,

Let My people go, that they may hold a Festival to Me in the wilderness.

Third Millennium Bible

Updated Bible Version 2.11

A Voice in the Wilderness

Webster's Bible Translation

World English Bible

Young's Literal Translation

Young's Updated LT

And afterwards have Moses and Aaron entered, and they say unto Pharaoh, "Thus said Jehovah, God of Israel, Send My people away, and they keep a feast to Me in the wilderness."

**The gist of this passage:**

Moses and Aaron go before Pharaoh and they give him God's demands.

**Exodus 5:1a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'achar (אַחַר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHAHR</i> ]	<i>after, following, behind; afterwards, after that; another</i>	preposition/adverb	Strong's #310 BDB #29
Owens translates this <i>afterward</i> .			
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance; to attain</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced <i>moh-SHEH</i> ]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'Ahârôn (אַהֲרֹן) [pronounced <i>ah-huh-ROHN</i> ]	transliterated Aaron	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

Exodus 5:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'āmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
par <sup>e</sup> ōh (הַעֲרֹה) [pronounced pah <sup>e</sup> -GOH]	<i>great house; possibly hair head (indicating one of great age and therefore with wisdom and authority); transliterated pharaoh</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6547 BDB #829

**Translation:** Later, Moses and Aaron went in and spoke to Pharaoh, ...

They are there to speak on behalf of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Who is God; and this is the personal name for God.

The fact that Moses and Aaron could get an audience with Pharaoh is unusual enough. They come to him with the straightforward Word of God. That is the very best that we can bring to anyone. What they would like to do is chāgag (חָגַג) [pronounced khaw-GAG] and it means *to make a pilgrimage, to keep a feast, to celebrate a feast*. For some reason, my remembrance from my unbeliever days emphasized the concepts of fasting but the Old Testament more often emphasizes feasting and celebration. God asks of Pharaoh what is reasonable: to take a few days off to journey into the desert and hold a celebration-feast on behalf of the **Revealed God** (Who is Jesus Christ).

Wherever Pharaoh is, that is where Moses and Aaron go. I would assume, by the use of this verb, that they are going inside a building of some sort, perhaps the official palace of Pharaoh.

Exodus 5:1a **Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh,...** (NKJV)

*Afterwards* simply means *after Moses and Aaron met with the elders of Israel*. Moses and Aaron went to the people of God first (to their leaders) and made certain that they knew that what was to come were the acts of God. They all needed to be on the same page, so that, if quizzed by Pharaoh, the elders do not say, "Moses? Who is this Moses?" The leaders also need to inform their people of what is going on (there seems to be some sort of organization by which this could be done).

You will notice some narrative shortcuts taken. We do not have, *God had said these things to Moses; Moses repeated them to Aaron, and then Aaron said them to Pharaoh of Egypt*. All of that occurred, but Moses, as author, is not going to present such a repetitive narrative. There will be 10 plagues brought upon Egypt; and it would have been very easy for Moses to get bogged down in extensive detail when recording this information, thus completely losing the literary impact of these confrontations. However, he does not. Moses is very adept at the editing of a narrative, so that the narrative is well-paced.

As I have pointed out, Moses had received excellent training for the 40 years that he lived in Egypt. It appears that he had developed writing and composition skills during that time. It would be my guess that Moses could both read and write Hebrew and Egyptian; and possibly other languages as well.

It is quite interesting that Moses and Aaron just walk in and speak to Pharaoh. We don't know if they made an appointment or if they just walked in, or how the way was made clear for them. Was there any knowledge, at this time, in Egypt, of who Moses was? He was well-known 40 years previous; was he known at all now? Did he use his name to gain access to the new Pharaoh (Exodus 2:23)? I suspect that he and the present Pharaoh were contemporaries and possibly raised together; but there is nothing said about that. There is no relationship between them ever defined or even implied, even though such a relationship seems likely.

I think that it is more likely that this meeting was initiated by the elders of Israel. It would make sense that they could meet with Pharaoh whenever they believed it necessary (obviously, they could not abuse this privilege).

Exodus 5:1b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced koh]	so, thus, here, hence; now; in the meantime	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as Jehovah, Yahweh, Y <sup>e</sup> howah	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'Ēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim	masculine plural construct	Strong's #430 BDB #43
Yis <sup>e</sup> râ'êl (יִסְרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

**Translation:** ...[saying], "Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the Elohim of Israel,...

God has told Moses what to say; he tells Aaron what to say, and Aaron speaks to Pharaoh.

On the other hand, to most people at this time—including Moses—they would understand God to be saying that He is "Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Israel would probably be understood by Moses as the shortened version of Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**.

I am speculating here, somewhat. I am making the assumption that, although the people of Israel see themselves as a separate, cohesive people, they do not see themselves as a nation. Up to Ex. 3:15, we do not find the name *Israel* alone used as a reference to the people. We find the phrase *sons of Israel* instead (which is found more than 10 times). The only variance is in Ex. 3:16, 18, where we speak of the *elders of Israel*. The first place where they seem to be spoken of as a people called *Israel* (without any modifiers) is in Ex. 4:22; and then again in Ex. 5:2, where God speaks of *Israel* as a people. Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me." (Ex. 4:22–23a; ESV) But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover,

**I will not let Israel go.**" (Ex. 5:2; ESV) My point being that, God saw His people as a singular people, as a nation, called *Israel*. The people were not yet there in their thinking.

Exodus 5:1a-b **Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel:...**

*Elohim* is more of a generic term, which refers more to the majesty and power of God; and to the Godhead.

*Israel* here has a double-meaning. It stands for the people descended from Israel (Jacob); and it also stands for nation Israel, the people who are there in Egypt, enslaved to Egypt. The entire nation Israel resided there. At this point in time, only God recognized them as a nation.

Exodus 5:1 marks the first use in the Old Testament of two related phrases, "**The Lord God of Israel**" (literally, "**Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Elohim of Israel**") and simply **the God of Israel**. Both designations for God are found here for the first time. Furthermore, the people of Israel are now large enough to be considered a nation (they are about 2 million people) and God is over them. Prior to this, it was "**Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.**" Now He is the God of the nation Israel. This would be the way that God sees them, as He is able to see their future as perspicuously as their past.

Interestingly enough, Israel is a nation, but they are without an actual country at this time. God has a piece of land for them which is roughly 250 miles away. The first half of the book of Exodus is getting Israel out of Egypt. The second half should have been about taking Israel into their land, but, there will be problems along the way.

The bulk of Exodus takes place over a few months time. However, Israel will not enter their land to actually take it until the book of Joshua, which is 40 years into the future.

Exodus 5:1a-b **Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel... (NKJV)**

In the Bible, this is the first time that a *person* speaks of *Israel* as a reference to the descendants of Israel (Jacob). God used this terminology in the previous chapter; but now this word is used by Aaron to Pharaoh (and he is repeating what Moses told him to say).

Now, although it is possible for God to have said, *I am the God of Israel* in reference to *Jacob*, the individual; the context simply does not allow for that. Pharaoh may or may not know the historical Jacob (Israel), but, no doubt, he was aware of the people being associated with the name *Israel*.

We must reasonably assume that these words make sense to Pharaoh. So, at this point in time, the word *Israel* is understood to refer to the people who are descendants of Israel (Jacob). God here calls them *My people* (remember, that Moses and Aaron and simply repeating what God has told them to say) The people of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are known now as Israel or as the Hebrew people. Both names will stay with these people forever.

Was Pharaoh aware of the God of Israel? Did he know about their worship of Him? My estimation is, he knew little or nothing about that God; or he perceived the God of Israel as being generally unimportant in the grand scheme of things. No doubt he thought, "So what that Israel has a god; so do the Canaanites and the Syrians. And beside, the Israelites are my slaves. So, He is obviously not a very good god." Pharaoh would certainly associate the God of Israel with a myriad of others national gods, if he thinks of Israel's God at all.

In any case, what Pharaoh thinks of God is immaterial at this point. He is about to face the power of the God of Israel and how Pharaoh chooses to respond to Him will affect Israel and Egypt for a very long time.

## Exodus 5:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	send, send off, send away [back], dismiss, give over, cast out, let go, set free, shoot forth [branches], shoot [an arrow]	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperative	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
The NET Bible: <i>The form שָׁלַח (shallakh), the Piel imperative, has been traditionally translated "let [my people] go." The Qal would be "send"; so the Piel "send away, release, dismiss, discharge." B. Jacob observes, "If a person was dismissed through the use of this verb, then he ceased to be within the power or sphere of influence of the individual who had dismissed him. He was completely free and subsequently acted entirely on his own responsibility" (Exodus, 115).<sup>6</sup></i>			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally to, toward	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]	masculine singular collective noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

**Translation:**...*'Send out My people...*

God sees all of these people as *His people*; He views them as a singular, unified group. God calls for His people, the descendants of Jacob, to be sent out of Egypt

## Exodus 5:1d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
châgag (חָגַג) [pronounced khaw-GAHG]	to move in a circle, to dance, to reel to be giddy, to feast; to celebrate [often, a feast or a feast day]	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2287 BDB #290
The NET Bible: <i>The verb חָגַג (khagag) means to hold a feast or to go on a pilgrim feast. The Arabic cognate of the noun form is haj, best known for the pilgrim flight of Mohammed, the hajira. The form in the text (יִחָגְגוּ; vÿyakhoggu) is subordinated to the imperative and thus shows the purpose of the imperative.<sup>7</sup></i>			
lâmed (לְ) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

<sup>6</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.



Exodus 5:1d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mid <sup>e</sup> bâr (מִדְבָּר) [pronounced mid <sup>e</sup> - BAWR]	<i>wilderness, unpopulated wilderness, desert wilderness; mouth</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4057 BDB #184

**Translation:** ...so that they [may] celebrate a feast to Me in the desert-wilderness.' ”

The purpose of the sons of Israel leaving Egypt was to go into the desert-wilderness and celebrate their relationship to Him. My assumption is, God did not want any association among the Jews with the Egyptian religions.

Notice that God does not speak directly to Pharaoh. Pharaoh is an unbeliever. What fellowship has darkness with light? God works through a mediator, Moses (and Aaron). Moses is a believer so he has **fellowship** with God. Therefore, he can speak to God and God will speak to him. However, the Pharaoh does not believe in Yahweh, the God of Israel, so he cannot have any sort of fellowship with God. Moses, as a believer, can speak to God, and as a man, can speak to Pharaoh. Therefore, he will act as a mediator between God and Pharaoh. Throughout the next several chapters, God will always communicate with Moses and Moses with Pharaoh.

Unbelievers do not have direct communication with God, except in one area and one area only: when God the Holy Spirit reveals the **gospel** to the unbeliever, the channels between him and God are opened for a short time so that the unbeliever can believe in Jesus Christ (God has the gospel revealed often by a mediator—someone like you or me—but making the gospel real to the hearer is all God the Holy Spirit). Other than this revealing of the gospel of the unbeliever and the response of the unbeliever, there is no direct communication between God and man. Furthermore, this gospel, although revealed to the unbeliever by the Holy Spirit, is still often presented to the unbeliever by means of a believer, who represents Jesus Christ to this unbeliever.

Exodus 5:1 Later, Moses and Aaron went in and spoke to Pharaoh, [saying], “Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the Elohim of Israel, ‘Send out My people so that they [may] celebrate a feast to Me in the desert-wilderness.’ ” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The first request was simply for Moses to lead God’s people, the Hebrews, into the wilderness, to worship their God. They would hold a feast celebrating Him—that was the initial proposed plan. The rationale offered would involve the necessity to separate from Egypt completely in order to worship their God.

Exodus 5:1 Afterwards, both Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they said, “This is the command of Jehovah, the God of Israel: ‘You will send My people out of Egypt so that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the desert-wilderness.’ ” (Kukis paraphrase)

And so says Pharaoh, “Who [is] Y<sup>e</sup>howah that I will listen in His voice to send off Israel? I have not known Y<sup>e</sup>howah, and also I will not send.”

Exodus  
5:2

Then Pharaoh said, “Who [is this] Y<sup>e</sup>howah that I will listen to [and obey] His voice to send away Israel? I do not know Y<sup>e</sup>howah; and therefore, I will not send [them] away.”

**Pharaoh answered, “Who is this Jehovah that I should listen and obey Him to send Israel away? I do not know Jehovah and, for that reason, I will not send Israel out.”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Pharaoh, “Who [is] Y <sup>e</sup> howah that I will listen in His voice to send off Israel? I have not known Y <sup>e</sup> howah, and also I will not send.”
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	And Pharaoh said, The name of the Lord is not known to me, that I should hearken to His word to send Israel away. The name of the Lord is not revealed to me, and Israel I shall not release.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And Pharaoh said, The name of the Lord is not made known to me, that I should receive His word to release Israel. I have not found written in the Book of the Angels the name of the Lord. Of Him I am not afraid, neither will I release Israel.
Jerusalem targum	.
Revised Douay-Rheims	But he answered: Who is the Lord, that I should hear his voice, and let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.
Latin Vulgate	.
Plain English Aramaic Bible	.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	Pharaoh said, "Who is Mar-Yah, that I should listen to his voice to let Yisrael go? I do not know Mar-Yah, and moreover I will not let Yisrael go."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.
V. Alexander’s Aramaic T.	And the Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord that I should listen to his voice and dispatch Israel? Neither do I recognize the Lord, nor will I dispatch Israel."
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	Upon which Pharaoh said, Who is he, that I should hearken to his voice so as to send away the Israelites? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Pharaoh said, Who is he that I should listen to his voice, so that I should send away the children of Israel? I do not know the Lord, and I will not let Israel go.
Brenton’s Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	.
Easy English	But Pharaoh said: ‘I do not know the Lord. I do not know why I should obey his voice. I do not know why I should let the Israelites go. I do not know the Lord. Neither will I let the Israelites go.’
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	But Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord? Why should I obey him? Why should I let Israel go? I don’t even know who this Lord is, so I refuse to let Israel go.”
God’s Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
The Message	Pharaoh said, “And who is GOD that I should listen to him and send Israel off? I know nothing of this so-called ‘GOD’ and I’m certainly not going to send Israel off.”
Names of God Bible	Pharaoh asked, “Who is <b>Yahweh</b> ? Why should I obey him and let Israel go? I don’t know <b>Yahweh</b> , and I won’t let Israel go.”
NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:



Common English Bible	But Pharaoh said, "Who is this LORD whom I'm supposed to obey by letting Israel go? I don't know this LORD, and I certainly won't let Israel go."
Contemporary English V.	"Who is this LORD and why should I obey him?" the king replied. "I refuse to let you and your people go!"
The Living Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	.
New Life Version	.
New Living Translation	"Is that so?" retorted Pharaoh. "And who is the LORD? Why should I listen to him and let Israel go? I don't know the LORD, and I will not let Israel go."

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And Pharaoh asked: 'Just who is this Jehovah, that I must pay attention to anything He has to say, and then send the children of IsraEl away? I don't know Jehovah, and I'm not letting IsraEl go!'
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD that I should listen to [Or <i>obey</i> ] him and let Israel go? I don't know about [The Heb. lacks <i>about</i> ] the LORD, nor will I let Israel go!"
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Why, he answered, who is this Lord, that I must obey his command, and let Israel go free? I know no such Lord as that; I will not let Israel go.
Translation for Translators	But the king said, "Who is Yahweh? Why should I pay attention to what he says and let the Israeli people [MTY] go? I do not know Yahweh! And furthermore, I will not let the Israeli people go!"

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Modern English	.
Awful Scroll Bible	Pharaoh was to say: Was I to listen to Jehovah's frivolity, that Isra-el I am to let loose? - am I to have known Jehovah, that Isra-el I was to let loose?
Conservapedia	.
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	But Pharaoh replied, " Who is the EVER-LIVING that I should listen to His voice, to send out the Israelites ? I know nothing of the EVER-LIVING ; and I shall not send the Israelites out !"
God's Truth (Tyndale)	.
HCSB	But Pharaoh responded, "Who is Yahweh that I should obey Him by letting Israel go? I do not know anything about Yahweh, and besides, I will not let Israel go."
Jubilee Bible 2000	.
H. C. Leupold	.
Lexham English Bible	.
NIV, ©2011	.
Urim-Thummim Version	.
Tree of Life Version	.
Wiki-Bible	And Pharaoh said: "Who is Yahweh, that I should listen to him to send Israel? I did not know of Yahweh, and also I will not send Israel off."

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	.
The Heritage Bible	And Pharaoh said, Who is Jehovah that I should attentively hear his voice to send Israel out? I do not know by seeing Jehovah, and also I will not send Israel away.
New American Bible (2002)	.
New American Bible (2011)	Pharaoh answered, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD,* and I will not let Israel go."

**I do not know the LORD:** whether or not he had heard of the Lord, the God of Israel, Pharaoh here refuses to acknowledge the Lord's authority.

**Who knew nothing of Joseph:** the nuance intended by the Hebrew verb "know" here goes beyond precise determination. The idea may be not simply that a new king came to power who had not heard of Joseph but that this king ignored the services that Joseph had rendered to Egypt, repudiating the special relationship that existed between Joseph and his predecessor on the throne.

New English Bible	'Who is the LORD,' asked Pharaoh, 'that I should obey him and let Israel go? I care nothing for the LORD: and I tell you I will not let Israel go.'
New Jerusalem Bible	'Who is Yahweh,' Pharaoh replied, 'for me to obey what he says and let Israel go? I know nothing of Yahweh, and I will not let Israel go.'
New RSV	.
Revised English Bible	"Who is the LORD," said Pharaoh, "that I should listen to him and let Israel go? I do not acknowledge the LORD: and I tell you I will not let Israel go."

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	But Pharaoh replied, "Who is <i>ADONAI</i> , that I should obey when he says to let Isra'el go? I don't know <i>ADONAI</i> , and I also won't let Isra'el go."
The Complete Tanach	And Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord that I should heed His voice to let Israel out? I do not know the Lord, neither will I let Israel out."
exeGesés companion Bible	And Paroh says, Who is Yah Veh, that I hear his voice to send Yisra El away? I neither know Yah Veh nor send I Yisra El away.
Hebraic Roots Bible	.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	.
Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation	.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Pharaoh replied, 'Who is YHVH that I should obey Him and let Israel go? I do not recognize YHVH. Nor will I let Israel leave.'
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Pharaoh said, "Who is יהוה, that I should obey His voice to let Yisra'el go? I do not know יהוה, nor am I going to let Yisra'el go."

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	.
The Expanded Bible	But the king of Egypt [ <sup>L</sup> Pharaoh] said, "Who is the LORD? Why should I obey him [ <sup>L</sup> listen to his voice] and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and I will not let Israel go."
The Geneva Bible	.
Kretzmann's Commentary	And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. Although Pharaoh's answer was given with the understanding that the gods governed the countries, and that therefore the Israelites belonged under the jurisdiction of the Egyptian gods and had no business to have a God of their own, Pharaoh here showed an impious, selfish, blasphemous mind, and proved himself a religious tyrant.
NET Bible®	But Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord [ <i>Heb</i> "Yahweh."] that <sup>6</sup> I should obey him <sup>7</sup> by releasing <sup>8</sup> Israel? I do not know the Lord, <sup>9</sup> and I will not release Israel!"
The Pulpit Commentary	.
Syndein/Thieme	And Pharaoh said, "Who is Jehovah/God . . . that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah/God . . . neither will I let Israel go.

{Note: It is very clear here that the Pharaoh is an unbeliever and firm in his negative volition. As we saw earlier, God declared that the Pharaoh no longer has the ability to change his mind.}

The Voice

**Pharaoh:** And who is this *god you call* “the Eternal One” that I should heed His message and release His people Israel? I do not know any god by that name, and furthermore I do not intend to release Israel.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and "Paroh <sup>Great house"</sup> said, who is "YHWH <sup>He Is"</sup> (that) I should listen (to) his voice to send "Yisra'el <sup>He turns El aside"</sup> ? I do not know "YHWH <sup>He Is"</sup> , and also, I will not send "Yisra'el <sup>He turns El aside"</sup> ,...
Concordant Literal Version	Yet Pharaoh said: Who is Yahweh to Whose voice I should hearken to dismiss Israel? I do not know Yahweh! And, moreover, Israel I shall not dismiss.
Context Group Version	.
Darby Translation	.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	Then said Pharaoh, Who is Yahweh that I should hearken to his voice, to let Israel go? I know not Yahweh, and certainly. Israel, will I not let go!
English Standard Version	But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."
Green's Literal Translation	And Pharaoh said, Who <i>is</i> Jehovah that I should listen to His voice to send away Israel? I do not know Jehovah, and I also will not send Israel away.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and besides, I will not let Israel go."
New European Version	.
New King James Version	.
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	.
Young's Updated LT	And Pharaoh says, "Who is Jehovah, that I listen to His voice, to send Israel away? I have not known Jehovah, and Israel also I do not send away."

**The gist of this passage:**

Exodus 5:2a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (I) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## Exodus 5:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'āmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
par <sup>ē</sup> ōh (פַּרְעֹה) [pronounced pah <sup>ē</sup> -GŌH]	<i>great house; possibly hair head (indicating one of great age and therefore with wisdom and authority); transliterated pharaoh</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6547 BDB #829
mīy (מִי) [pronounced mee]	<i>who, whom; whose, whomever; what; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative; the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where; in that, in which, in what</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
The NET Bible: <i>The relative pronoun introduces the consecutive clause that depends on the interrogative clause (see GKC 318-19 §107.u).</i> <sup>8</sup>			
shāma <sup>c</sup> (שָׁמָע) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
The NET Bible: <i>The imperfect tense here receives the classification of obligatory imperfect. The verb שָׁמָע (shama') followed by "in the voice of" is idiomatic; rather than referring to simple audition – "that I should hear his voice" – it conveys the thought of listening that issues in action – "that I should obey him."</i>			
The NET Bible continues: <i>The construction of these clauses is similar to (ironically) the words of Moses: "Who am I that I should go?" (3:11).</i> <sup>9</sup>			
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qōwl (קוֹל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6963 BDB #876

**Translation:** Then Pharaoh said, "Who [is this] Y<sup>e</sup>howah that I will listen to [and obey] His voice..."

<sup>8</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.

The NET Bible: *This is a rhetorical question, expressing doubt or indignation or simply a negative thought that Yahweh is nothing (see erotesis in E. W. Bullinger, Figures of Speech, 944-45). Pharaoh is not asking for information (cf. 1 Sam 25:5-10).*<sup>10</sup>

I think the idea is, there is no statue of this God that he is acquainted with; Pharaoh has never personally met this God; and therefore, just Who is He that Pharaoh should listen to him. Quite obviously, Pharaoh is expressing disbelief in their God.

The personal name of God is known to many (or all) of the believers of that era; but how did Pharaoh perceive it? Had he heard the name *Y<sup>e</sup>howah* before? Did he associate it with the God of his Hebrew slaves? If this is how Pharaoh saw it, then his point of view, initially, might make sense. “We are your lords and you are our slaves; so I think I am going to trust my god and not yours,” might be Pharaoh’s attitude (although we do not have him stating this point exactly).

Exodus 5:2b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #510
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i> ]	<i>to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth [branches], to shoot [an arrow]</i>	Piel infinitive construct	Strong’s #7971 BDB #1018
The NET Bible: <i>The Piel infinitive construct here has the epexegetical usage with lamed (ל); it explains the verb “obey.”</i> <sup>11</sup>			
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong’s #853 BDB #84
Yis <sup>e</sup> râ’êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong’s #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

**Translation:** ...to send away Israel?

The God of Moses calls for the descendants of Israel to be sent away. Pharaoh knows these people by the name *Israel*, and he therefore says, “I am not going to send Israel away, simply on the request of some God that does not exist.”

Israel is the name of the patriarch of the Israelites and we have his name here used by God in such a way that it stands for all of the Israelites.

Exodus 5:2a-b **And Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.

<sup>11</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.

Pharaoh asks, “Just Who is this Y<sup>e</sup>howah?” This is certainly a reasonable question for Pharaoh to ask Moses and Aaron.

It is reasonable for us to ask, *is Pharaoh aware of the national God of Israel?* Let me suggest that Pharaoh is an intelligent man, and he would have been aware of many of the customs and beliefs of the Israelites. However, let me suggest that he trivializes their god and their beliefs in his own mind, if he is aware of them at all.

By Pharaoh’s response, it is clear that he thinks nothing of Israel’s God. He says, “I do not know the *Lord* and so I won’t let Israel go.” Nevertheless, he understands what is being requested of him. He understands exactly of whom Aaron is speaking when using the word *Israel*. He calls the *sons of Israel* just *Israel*.

Pharaoh’s words here pretty much open the door for the God of Israel to respond. “Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice?” Pharaoh asks. God will answer this question over the next 10 or so chapters.

The word *obey* is often translated by the Old English work *hearken*. *Hearken* is a marvelous word for which we do not have an exact one-word equivalent in Modern English. It means *to listen and to obey* or *to listen and to comply*. The Hebrew word is the Qal imperfect of *shâma’* (שָׁמַע) [pronounced *shaw-MAH*] and this word can mean *to listen and comply* (as in Gen. 3:17 16:2); it can simply mean *to hear* (Gen. 3:8, 10); or it can mean *to hear and sympathize* (Gen. 16:11 Ex. 2:24). These six passages<sup>12</sup> make it clear that we do not have the exact same implication each time.

Pharaoh is actually asking Moses and Aaron, “Why should I even *hear* His voice? Who is this god to me?”

It is my opinion—this is not found in the text—that the pharaohs of Egypt, for the most part, were prepared men. Many of them knew the peoples around them, their language, their gods and their culture. Surely Pharaoh knew all about the people of Israel; he likely knew something of their God. Based upon Moses’ request and Pharaoh’s response, I would think that we could conclude that there is very limited Y<sup>e</sup>howah worship occurring at this time among the people of Israel in Goshen.

Based upon the interactions of Moses (and Aaron) and the elders, and the request being made by Aaron, I would guess that, the people of Israel have preserved their Scriptures (the books of Genesis and Job), passing them along orally from generation to generation; but that they were not offering up animal sacrifices to their God. I come to these two conclusions based upon these two things: (1) When Moses and Aaron spoke to the elders, they appear to accept that there is a God related to them. This knowledge would have come from their Scriptures (which were not written down). (2) Secondly, Moses and Aaron will request that the people be allowed to go off into the wilderness to worship Y<sup>e</sup>howah, which would have naturally included animal sacrifices. This suggests to me that Israel did not practice this aspect of their **religion** in Egypt at this time.

Exodus 5:2a-b **And Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? (NKJV)**

God will answer this question posed by Pharaoh and give him many good reasons to believe and obey. God will see to it that Pharaoh knows Who He is. The fact that all of Israel will eventually respond to and obey their God; but Pharaoh will continue to resist Him—this clearly indicates that man has free will, and that two people can respond in opposite ways to the same thing.

<sup>12</sup> I have included the Qal perfect and the Qal imperfect in each illustration



Exodus 5:2c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
לֹא (אל or אול) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
יָדָע (עִדַּי) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHĠ</i> ]	<i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted with, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see; to learn; to recognize [admit, acknowledge, confess]</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
עֵת (אָן) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
יְהוָה (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** I do not know Y<sup>e</sup>howah;...

Pharaoh emphasizes, "I don't know Y<sup>e</sup>howah." He has never seen any statue of Him or any small figurine which represents Him; Pharaoh has never seen anything to indicate to him that there is this God, Y<sup>e</sup>howah.

This is, in a way, a challenge. "I don't know Him; never met Him; no idea Who you are speaking of. So, I am not going to grant your request."

The NET Bible: *This absolute statement of Pharaoh is part of a motif that will develop throughout the conflict. For Pharaoh, the Lord (Yahweh) did not exist. So he said "I do not know the Lord [i.e., Yahweh]." The point of the plagues and the exodus will be "that he might know." Pharaoh will come to know this Yahweh, but not in any pleasant way.*<sup>13</sup>

Exodus 5:2d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
וְ (or וֵ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
גַּם (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168

Together, the wâw conjunction and the gam particle might mean *and also, together with, along with, joined with, and, furthermore, and furthermore.*

<sup>13</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.



Exodus 5:2d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לא or לוּל) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
I am thinking that the gist of gam and lô' together is <i>neither, not even</i> .			
shâlach (שלח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	<i>to send, to send off, to send away, to dismiss, to give over, to cast out, to let go, to set free, to shoot forth [branches], to shoot [an arrow]</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018

**Translation:** ...and therefore, I will not send [them] away.”

There are 3 particles placed here together. When I do the translations, I will list the various ways which they are used.

Pharaoh says, “I am not sending Israel out of Egypt to do anything.”

Everything is happening exactly as God planned it. He told Moses to speak to the elders of Israel and then to go to Pharaoh and speak to him. God gave no indication that there would be trouble with the elders, but indicated the Pharaoh would not be so inclined. Any thinking person understands the reluctance of Pharaoh, however, a stranger coming to the Israelites and telling them that he was going to lead them out of Egypt; that is pretty phenomenal too. The Pharaoh admits to being an unbeliever. He does not know Who Yahweh is and has no intention of turning the Jews loose. For the past century or so, it has been the practice of Egypt to have the Jews in slavery. It is difficult for anyone to see past that. After all of the years of slavery in the United States, it was difficult for the Blacks to receive proper respect. That, however, is an entirely different topic.

Exodus 5:2 Then Pharaoh said, “Who [is this] Y<sup>e</sup>howah that I will listen to [and obey] His voice to send away Israel? I do not know Y<sup>e</sup>howah; and therefore, I will not send [them] away.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Pharaoh clearly expresses his **negative volition** towards the God of Israel; and this is exactly what we would expect. For perhaps 200 years, the sons of Jacob have been slaves to Egypt and, no doubt, they have built some marvelous Egyptian structures during that time. At this point in time, Pharaoh has no pressing reason why he should pay any attention to Moses and Aaron. God will change this.

Exodus 5:2 Pharaoh answered, “Who is this Jehovah that I should listen and obey Him to send Israel away? I do not know Jehovah and, for that reason, I will not send Israel out.” (Kukis paraphrase)

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So far, this is what we have studied:

Exodus 5:1 Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, “Thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.’”

This is the first meeting between Moses and Aaron and Pharaoh. They have the backing of the elders of Israel. They now stand before Pharaoh, asking for time to worship their God in the desert-wilderness.

Exodus 5:2 And Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go." (ESV; capitalized)

Pharaoh responds, "I don't know this god to whom you refer. Israel is not going anywhere."

**And so they say, "An Elohim of the Hebrews has met upon us. Let us go, please, a journey of three of days into the desert-wilderness and let us sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah our Elohim lest He fall upon us in the pestilence or in the sword."**

Exodus  
5:3

**So they said, "The Elohim of the Hebrews has met together with us. Please let us go a journey of 3 days into the desert-wilderness and let us sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah our Elohim, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."**

**So they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please allow us to journey 3 days into the desert-wilderness so that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God, so that He will not fall upon us with sickness or with the sword."**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so they say, "An Elohim of the Hebrews has met upon us. Let us go, please, a journey of three of days into the desert-wilderness and let us sacrifice to Y <sup>e</sup> howah our Elohim lest He fall upon us in the pestilence or in the sword."
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	And they said, The God of the Jehudaeae hath revealed Himself to us; let us now go three days' journey into the desert to sacrifice before the Lord our God, lest He come upon us with death or with slaughter.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And they said, The Name of the God of the Jehudaeae is invoked by (or upon) us. We will go, then, to proceed three days into the desert, and offer the sacrifices of a festival before the Lord God, that death and slaughter befall us not.
Jerusalem targum	.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And they said: The God of the Hebrews has called us, to go three days' journey into the wilderness and to sacrifice to the Lord our God: lest a pestilence or the sword fall upon us.
Latin Vulgate	.
Plain English Aramaic Bible	.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And they said, The LORD God of the Hebrews has appeared to us; now let us go three days journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God; lest he fall upon us with the sword or with pestilence.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	They said, "God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to Mar-Yah, our God, lest he fall on us with pestilence, or with the sword."
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	And they said, "The Lord God of the Hebrews has revealed to us that we must go a journey of three days into the wilderness and sacrifice to our Lord God, lest not He should put us to the sword or to death."
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	Then they said to him, The God of the Hebrews hath called us. Let us therefore go three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest death or destruction befall us.
Septuagint (Greek)	And they say to him, The God of the Hebrews has called us to him: we will go therefore a three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest at any time death or slaughter happen to us.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

Bible in Basic English	And they said, The God of the Hebrews has come to us: let us then go three days' journey into the waste land to make an offering to the Lord our God, so that he may not send death on us by disease or the sword.
Easy English	Moses and Aaron said: 'The God of the Israelites has met us. Please let us go. We must go on a journey of three days into the desert. There we must give gifts to the Lord our God. If we do not do this, God may attack us with illness. Or he may use soldiers to attack us.'
Easy-to-Read Version—2006	Then Aaron and Moses said, "The God of the Hebrews[b] has talked with us. So we beg you to let us travel three days into the desert. There we will offer a sacrifice to the Lord our God. If we don't do this, he might become angry and destroy us. He might make us die from sickness or war."
God's Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
The Message	.
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	Then Moses and Aaron said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us take a journey that lasts about three days. We want to go into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God. If we don't, he might strike us with plagues. Or he might let us be killed by swords."
New Simplified Bible	.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	Then they said, "The Hebrews' God has appeared to us. Let us go on a three-day journey into the desert so we can offer sacrifices to the Lord our God. Otherwise, the LORD will give us a deadly disease or violence."
Contemporary English V.	They answered, "The LORD God of the Hebrews, has appeared to us. Please let us walk three days into the desert where we can offer sacrifices to him. If you don't, he may strike us down with terrible troubles or with war."
The Living Bible	But Aaron and Moses persisted. "The God of the Hebrews has met with us," they declared. "We must take a three days' trip into the wilderness and sacrifice there to Jehovah our God; if we don't obey him, we face death by plague or sword."
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	.
New Life Version	Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. We ask of you, let us travel into the desert three days, to give a gift on an altar in worship to the Lord our God. Or He may send death to us by disease or by the sword."
New Living Translation	But Aaron and Moses persisted. "The God of the Hebrews has met with us," they declared. "So let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness so we can offer sacrifices to the Lord our God. If we don't, he will kill us with a plague or with the sword."

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	So [Moses and Aaron] said: 'The God of the Hebrews has called us to Him, and we're going on a three-day journey into the desert to [offer] sacrifices to our God Jehovah; for we're afraid that He might strike us and we'll die!'
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	It is the God of the Hebrews, they told him, who has summoned us to go out into the desert, a matter of three days' journey, and offer sacrifice to him; he, the Lord, is our God, what if he should bring sickness or war upon us?

Translation for Translators They/we replied, "Yahweh God, the one we Hebrews *worship*, has ◀revealed himself/appeared▶ to us *and told us what to tell you*. So we ask you to *please* let us go on a three day journey into the desert. We must offer sacrifices to Yahweh God *there*. *If we do not do that*, he will cause us to die [IDI] from diseases or from attacks by our enemies [MTY]."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible He was to say: He of mighty ones of the Hebrews, is to have met with us. We were to go on a three days' journey into the wilderness, and were to sacrifice to Jehovah, he of mighty ones - was he to touch you with pestilences, as if a sword?

Conservapedia And they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us: let us go, we beg you, three days' journey into the desert, and make sacrifices to the LORD our God, lest he fall upon us with disease or war."

Ferrar-Fenton Bible They, however, replied; "The GOD of the Hebrews has summoned us. Let us go therefore three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice to our Ever-living God, for fear He should assail us with plague or fever."

God's Truth (Tyndale) And they said: the God of the Hebrews has met with us: let us go (we pray you) three days journey into the desert, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God: least he smite us either with pestilence or with sword.

HCSB .

Jubilee Bible 2000 .

H. C. Leupold .

Lexham English Bible .

NIV, ©2011 .

Urim-Thummim Version .

Wiki-Bible And they said: "The God of the Hebrews has been called to us, we will please go a three day's journey in the desert, and sacrifice to Yahweh our God, lest he touch us with plague or the sword."

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) .

The Heritage Bible And they said, The God of the Hebrews has met with us; let us walk, please, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice to Jehovah our God, lest he impinge upon us with pestilence, or with the sword.

New American Bible (2002) .

New American Bible (2011) They replied, "The God of the Hebrews has come to meet us. Let us go a three days' journey in the wilderness, that we may offer sacrifice to the LORD, our God [Ex 3:18], so that he does not strike us with the plague or the sword."

New English Bible .

New Jerusalem Bible 'The God of the Hebrews has encountered us,' they replied. 'Give us leave to make a three -days' journey into the desert and sacrifice to Yahweh our God, or he will strike us with a plague or with the sword.'

New RSV .

Revised English Bible They replied, "The God of the Hebrews confronted us. Now we request leave to go three days' journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifice to the LORD our God, or else he may attack us with pestilence or sword."

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible .

The Complete Tanach And they said, "The God of the Hebrews has happened upon us. Now let us go on a three day journey in the desert and sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest He strike us with a plague or with the sword."

**lest He strike us:** Heb. וַיִּעַגְפֵי יְיָ: They should have said, "וַיִּעַגְפֵי יְיָ, lest He strike you," but they imparted honor to the throne [and out of respect said this]. The word וַיִּעַגְפֵי denotes a fatal encounter. — [from Tanchuma, Va'era 2]

exeGesés companion Bible And they say, Elohim of the Hebrews met with us:  
let us go, we beseech you,  
a journey of three days into the wilderness  
and sacrifice to Yah Veh our Elohim;  
lest he encounter us  
with pestilence or with the sword.

Hebraic Roots Bible .  
JPS (Tanakh—1985) .  
Judaica Press Complete T. .  
Kaplan Translation

'The God of the Hebrews has revealed Himself to us,' said [Moses and Aaron]. 'Please, allow us to take a three day journey into the desert, and let us sacrifice to YHVH our God. Otherwise, He may strike us down with the plague or the sword.'

Orthodox Jewish Bible And they said, Elohei Halvrim hath met with us; let us go, now, derech shloshet yamim into the midbar, and sacrifice unto Hashem Eloheinu; lest He fall upon us with dever (cattle disease), or with the cherev.

*The Scriptures* 1998

And they said, "The Elohim of the Hebrews has met with us. Please, let us go three days' journey into the wilderness and slaughter to הוהי our Elohim, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

*The Amplified Bible* .  
The Expanded Bible

Then Aaron and Moses said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us travel three days into the desert [wilderness] to offer sacrifices to the Lord our God. If we don't do this, he may kill us with a disease [pestilence; plague] or in war."

The Geneva Bible .  
Kretzmann's Commentary

And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us, He had disclosed, revealed Himself to them in glory, He, the ancient God of the free Hebrews. Let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord, our God, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword. The plea was that Jehovah would look upon their neglect to bring Him sacrifices as a deliberate act of disobedience, and would therefore come upon them, as their enemy, with severe punishments. Thus both ideas are brought out, that Jehovah was a jealous, and that He was a powerful God.

NET Bible®

And they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Let us go a three-day journey into the desert so that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God, so that he does not strike us with plague or the sword."

The Pulpit Commentary .  
Syndein/Thieme .  
The Voice

**Moses and Aaron:** The God of the Hebrews has visited us. We ask that you allow us to travel three days' distance into the desert to sacrifice to the Eternal our God. Otherwise, He may *become angry* and come after us with disease or sword.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans. ...and they said, "Elohiym <sup>Powers</sup> of the ones of "Ever <sup>Other side</sup> has met (with) us, please, we will walk the road for three days in the wilderness, and we will sacrifice

to "YHWH <sup>He Is</sup>" our "Elohiym <sup>Powers</sup>", otherwise, he will reach us (with) the epidemic or (with) the sword,...

Concordant Literal Version

Then they said: The Elohim of the Hebrews has met with us. Let us go, we pray, a way of three days into the wilderness, and let us sacrifice to Yahweh our Elohim, lest He come upon us with the plague or with the sword.

Context Group Version

.

Darby Translation

.

*Emphasized Bible*

.

English Standard Version

Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."

Green's Literal Translation

And they said, The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now let us go a journey of three days into the wilderness and sacrifice to Jehovah our God, that He not strike us with plague or with sword.

Jack Ballinger's translation

.

Modern English Version

.

Modern KJV

.

NASB

.

New European Version

.

New King James Version

.

Owen's Translation

.

Ron Snider's Translation

.

Stuart Wolf

.

Third Millennium Bible

.

Updated Bible Version 2.11

.

A Voice in the Wilderness

.

Webster's Bible Translation

.

World English Bible

.

*Young's Literal Translation*

.

Young's Updated LT

And they say, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us, let us go, we pray you, a journey of three days into the wilderness, and we sacrifice to Jehovah our God, lest He meet us with pestilence or with sword."

**The gist of this passage:**

Exodus 5:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'Ēlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #430 BDB #43



## Exodus 5:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿIb <sup>e</sup> rîym (מִיִּרְבֵּעַ) [pronounced <i>ġih<sup>b</sup>-VREEM</i> ]	<i>those from beyond</i> ; transliterated <i>Hebrews, Eberites</i>	proper masculine plural gentilic/noun with the definite article	Strong's #5680 BDB #720
qârâ' (אָרַךְ) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to meet; to meet unexpectedly;</i> <i>to have been met, to have</i> <i>encountered</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>ġahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against,</i> <i>above, over; on the ground of,</i> <i>because of, according to, on</i> <i>account of, on behalf of, with, by,</i> <i>besides, in addition to, to,</i> <i>toward, together with, in the</i> <i>matter of, concerning, as</i> <i>regards to</i>	preposition of relative proximity with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:** So they said, “The Elohim of the Hebrews has met together with us.”

The plural verb is interesting. Recall that Moses just was unable to state a point of view before Pharaoh in a cogent manner; so he needed Aaron to do the talking. But, it says, *they said*. So, did Moses whisper into Aaron's ear from time to time, or did he, on occasion, add a thought to what Aaron said?

Exodus 5:3a So they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us.” (NKJV)

The pronouns *they* and *us* refer to Moses and Aaron. God has told Moses what to say; he tells this to Aaron, and Aaron speaks to Pharaoh.

God met with Aaron and told him to leave Egypt and to go find Moses. God spoke to Moses in the Midian desert, having taken the form of a burning bush.

God has already been called *God of the Hebrews* (Ex. 3:18), a title which is, interestingly enough, found only in the book of Exodus (Ex. 3:18 5:3 7:16 9:1, 13 10:3).

### The Term *Hebrews*

1. The word *Hebrew*, which is found throughout Old Testament (but less often than you might think), is ʿIb<sup>e</sup>rîym (מִיִּרְבֵּעַ) [pronounced *ġih<sup>b</sup>-VREEM*], which means, *those from beyond*. It is transliterated *Hebrews, Eberites*. Strong's #5680 BDB #720.
2. This appears to be originally an Egyptian designation for those who came from Canaan (it is not clear if it has been altered in any way by the Hebrew language).
3. Egyptians appear to have given this name to the sons of Jacob, which was previously a generic term applied to people who simply came from outside of Egypt. Apparently, this term was commonly applied to those who came from Canaan (or possibly anyone who came from that general direction). Gen. 40:15
4. It is so used in Gen. 43:32 when it is noted that there was a custom against Egyptians eating with Hebrews (the ESV reads: *They served him [Joseph, the prime minister of Egypt] by himself, and them [the sons of Jacob] by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians.*) Clearly, there would have been no specific custom against eating with the sons of Jacob at this time, as they were a

## The Term *Hebrews*

very small tribe of people, who were about 70 in number—wives and children included—and unknown to all Egyptians at the time of Joseph’s rise to power in Egypt. Therefore, the custom of not eating with *Hebrews* is either a specific reference to the people of Canaan or a reference to non-Egyptians in general. My general impression of Egyptians at this time is, they are fastidiously clean people.

5. By the time of the **exodus**, this word became a term which specifically referenced the descendants of Jacob who lived in Egypt (Ex. 1:22 2:6, 13). That was simply how they were referred to. It is even possible that this word was a term of derision applied to them by their Egyptian masters (which is why I suggested that perhaps this term was softened, changed, or Hebrewized by the Hebrew people).
6. In any case, both the sons of Israel and the Egyptians accepted this terminology, and the sons of Israel were therefore known as *Hebrews*.
7. This term is used in the book of Exodus with reference to their God, Who is called *Elohim of the Hebrews* in Ex. 3:18 5:3 7:16 9:1, 13 10:3. Given the relative status of the Hebrew people, this was a powerful designation. No matter how the people of Egypt views the Hebrews, they have a powerful God Who would prove to be all-powerful.
8. The Philistines used this term *Hebrew* to refer to the Israelite people. 1Sam. 4:6, 9 13:19 14:11 29:3
9. King Saul used this term to refer to his people. 1Sam. 13:3
10. Therefore, this word became a common way to reference the sons of Jacob.
11. This term is used by the writer of Samuel in 1Sam. 13:7 as a parallel term to *men of Israel*. The phrase *men of Israel* generally refers to the *army of Israel* and it was a much more common term than *Hebrews*. The word *Hebrew (s)* is only found 34 times in the OT<sup>1</sup>; and *men of Israel* is found nearly 60 times in the OT.<sup>2</sup>

So, it appears that this term was originally a generic term used by the Egyptians to refer to people from outside of Egypt; and that this was, in time, was specifically applied to the sons of Jacob and appropriated by them as well.

<sup>1</sup> *Hebrew (s)* is only found 15 times in the NT.

<sup>2</sup> I should clarify that I took these numbers from the English of the KJV. The Orthodox Jewish Bible has the phrase *Bnei Yisrael (sons of Israel)* and it is found 640 times in the OT. In case you were wondering, their word for *Hebrew (Ivrim)* is found about the same number of times that *Hebrew* is found in the KJV.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

My guess is, God has given Moses and Aaron some of the basic stuff to say; and that everything is not scripted word by word. Aaron, you may recall, is doing most or all of the talking, as he requested of God, and he is able to do fine with saying the first few things that God has directed Moses to say.

Pharaoh has just said, “Look, I don’t know this God of whom you speak. I have never met Him.”

It is speculation on my part this Aaron gives this answer—or, perhaps Aaron and Moses speak. More likely, Moses whispers a few things to Aaron and then Aaron says these things to Pharaoh.

Recall that when Moses and Aaron meet up, there is nothing to suggest that Aaron just happened to be wandering through Midian that day. We know that God appeared to Moses and the burning bush. We do not know about God communicating to Aaron, but let me suggest that He did. So, God has clearly met with both men; and in between their meetings with Pharaoh, they meet with God, Who provides them with more direction.

Exodus 5:3a [So they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us.”](#) (NKJV)

This is an entirely unusual thing for someone to say—“The God of the Hebrews has met with us.” If these words caught Pharaoh’s attention or interest, he does not let on. However, in that era, it would have been quite extraordinary for a person to interact with his God. When they said these words, did Pharaoh smile and think to himself, *this ought to be interesting?*

In our era, any person who claims to have had a *back-and-forth* conversation with God would be considered to have mental problems. God's entire message to man is provided for us in the Word of God. He did not forget to say and few things, and so now, He is contacting Charley Brown (or Joseph Smith) to fill in the gaps. The completed Scriptures are enough to last us from A.D. 100 to the rapture. What God has provided for us is far more than most people could absorb in a lifetime.

There are so few good commentators who have written commentary on the entire Bible; there are even fewer **pastor-teachers** who have taught the entire Bible (J. Vernon McGee is the only person I can think of who has). My point being, if so few people have accomplished the feat of covering the entire Bible, then there is little need for us to look for more revelation from God. It is difficult enough to absorb all that He has shared with us already.

Furthermore, if you have ever read any extra-Biblical *revelation* claimed by anyone at any time since the completion of the canon of Scripture (A.D. 90–100)—and there have been many people who have made this claim—it is like comparing cheap dog food (their writings) to a splendid Thanksgiving meal cooked by your mother at the top of her game (the Scriptures). Let me use Joseph Smith, the one who founded the Mormon religion, as an example. He claimed to have special revelation from God. The angel Maroni revealed to him some gold tablets with reformed Egyptian writing on it (no such thing, by the way), and when he wore these *rose-colored glasses*, he could read and understand the Egyptian and translate it into English. Interestingly enough, Smith did not translate the reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics into English but into *Old English*; that is, into King James' English. I guess that the end result was more holy that way? This is where Smith claimed that the book of Mormon came from (I may have a few of the details wrong; it has been awhile since I have looked into their cult). I don't believe that anyone else saw those gold tablets.

I want you to briefly consider the cultic nature of the origin of Mormonism. It is based upon the word of one man in one generation who offers up a very preposterous story. I mean, for one thing, why is this original text—which apparently has not been seen by anyone else—written in reform Egyptian hieroglyphics? What exactly is that all about?

There was another young man who I read about who claimed to have direct contact with God. This revelation included the boy having splash fights with Jesus in some heavenly river. My point in this is, when you compare extra-Biblical *revelation* from the **church age**, it almost seems satirical.

**Moses in Hollywood:** On a related matter, there was a television series on the Old and New Testaments; and part of this series was about Moses leading the exodus of Hebrews out of Egypt. That sounded interesting to me; and the creators were passed off as a new voice for God in Hollywood.

I tuned in, and saw Moses. As we have studied, Moses talked to God. So, the actor playing Moses—not a particularly big guy—played Moses as a nutcase. He talked to God; so, the guy must have been nutty, right? That was the interpretation this actor gave to Moses. It was pathetic and I could not watch it. Moses talked to God, but he was not a nutcase. He was a man who was a genius in many areas; and he had been trained to be a leader in the finest schools that Egypt had to offer (private tutoring in the palace).

I tried to watch, but after 30 minutes or so, I could not watch it any more. How could someone get Moses any more wrong? He was not a goofy man from another planet who heard voices. He was called by God and given one of the most difficult assignments that any man could have. No way does a nutball from another planet lead Israel out of Egypt.

## Exodus 5:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect; with the cohortative hê	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
The cohortative expresses volition. In the English, we often render this with <i>let</i> or <i>may</i> ; in the plural, this can be <i>let us</i> . The cohortative is designed for the 1 <sup>st</sup> person, it can express a wish or a desire or purpose or an intent. It is found in conditional statements. Generally there is the hê suffix to indicate this.			
nâ' (נא) [pronounced naw]	<i>now; please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	a primitive particle of incitement and entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
Nâ' is used for a submissive and modest request. It is used to express a wish (Job 32:21: "Oh, that I may not respect any man's person"); to incite or to urge (Jer. 5:24); it is depreciatory when affixed to the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person with a particle of negation (do not, I implore you—see Gen. 33:10 19:18); with the it expresses a wish or request (Psalm 124 129:1 SOS 7:9), a challenge (Jer. 17:15), asking leave (Gen. 18:4), and depreciation with a negation (Gen. 18:32). In many of these examples, we would express this with the addition of the word <i>let</i> .			
derek <sup>e</sup> (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced DEH-rek <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>way, distance, road, path; journey, course; direction, towards; manner, habit, way [of life]; of moral character</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1870 BDB #202
The NET Bible: <i>The word "journey" is an adverbial accusative telling the distance that Moses wanted the people to go. It is qualified by "three days." It is not saying that they will be gone three days, but that they will go a distance that will take three days to cover (see Gen 31:22-23; Num 10:33; 33:8).</i> <sup>14</sup>			
sh <sup>e</sup> lôshâh (שְׁלוֹשָׁה) [pronounced shiloh-SHAW]	<i>a three, a trio, a triad, a threesome</i>	feminine numeral construct	Strong's #7969 BDB #1025
yâmîym (יָמִים) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mid <sup>e</sup> bâr (מִדְבָּר) [pronounced mid <sup>e</sup> -BAWR]	<i>wilderness, unpopulated wilderness, desert wilderness; mouth</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4057 BDB #184

**Translation:** ...Please let us go a journey of 3 days into the desert-wilderness...

Aaron goes back to the original request, which is to go 3 days into the desert-wilderness to offer sacrifices to God.

<sup>14</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.

## Exodus 5:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
zâbach (זָבַח) [pronounced <i>zaw<sup>b</sup>-VAHKH</i> ]	<i>to slaughter [usually an animal for sacrifice]; to sacrifice [an animal]; to slay, to immolate [an animal sacrifice]</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect; with the cohortative hê	Strong's #2076 BDB #256
<p>The cohortative expresses volition. In the English, we often render this with <i>let</i> or <i>may</i>; in the plural, this can be <i>let us</i>. The cohortative is designed for the 1<sup>st</sup> person, it can express a wish or a desire or purpose or an intent. It is found in conditional statements. Generally there is the hê suffix to indicate this.</p>			
<p>The NET Bible: <i>The purpose clause here is formed with a second cohortative joined with a vav (ו): "let us go...and let us sacrifice." The purpose of the going was to sacrifice.</i></p>			
<p>The NET Bible continues: <i>Where did Moses get the idea that they should have a pilgrim feast and make sacrifices? God had only said they would serve Him in that mountain. In the OT the pilgrim feasts to the sanctuary three times a year incorporated the ideas of serving the Lord and keeping the commands. So the words here use the more general idea of appearing before their God. They would go to the desert because there was no homeland yet. Moses later spoke of the journey as necessary to avoid offending Egyptian sensibilities (8:25-26).</i><sup>15</sup></p>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
’Ēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i> ]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43

**Translation:** ...and let us sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah our Elohim,...

The way that this is said is very polite: "Please allow us to go into the desert-wilderness and allow us to sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah our God."

I suspect that it had been a very long time since the people of Israel had offered up animal sacrifices to their God.

Exodus 5:3a-c *So they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please, let us go three days' journey into the desert and sacrifice to the Lord our God,..."* (NKJV)

Even though Moses has required that Aaron be the spokesman, it reads, *they said*, referring to both Moses and Aaron. Moses tells Aaron what to say, then Aaron says it. This probably looks kind of odd to Pharaoh.

They specifically request a 3-day journey into the desert-wilderness to sacrifice to their God. For those who know the end of this story—that nation Israel will walk out of Egypt entirely and permanently—this is not a *bait and*

<sup>15</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.



*switch* perpetrated by God (that is, God is not asking for a 3-day trip into the wilderness, at which point He will say to Moses, “Okay, now make a run for it!”). When the people of Israel leave the land, they will leave it permanently by the demand of Pharaoh and his people. However, this is *not* what is being requested at the beginning. The negative volition of Pharaoh will make a complete separation inevitable.

This also fits in well with one of the underlying themes of Scripture that, at some point, there will need to be a complete and total separation of the holy from the profane.

Exodus 5:3d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pen (פֶּן) [pronounced <i>pen</i> ]	<i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that [plus a negative]</i>	conjunction	Strong's #6435 BDB #814
pāga <sup>c</sup> (פָּגַע) [pronounced <i>paw-GAHG</i> ]	<i>to fall upon, to meet, to encounter, to reach; to entreat [by request], to assail [with a petition], to urge; to strike, to kill, to slay; to touch out of boundary; to reach [to anyone]; to strike a covenant [with someone], to make peace</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #6293 BDB #803
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
deber (דִּבְרָה) [pronounced <i>DE<sup>B</sup>-ver</i> ]	<i>pestilence, plague, widespread sickness; punishment from God in the form of pestilence; punishment as the sin unto death</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1698 BDB #184
This is the first occurrence of this word in Scripture.			
'ōw (אוּ) [pronounced <i>oh</i> ]	<i>or, or rather, otherwise, also, and; if, perchance; except, or else; whether, not the least</i>	disjunctive conjunction	Strong's #176 BDB #14
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
chereb (כֶּרֶב) [pronounced <i>khe-RE<sup>B</sup>V</i> ]	<i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article; pausal form	Strong's #2719 BDB #352

The NET Bible: *The last clause of this verse is rather unexpected here: “lest he meet [afflict] us with pestilence or sword.” To fail to comply with the summons of one’s God was to invite such calamities. The Law would later incorporate many such things as the curses for disobedience. Moses is indicating to Pharaoh that there is more reason to fear Yahweh than Pharaoh.*<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.



**Translation:** ...lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.”

This is the warning which I find odd. Is Aaron saying, “God will fall upon us” as in Moses, Aaron and the Jews? Or, does he mean that God will bring pestilence or the sword to fall upon all of them? Is he offering up a reason why Pharaoh should allow them to leave and make these sacrifices, because God might harm the Hebrews? Or is Aaron warning that God will fall upon *us*, as in Aaron, Moses, and Pharaoh?

God has given the general request to Moses, and this is to be put before Pharaoh. There appears to be a particular threat associated with this request, as per Ex. 4:22–23 *Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, Israel is My firstborn son, and I say to you, "Let My son go that he may serve Me." If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.'*” (ESV; capitalized)

If I were to make an educated guess here, perhaps Aaron is going a little freeform here, as he does not repeat what God said exactly—or even closely. So, God tells Moses, Moses tells Aaron, and then Aaron appears to go somewhat freeform after that, not exactly following the plan as God has laid it out.

Moses and Aaron understand the issue; they have a job to do; to remove the people of Israel from Egypt. If they do not do this, it means the **sin unto death** to themselves and to Israel. Moses already knows first hand that if he does not obey God it will mean the sin unto death. What they are requesting is exactly what God told them to request (Ex. 3:18). However, God has made any threats to Israel. His threats are toward Egypt. Here, Aaron is adding to God's Word. He claims that if he does not round up the Jews and haul them into the desert, then God will attack them with either sickness or with war (sword is a **metonymy** for war). This sounds better, but it is not what God told them to say (insofar as we know). Prior to the exodus, God wanted the Israelites to go out into the desert and worship him and receive divine instructions there.

I think that we may agree that Aaron has believed in the Revealed God and has believed that God has a plan for them. However, it is not clear in this meeting that he correctly communicates what God wants him to communicate. It does not appear that there is much similarity between what God has said and what Aaron said here, apart from the 3 day journey into the desert-wilderness ([God is speaking to Moses] *“And they will listen to your voice, and you and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now, please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.’”—Ex. 3:18).*

Exodus 5:3 *So they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please, let us go three days' journey into the desert and sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.”* (NKJV)

The alternative to being allowed to worship, according to what Aaron says here, is that God will fall upon them with sickness or with the sword. In other words, Aaron is saying that there would be consequences for their not going out to the desert-wilderness to worship God. It appears that either Moses or Aaron believed those consequences would fall upon the Israelites themselves. Aaron says, *“...lest He fall upon us...”*

Quite frankly, I do not know how to take this. When Aaron said this, does *us* mean the people of Israel *and* Egypt or just Israel alone? It sounds more like the latter. Furthermore, I do not recall God warning Moses, “Listen, if you do not get your people organized and out of there to the desert-wilderness to worship Me, I will visit them with the sword and with sickness.” Do you see how what Aaron is saying is problematic?

Therefore, I would not be surprised that Aaron was ad libbing at this point or summarizing what he believed Moses said to him. This is likely another reason why God wanted Moses for this job, exclusively. God's words tend to be precise. God's words spoken by Moses to Aaron, which process then allows Aaron's own thinking to influence what comes out of his mouth.

The 1<sup>st</sup> person plural occurs quite a number of times in this verse, either as the subject of a verb or as a suffix. We can even see this in the English:

Exodus 5:3 So they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with **us**. Please, let **us** go three days’ journey into the desert and sacrifice to the Lord **our** God, lest He fall upon **us** with pestilence or with the sword.” (NKJV)

Exodus 5:3 So they said, “The Elohim of the Hebrews has met together with us. Please let us go a journey of 3 days into the desert-wilderness and let us sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah our Elohim, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

We see it 4x in the English; but the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural actually occurs 5x in this single verse. So, unless there was some hand-gesturing of some sort, no matter how Aaron meant this to come across, Pharaoh probably understood this the way that I first took it—that God would bring these things upon Moses, Aaron and all of Israel (= *us*). “You have to let **us** go,” Aaron appears to be saying, “Or God will fall upon **us** with sickness and violence.” Just to make certain that we are clear on this, God did *not* say these things.

It is my opinion that God speaking to Moses, Moses telling Aaron what to say, and then Aaron speaking to Pharaoh results in saying something which does not really convey what God wanted to convey. I believe the intent was for the pestilence and the sword to fall upon the Egyptians (which means, at the very end, Aaron should have used the 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural suffix rather than the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural suffix). So, I believe that what we read here actually represents a screw-up on Aaron’s part.

Now, how on earth, you may ask, does Aaron get this so wrong? What is in his background that would cause him to say something like this? In Egypt, there were the slave drivers, who were Egyptian; but there were also Hebrew men who oversaw the other Hebrew slaves. If the Hebrew slaves did not perform their duties satisfactorily, their Hebrew overseers would be punished. This is how Aaron could have allowed his thinking to end up distorting the accurate words of Moses from God (Moses did not have the same background as a slave as Aaron did).

This is another reason why God wanted Moses to speak directly to Pharaoh and not to speak through his brother Aaron: Moses would get it right; Moses would not go off-script. Moses would not just start making things up.

In any case, Pharaoh is rejecting all of what Aaron has to say. Exactly what Aaron said does not really concern Pharaoh. He is focused on what the Hebrew people are supposed to be doing, and that is constructing great things for Egypt. This does not give them time to go off on their God-mandated sabbaticals.

Exodus 5:3 So they said, “The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please allow us to journey 3 days into the desert-wilderness so that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God, so that He will not fall upon us with sickness or with the sword.” (Kukis paraphrase)

**And so says unto them a king of Egypt, “For why, Moses and Aaron, do you [all] let loose the people from his works; go to your burdens.”**

Exodus  
5:4

**The king of Egypt said to them, “Why, Moses and Aaron, do you [both] release the people from their production; go [now and return] to your labor.”**

**The king of Egypt said to them, “Why, Moses and Aaron, do you think that you are able to release the people from their work? Go now and return to your assigned labors.”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so says unto them a king of Egypt, “For why, Moses and Aaron, do you [all] let loose the people from his works; go to your burdens.”

Dead Sea Scrolls

Targum of Onkelos	And the king of Mizraim said to them, Why, Mosheh and Aharon, do you hinder the people from their works? Go to your employment.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And the king of Mizraim said to Mosheh and Aharon, Why do you make the people cease from their labours? Go to your work.
Jerusalem targum	.
Revised Douay-Rheims	The king of Egypt said to them: Why do you Moses and Aaron draw off the people from their works? Get you gone to your burdens.
Latin Vulgate	.
Plain English Aramaic Bible	.
Peshitta (Syriac)	.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	And the king of Egypt said to them, Wherefore do you, Moses and Aaron, cause the people to stop from their work? Go back to your tasks.
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	And the king of Egypt said to them, "Wherefore do you, Moses and Aaron, take away [Lit. Ar. id.: "Make them idle."] the people from their work? Get back to your duties!"
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	Thereupon the king of Egypt said to them, Why do ye, Moses and Aaron, divert the people from their labours? Begone each of you to his work.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king of Egypt said to them, Why do you, Moses and Aaron, turn the people from their works? depart each of you to your works.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	.
Easy English	.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	But Pharaoh said to them, "Moses and Aaron, you are bothering the workers. Let them do their work. Go back to your own work! There are very many workers, and you are keeping them from doing their jobs." V. 5 is included for context.
<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	The king said to Moses and Aaron, "What do you mean by making the people neglect their work? Get those slaves back to work! You people have become more numerous than the Egyptians. And now you want to stop working!" V. 5 is included for context.
<i>The Message</i>	But the king of Egypt said, "Why on earth, Moses and Aaron, would you suggest the people be given a holiday? Back to work!"
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why are you making the people slack off from their work? Do the hard work yourselves!"
Contemporary English V.	The king said, "Moses and Aaron, why are you keeping these people from working? Look how many you are keeping from doing their work. Now everyone get back to work!" This is a combination of vv. 4 & 5.
The Living Bible	"Who do you think you are," Pharaoh shouted, "distracting the people from their work? Get back to your jobs!" This appears to be a combination of vv. 4 & 5.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	.
New Life Version	.
New Living Translation	.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	But the king of Egypt replied: 'Why are you, Moses and Aaron, trying to keep people from doing their work? Now, go back and do your jobs!'
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Nay, said the king of Egypt, it is two men, Moses and Aaron, enticing the people away from their work; go back to your duties.
Translation for Translators	But the king of Egypt said to them/us, "Moses and Aaron, «why are you preventing the Israeli people from working?/stop trying to keep the Israeli people from working!» [RHQ] <i>Tell those slaves to return to work!</i> "

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Awful Scroll Bible	The king of Egypt was to say: Moses and Aaron, were yous to loose the people from their work? - They were to go to their burdens.
Conservapedia	But the king of Egypt said, "Moses and Aaron, why have you incited your people to stop working? Get to your work!"
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	The King of the Mitzeraim said to them; "Why do you, Moses and Aaron, break off the people from their work ? Go yourselves to the buildings !
God's Truth (Tyndale)	.
HCSB	.
Jubilee Bible 2000	.
H. C. Leupold	.
Lexham English Bible	.
NIV, ©2011	.
Urim-Thummim Version	Then the king of Egypt answered them, why do you Moses and Aaron keep the people from their works? Go back yourselves now to your compulsory service.
Wiki-Bible	And the king of Egypt said to them "Why, Moses and Aaron, will you disturb the people from its doings, go to your own troubles."
Tree of Life Version	.

**Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

Christian Community (1988)	.
The Heritage Bible	And the king of Egypt said to them, Why do you, Moses and Aaron, strip the people from their works? Walk to your burdens.
New American Bible (2002)	.
New American Bible (2011)	The king of Egypt answered them, "Why, Moses and Aaron, do you make the people neglect their work? Off to your labors!"
New English Bible	.
New Jerusalem Bible	The king of Egypt said to them, 'Moses and Aaron, what do you mean by distracting the people from their work? Get back to your forced labour.'
New RSV	.
Revised English Bible	.

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	.
The Complete Tanach	But the king of Egypt said to them, "Why, Moses and Aaron, do you disturb the people from their work? Go to your own labors."

**do you disturb the people from their work:** Heb. וַעֲרִיֶפֶת; [meaning] you separate [them] and take them away from their work, because they listen to you and expect to rest from their work. Similarly, "Avoid it (וּבְעַרְפָּךָ), do not pass

through it" (Prov. 4:15); [i.e.,] distance it. Similarly, "And you have avoided (וּעָרַפְתִּי) all my advice" (Prov. 1: 25); "that it was (עָרַפָּה)" (Exod. 32:25), [i.e.,] distanced and despised.

**Go to your own labors:** "Go to your work that you have to do in your houses." But [he could not have been referring to the Egyptian bondage, because Moses and Aaron were from the tribe of Levi and] the labor of the Egyptian bondage was not incumbent upon the tribe of Levi. You should know [that this is true] for behold, Moses and Aaron were coming and going without permission. — [from Tanchuma, Va'era 6; Tanchuma Buber, Va'era 4]

exeGes companion Bible	And the sovereign of Misrayim says to them, Why do you, Mosheh and Aharon, expel the people from their works? Go to your burdens.
Hebraic Roots Bible JPS (Tanakh—1985) Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation	.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	The Egyptian king said to them, 'Moses and Aaron, why are you distracting the people from their work? Get back to your own business!'
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Melech Mitzrayim said unto them, Why do ye, Moshe and Aharon, disturb the people from their works? Get you back unto your own sivot (burdens). But the sovereign of Mitsrayim said to them, "Mosheh and Aharon, why do you take the people from their work? Get back to your burdens."

#### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i> The Expanded Bible	.
The Geneva Bible Kretzmann's Commentary	But the king [ <sup>L</sup> of Egypt] said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their work? Go back to your jobs [labor]! There are very many Hebrews [ <sup>L</sup> They are more numerous than the people of the land], and now you want them to quit working!"
NET Bible®	And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works, attempt to secure for them a vacation from their labors, release them from their duties? Get you unto your burdens, your servile labor. He addressed them as though they themselves were slaves, and at the same time intimated that their request was a vain pretext.
The Pulpit Commentary Syndein/Thieme The Voice	The king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you cause the people to refrain from their work?13 Return to your labor!" <b>Pharaoh:</b> Moses and Aaron, why are you distracting people from their work? <i>Stop wasting time, and get back to your labor!</i>

#### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and the king of "Mits'rayim <sup>Two straits"</sup> said to them, <why> will you, "Mosheh <sup>Plucked out"</sup> and "Aharon <sup>Light bringer"</sup> , loose the people from his work? Walk to your burdens,...
Concordant Literal Version	Yet the king of Egypt said to them: Why, Moses and Aaron, are you causing the people to renounce their tasks? Go to your burdens!"
Context Group Version	And the king of Egypt said to them, Why do you (pl), Moses and Aaron, loose the people from their works? You (pl) get to your (pl) burdens.
Darby Translation <i>Emphasized Bible</i>	.



English Standard Version	But the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people away from their work? Get back to your burdens."
Green's Literal Translation	And the king of Egypt said to them, Moses and Aaron, why do you loose the people from their work? You go to your burdens.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	But the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you draw [Lit loose] the people away from their work [Lit works]? Get back to your labors [Lit burdens]!"
New European Version	.
New King James Version	.
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	And the king of Egypt said to them, Why do ye, Moses and Aaron, hinder the people from their works; go you to your burdens.
World English Bible	.
Young's Literal Translation	.
Young's Updated LT	And the king of Egypt says unto them, "Why, Moses and Aaron, do you [all] free the people from its works? go to your burdens."

### The gist of this passage:

Exodus 5:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
melek <sup>e</sup> (מלך) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince; royal, royalty</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
Mits <sup>e</sup> rayim (מצרים) [pronounced mits-RAH-yim]	<i>double straights; transliterated Mizraim; also Egypt, Egyptians</i>	masculine singular, proper noun	Strong's #4714 BDB #595



## Exodus 5:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i> ]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Lâmed + mâh together literally mean <i>for why</i> . They can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence. BDB also offers the rendering <i>lest</i> . Gesenius, perhaps for this passage alone (1Chron. 15:13), offers the rendering <i>on account of [that] which, because that</i> .			
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced <i>moh-SHEH</i> ]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾAhărôn (אַהֲרֹן) [pronounced <i>ah-huh-ROHN</i> ]	transliterated Aaron	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14
pâraʿ (פָּרַע) [pronounced <i>paw-RAHG</i> ]	<i>to let go of [someone], to let loose [of someone], to make unbridled, to make lawless</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #6544 BDB #828
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿam (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
maʿăšîym (מַעֲשֵׂימ) [pronounced <i>mah-ğuh-SEEM</i> ]	<i>deeds, works, production, that which is produced or done [crops, property, goods]; profession, occupation</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4639 BDB #795

**Translation:** The king of Egypt said to them, “Why, Moses and Aaron, do you [both] release the people from their production;...”

I think the idea here is, *from where do you get the authority to release your people from their assigned work? Why do you think that you have that ability?*

The NET Bible: *The clause is a rhetorical question. Pharaoh is not asking them why they do this, but rather is accusing them of doing it. He suspects their request is an attempt to get people time away from their labor. In Pharaoh's opinion, Moses and Aaron were "removing the restraint" (פָּרָא, para') of the people in an effort to give them rest. Ironically, under the Law the people would be expected to cease their labor when they went to appear before God. He would give them the rest that Pharaoh refused to give. It should be noted also that it was not Israel who doubted that Yahweh had sent Moses, as Moses had feared – but rather Pharaoh.*<sup>17</sup>

V. 4 has the 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect of pāra' (פָּרָא) [pronounced *paw-RAH*] which, generally speaking, means *to loose*. It more properly means *to let go, to let alone* and in the causative stem, it means that Moses and Aaron are causing the Jews to let go of their labors. Better English is *they are causing them to refrain from their labors*.

We have two different words for *work* in this verse. The first word is ma'āseh (מַעֲשֵׂה) [pronounced *mah-as-EH*] and it means *deed, work*. Since it is in the plural and has on the 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix with the preposition mî (-מִ), which is used with verbs of separation or removal and, in that context, means *from*, I have translated this phrase *from their labors*. The 3<sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix gathers Israel as a whole; we still translate that suffix as *their*.

Exodus 5:4a *Then the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people from their work?"*

Pharaoh objects to the people being taken from their work. As far as he is concerned, the Hebrew people were good for one thing, and that was being slaves to Egypt. They had work to do. They served Egypt. Pharaoh had projects which needed to be done. He saw no upside in their meandering out into the wilderness for any reason.

We have begun to study the first encounter between Moses and Aaron and Pharaoh. We have exegeted the first 4½ verses:

Exodus 5:1 *Afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.'"*

Exodus 5:2 *But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."*

Exodus 5:3 *Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."*

Recall that Aaron has made a mistake here with what he has said. God did not threaten the Hebrew people.

Exodus 5:4a *But the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people away from their work?" (ESV; capitalized)*

Pharaoh's concern is with the work which the sons of Israel ought to be doing.

Exodus 5:4b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hālak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>go, come, depart, walk; advance</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

<sup>17</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.

## Exodus 5:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
James Rickard: "Go" [is]...the Qal Imperative of the Hebrew verb HALAK, הלך, which means, "go or walk." The basic idea carried by the word is movement of some type, usually of people. As such, it is the opposite of sitting or lying down, or sleeping; a body without movement or taking no action in life. So right away we are told to take action that is the opposite of being lazy. <sup>18</sup>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
çib <sup>e</sup> loth (סבלת) [pronounced sihb-LOHTH]	(heavy) burdens, forced labours	feminine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5450 BDB #688

**Translation:** ...go [now and return] to your labor."

Exodus 5:4b [Get back to your labor.](#)"

The final word in this verse is ç<sup>e</sup>bâlâh (סבלת) [pronounced seb-aw-LAWH] and it is the word used in Exodus exclusively for their slavery. The masculine form of this means, a *tyrannical burden* and this word, in the feminine, means a *burden placed upon the Israelites in slavery*. *Slave-labors* or *burdens of slavery* would both be good translations of ç<sup>e</sup>bâlâh.

Pharaoh orders them back to work. "Go to your duties!" he orders. Now, remember, Moses is not a slave and never has been a slave, even though he is a Hebrew. He was a Hebrew infant who was adopted by the young daughter of Pharaoh; and, therefore, raised in the palace and given a royal education given to royal princes.

Exodus 5:4 [The king of Egypt said to them, "Why, Moses and Aaron, do you \[both\] release the people from their production; go \[now and return\] to your labor."](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Aaron was a slave at this time and we are not given in any information about him leaving his assigned tasks. One day, he is working for Pharaoh as a slave; and the next day, he is off traveling to Midian, apparently guided by God to go and meet his brother there. Exactly how that all came about, we are not told.

There have attempts to explain why Aaron was not missed on the job. According to the Complete Tanakh,<sup>19</sup> being [Levites](#), Moses and Aaron would have been exempt from typical slave duties in order to serve a spiritual function. However, I am unaware of any historical or Scripture backup for that assertion (it is the opinion of an ancient rabbi; but certainly from long after the period of time that we are studying). Although Moses and Aaron are clearly Levites; there is no indication at this point in time that Levites had any sort of spiritual function. Furthermore, given the harshness of the attitude of Pharaoh towards this request to worship God, it is hard to imagine that Egypt made accommodations for the religion of the Hebrews (there is not a lot of evidence for much by the way of Y<sup>e</sup>howah worship among these Hebrew slaves).

In nation Israel, the focus of the [Levite](#) tribe was to be towards spiritual things. This will be the result of divine revelation which will come to Moses *after* the sons of Israel exit Egypt. During the time period that we are studying, the duties and responsibilities of the Levites have not yet been specified. This would come with the giving of [the Law](#), a few months in the future from the time of our narrative. In other words, there is no basis for

<sup>18</sup> From <http://gracedoctrine.org/proverbs-chapter-6/> accessed September 21, 2015.

<sup>19</sup> I do wonder if there are any other opinions; and, more importantly, any sort of evidence for having an opinion on this matter.

thinking that the sons of **Levi** have any sort of a specific spiritual function at this time. Their place in Hebrew culture will become defined in the second half of the book of Exodus and in the book of Leviticus, which things have not yet happened.

**Application—Socialism, Communism and Christianity:** As an aside, socialism and communism are simply forms of government where the people ostensibly work in service to the nation as a whole—and they are led to believe that their work is in service to themselves, as they are the nation. That is not what the reality is, however. Under socialism or communism, the political class takes their cut first from all that is produced, and then they spread out whatever remains among the workers. So the workers are not really working in service to the entire nation; they are working primarily in service to the political class—their rulers. It is a form of slavery, not dramatically different from what the people of Israel were subject to.

Before moving ahead with this digression, some definitions should be given. Originally, *socialism* and *communism* were theoretical terms. Socialism was established when the means of production belonged to the people (which was defined as the *state*). There had to be guidance from enlightened socialists (that is, rulers) to establish the socialist state, where everything, essentially belongs to the state. This does not mean that I, as a factory worker, have an individual ownership in the factory where I work (I do not own a few square yards here or there; I do not receive profit bonuses when the factory has a good year). But people who work in the factory are the owners insofar as they make up the nation and the nation owns the factory. You might be able to see from this what a ruse socialism is from the beginning.

A ruling class would be needed in order to implement all of these things, when a government becomes socialist, but, according to Karl Marx, this ruling class would naturally melt away or disappear when each factory, store and farm collective began to act as an autonomous unit. When that happens, then the nation is full-on communist. That is the theory; and the theory is false. At no time do despotic rulers look at their nation and think, “Well, all of these factories and stores and farms look like they are functioning fine and with autonomy, so, I am going to quit my job as ruler.” That is what is supposed to happen in theory, according to Marx; but it never actually happens. People who take power generally want it; and when they have it, they don’t tend to let go of it.

In actual practice, communism is usually an extreme form of socialism. Under socialism, the government begins to take over major industries (like the oil and healthcare industries); and, under communism, nearly everything is under state control.

It is nearly impossible to make a people think, “This sounds great, having a political class at the top and they control everything. I like that idea!” So socialism, which can be implemented quickly (almost overnight) or slowly (over many decades) has to offer things for free: free education (at most or all levels), free food, free healthcare, free housing; whatever. The idea being sold is, no matter who you are, the government will make certain that you are fed, clothed, housed and medicated. Now, to a kid with \$80,000 in school debt, or the person with a \$150,000 medical bill, or the person who just wants something for free, this sounds like a great deal. The reality is quite different.

In our study, for all intents and purposes, the Hebrew people are in a socialized society. Egypt makes certain that they have food, clothing and housing (which they all apparently have); and, in exchange, they simply must work. There is not as much of a difference between slaves and socialist citizens.

Socialist leaders portray themselves as distributing goods and services equally; but those directly related to the socialist/communist party always receive the lion’s share of whatever is produced. Whatever is leftover is then given to the workers. The closer you are to ruling class, the better off you are. Now, in some communist/socialism nations, their leaders may appear in crisp worker’s uniforms; but, no matter what the standard of living is for the people, the standard of living for leaders is always greater—sometimes by an amazing factor.

There is virtually no difference between socialism/communism and the slavery endured by the sons of Israel while in Egypt. The Hebrew people, with their labor, served the state. Their first allegiance was to be towards nation Egypt and not towards their God (socialism and communism tend to be very anti-God). The exception to this maxim is, if socialism is being sold to a **religious** people, it is often presented as being the logical outgrowth of their charitable beliefs. That is, Communists found that attacking their faith directly did not work; but undermining their faith often worked to move people away from their God. Propagandists for the left often portray Jesus as a long-haired, hippy socialist, even though He was none of those things.

Socialism and Communism are forms of slavery where freedom is dramatically restricted. These forms of government have simply found a way to make their political philosophy sound palatable to the common man. Obviously, when socialism is being sold to a nation through propaganda, the subsequent loss of freedom is never revealed. You may be restricted on what you can read, watch on television, eat; and the type of medical care and education that you receive is determined by the state, not by you.

In a nation where the people are poor, communism/socialism teaches them jealousy of anyone who is successful; and particularly, jealousy of the wealth of the ruling class. But, communist/socialist leaders simply take the place of the ruling class when all is said and done. Many of those who are wealthy are eliminated; but the rulers of a socialist state are never eliminated (even in a socialist state which pretends to be democratic, many leaders rule for their entire life).

In a nation of freedom, there are always great differences between the rich and poor; and most recently, *wealth inequality* is how communism/socialism is sold to a free nation. Those who are successful are villainized. We even had a former president of the United States, who had socialist leanings, who, during his campaign, accused doctors of not giving the proper medicine to diabetics so that they might later cut off their limbs, because such an operation gave the doctor more money. We have two socialist politicians today in the United States, a male and a female, neither of whom has the first clue about economics, who proclaim that they will provide medicare for all. Socialist never tell you of the rights and freedoms that you will lose. They tell the people about everything that they will give to them (if elected); and people, unfortunately, are sold by their promises of free medicine, free education, and free whatever else sounds good.

Today, in the United States, we have free public education which is not free, but very expensive; and has become sadly inferior to the education systems of modern countries around the world. By the use of political power, college education in the United States has become dramatically expensive. Where, at one time, one could work and pay for one's education; today, that is virtually impossible. This process took place over a period of 30–40 years, but the exact same people who caused it to happen are selling *free college education* today as the solution.

The nation that we are studying, ancient Egypt, appears to have been a 3-tiered caste system. There was the ruling class, the Egyptian population and the slaves. Modern socialism retains the ruling class and the slaves, who are not called *slaves* but *workers* instead. These workers are told that they are serving the collective whole (which is themselves), but, in reality, they are serving the ruling class. Whatever the ruling class wants, they take. This is why in extreme cases, like North Korea and Venezuela, the rulers are overweight and the people are starving.

What socialism and communism do is make a dictatorship (more accurately, an Oligarchy) more palatable to the people who are under them. It is quite brilliant, actually. It inspires a considerable number of people to revolt in order to replace one dictatorship with another; but thinking that this will somehow be better. Or, in other countries, to willingly vote for socialist programs and socialist candidates; so that there is a socialist creep in that nation.

Also, under communism or socialism, innovation and creativity are usually stifled because the state needs neither of these things (unless those things serve or glorify the state). People in power often view innovation as being a threat to their power (or, at least, this is often the first thing that comes to their minds). However, if those in power see something that impresses them done in another country, then they will do whatever is necessary to



steal that technology. That's why we do not associate socialist countries with creativity or innovation, but with stealing technology that which is developed by others in other countries.

So that there is no misunderstanding, those who are allowed to evangelize in socialist and communist countries (sometimes this is allowed; most of the time it is discouraged and even outlawed), it is not the responsibility of the evangelist to sell the people on free enterprise as over against socialism. The evangelist is to present Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. Political commentary, however accurate, would be undermining the government. It is the job of the evangelist to present Jesus Christ, *not* to present a better form of government. The evangelist is to present the salvation of the cross; not offer up some candidate for a government office or a new system of government. As R. B. Thieme, Jr. used to often say, "It is not up to us to whitewash the devil's world."

That being said, it is not a coincidence that socialism and communism are most often associated with atheism. Socialism and communism are all about control of the people from the very top; and true Christianity is all about freedom. Fundamental to Christianity is the fact that we were created by God to have free will; life is all about choice.

See the doctrines of **Socialism** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) and **Socialism and Communism** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

The reason that Christians should understand socialism and communism is, these are enemies of man's free will; and they are enemies of Christian evangelism. It is nearly impossible to evangelize for Christ in North Korea (which is communist); whereas, South Korea is the Asian center of Christianity. In North Korea, they have no freedom and not enough food to eat; in South Korea, they have great freedom and prosperity. Furthermore, the believer should never be confused about Jesus. Jesus is our Savior; He is not the first socialist. Jesus did not sell or practice any form of socialism.

Political leadership is first and foremost about power and control. Even though there are some leaders who are there to serve the people, most of them have the tremendous drive of power lust (a lust which most people do not have to the same degree). We tend to believe that a politician has a solid set of principles and that he (or she) stands firmly upon their own firm ideology. Whether you are left, right or center, the people that you look up to to lead may or may not hold to the principles that they espouse. I began to write this in 2019, when Democrat candidates are beginning to throw their hats into the ring to run for president; and one of the interesting phenomenon of this pre-election is the number of candidates who have had to make public statements which disavowed previous public statements. The leaders of the current Democrat party have made strong statements about border security, which statements included support for walls/fences/obstructions; yet, at this point in time, absolutely oppose doing any border security which involves new walls or fences. Now, I am not trying to litigate political issues here; but just to point out that a politician can favor X one year; and a few years later, favor not-X. This is how a Democrat can have a change of heart and become a Republican; or how a Republican can "see the light" and become a Democrat. Their values and principles are often things that they espouse with passion; but, given a change of political circumstances, and you can hear them passionately arguing for exactly the opposite point of view. What is far too often the case is, a politician will be asked a simple yes or no question, and he will give an answer that might be 100 words long. We had one president who, if asked a question at a press conference, could pontificate for 5–10 minutes on that question—without even clearly answering the question asked. As long as you understand that, with a politician, it is the power he desires, first and foremost, then his words and actions will often make a lot more sense.

The other thing that the believer ought to know is, nothing is free. Whatever a politician offers you in exchange for your vote will either come out of your pocket (or your neighbor's pocket) or be added to our crushing debt.

In the theological realm, we often say that salvation is free—and to us, it is. Completely and totally free. But it came at great cost to our Lord that we cannot even imagine.

There is very little difference between socialism, communism and slavery of the Hebrew people to Egypt that we are studying. The Hebrew people work for the nation of Egypt and Egypt determines how they are to be



remunerated. The Hebrew people obviously have places to live and food to eat; and they enjoyed marriage and family. We have no idea of their religious practices. As has been discussed, they appear to have retained the Word of God; but there is nothing said about overt religious practices among the people. The implied awareness of their own history suggests that they have preserved their Scriptures (Genesis and Job).

Exodus 5:4 The king of Egypt said to them, "Why, Moses and Aaron, do you think that you are able to release the people from their work? Go now and return to your assigned labors." (Kukis paraphrase)

**A Review of Exodus 5:1–4:** So far in our narrative, Moses and Aaron have come before Pharaoh for the first time and have requested that he allow Israel to leave Egypt, temporarily, to worship their God.

Exodus 5:1 Afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.'"

Exodus 5:2 But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."

Exodus 5:3 Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword." (ESV; capitalized)

Interestingly enough, we might think that this would be the time that Moses or Aaron would say, "Let me show you the power of God," and then show Pharaoh a miracle. Point in fact, that is what they did do. However, we are going to see this first meeting with Pharaoh from two views: this first view is from the human perspective. Everything that we will study in vv. 1–5 and the aftermath of this meeting will be what happened in the views of Moses and Aaron, Pharaoh and the elders of Israel. God's perspective is missing. Hence, we have Aaron saying something which is misleading ("The Lord our God...[will] fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."); and the miracles given to Moses are not mentioned.

We will revisit this same meeting in Exodus 7, and then it will appear to be more of a spiritual struggle between spiritual forces (which is what is really happening). Just as God allows Moses and Aaron to take part in this spiritual struggle, we are given the same opportunity in our lives each and every day.

When you view life, sometimes you see it from your own carnal vision; and sometimes you see life through the eyes of God, as you have the mind of Christ. I am not suggesting that you live life as a nutcase; I am talking about how you view your day-to-day life. If your every thought is how do you get enough money to feed yourself; or how do you save and invest and spend enough money to get ahead in life—if this is your entire life, then your life is filled with ups and downs; your life is filled with confusion and frustration. As the **song** says, you are *riding high in April*, then *shot down in May*.

Exodus 5:1–5 is what this first meeting seen from the human perspective.

Exodus 5:4 Then the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people from their work? Get back to your labor."

Pharaoh appears to be ordering Moses and Aaron to get back to their work. Aaron has been living there and he would have been a slave. If you are wondering, how could Aaron be a slave at age 83; it is because age 80 might be equivalent to age 50 or 60 today—meaning that he would still, more than likely, be a slave. How Aaron was able to go out to meet Moses, his younger brother, in the first place, is not told to us. Quite obviously, God worked out those details.

Moses is around 80 years old and Aaron is 83 (Ex. 7:7). Neither man is like men who are 80 and 83 today. They would have been more like healthy 50 year old men today. We do not know anything about those who were aged and slaves. If I were to hazard a guess, based upon what is coming up, it would be that most Hebrew men were worked until they died.

**And so says Pharaoh, “Behold, many (s) a people of the land and you have made rest them from their burdens.”**

Exodus  
5:5

**Pharaoh then said, “Listen, [there are] many people in the land, but you have made them to rest from their burdens.”**

**Pharaoh then said, “Listen, there are many people in this land—who ought to be working—but you have decided to make this people rest from their burdens.”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Pharaoh, “Behold, many (s) a people of the land and you have made rest them from their burdens.”
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	And Pharaoh said, Behold now, the people of the land are many, and you make them relax from their employment.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And Pharaoh said, Behold, this people of the land are many, whom you would stop from their service.
Jerusalem targum	.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And Pharaoh said: The people of the land is numerous: you see that the multitude is increased: how much more if you give them rest from their works?
Latin Vulgate	.
Plain English Aramaic Bible	.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Pharaoh said to them, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and you cause them to stop from their work.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	Pharaoh said, "Behold, the people of the land are now many, and you make them rest from their burdens."
V. Alexander’s Aramaic T.	And the Pharaoh said to them, "Behold, how much the people have increased in the land and you want to [waste their time and] keep [Lit. Ar. idiomatic construction: "Idle them from their work."] them from working.
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	And Pharaoh said, Behold this people is now numerous, therefore we must not let them rest from their labours.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Pharaoh said, Behold now, the people is very numerous; let us not then give them rest from their work.
Brenton’s Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And Pharaoh said, Truly, the people of the land are increasing in number, and you are keeping them back from their work.
Easy English	And Pharaoh said: ‘Look, there are now many people in the country. But you stop them doing their work.’
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	.
God’s Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
International Children’s B	There are very many Hebrews. And now you want them to quit their hard work!”

<i>The Message</i>	Pharaoh went on, "Look, I've got all these people bumming around, and now you want to reward them with time off?"
Names of God Bible NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	Pharaoh continued, "There are large numbers of your people in the land. But you are stopping them from working."

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Pharaoh continued, "The land's people are now numerous. Yet you want them to stop their hard work?"
Contemporary English V.	.
The Living Bible	.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	But the king said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their work? Go back to your jobs! There are very many Hebrews, and now you want them to quit working!" V. 4 is included for context.
New Life Version	.
New Living Translation	.

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then Pharaoh said: '{Look!} There are huge numbers of these people and we can't allow them to slack off from doing their work!'
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	These folk, Pharaoh complained, have outgrown their territory already: see how their numbers have increased! And it will be worse still if you ease them of their burdens.
Translation for Translators	The king also said, "Listen to me You people <i>who now live</i> in this land are now <i>more numerous than we Egyptians</i> (OR, <i>the ordinary people in this land are very numerous</i> ). So now do you want them to <i>stop working and rest</i> [RHQ]?"

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	Pharaoh was to say: The people of these solid grounds are many - are they to have cease from their burdens?
Conservapedia	The Pharaoh said, "There are many Hebrews, and you are inciting them them to leave their work."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	And," Pharaoh went on to say, "the people are now too many for the land, yet you would take them away from building ! "
God's Truth (Tyndale)	And Pharaoh said furthermore: behold there is much people in the land, and you make them play and let their work stand.
HCSB	.
Jubilee Bible 2000	.
H. C. Leupold	.
Lexham English Bible	.
NIV, ©2011	.
Urim-Thummim Version	.
Tree of Life Version	Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are now so numerous, yet you would have them rest from their labors?"
Wiki-Bible	And Pharaoh said: "They are many now, the people of the land, and you would have them break from their toils?"

#### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) The Heritage Bible	The people are now numerous and you are asking them to interrupt their work.”
New American Bible (2002)	.
New American Bible (2011)	Pharaoh continued, “Look how they are already more numerous [a recollection of Pharaoh’s earlier words to his subjects in 1:9.] than the people of the land, and yet you would give them rest from their labors!”
New English Bible	.
New Jerusalem Bible	And Pharaoh said, 'Now that the people have grown to such numbers in the country, what do you mean by interrupting their forced labour?'
New RSV	Pharaoh continued, 'Now they are more numerous than the people of the land [Sam: Heb <i>The people of the land are now many</i> ] and yet you want them to stop working!'
Revised English Bible	Your people already outnumber the native Egyptians; yet you would have them stop working!”

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	The king of Egypt answered them, “Moshe and Aharon, what do you mean by taking the people away from their work? Get back to your labor! Look!” Pharaoh added, “the population of the land has grown, yet you are trying to have them stop working!” V. 4 is included for context.
The Complete Tanach	And Pharaoh said, "Behold, now the people of the land are many, and you are stopping them from their labors."
	<b>Behold, now the people of the land are many:</b> Those who are required to work, and you stop them from their labors. This is a great loss.
exeGesés companion Bible	And Paroh says, Behold, the people of the land now are many and you shabbathize them from their burdens.
Hebraic Roots Bible JPS (Tanakh—1985)	. And Pharaoh continued, “The people of the land are already so numerous, and you would have them cease from their labors!”
Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation	. 'The peasants are becoming more numerous,' said Pharaoh, 'and you want them to take a vacation from their work!'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And Pharaoh said, Hinei, the Am HaAretz now are many, and ye make them rest from their sivlot.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Pharaoh said, “Look, the people of the land are now many, and you would have them stop their work!”
The Expanded Bible	·There are very many Hebrews [ <sup>L</sup> They are more numerous than the people of the land], and now you want them to quit working!”
The Geneva Bible Kretzmann’s Commentary	. And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and ye make them rest from their burdens, you want to secure for them a vacation, a period of rest, and their great numbers caused such a period to result in losses to the crown. The words reveal a boundless contempt for the common people.
NET Bible®	Pharaoh was thinking [ <i>Heb</i> “And Pharaoh said.”], “The people of the land are now many, and you are giving them rest from their labor.”
The Pulpit Commentary Syndein/Thieme	. .

The Voice

**Pharaoh:** Look, there are vast numbers of people in this land *who should be working*; instead they are all idle because of you.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and "Paroh <sup>Great house</sup> said, though the people of the land are now abundant, will you make them cease from their burdens?
Concordant Literal Version	And Pharaoh said: Behold, they are now more numerous than the people of the land, and you cause them to cease from their burdens.
Context Group Version	.
Darby Translation	And Pharaoh said, Behold the people of the land are now many, and ye wish to make them rest from their burdens.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	.
English Standard Version	And Pharaoh said, "Behold, the people of the land are now many, and you make them rest from their burdens!"
Green's Literal Translation	.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	.
New European Version	.
New King James Version	.
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	And Pharaoh said, Look, the people of the land are now many, and you + make them rest from their burdens.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	.
Young's Updated LT	Pharaoh also says, "Lo, numerous now is the people of the land, and you [all] have caused them to cease from their burdens!"

### The gist of this passage:

Exodus 5:5a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

## Exodus 5:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
par <sup>e</sup> ôh (הַעֲרֹף) [pronounced <i>pahr<sup>e</sup>-G<sup>O</sup>H</i> ]	<i>great house; possibly hair head</i> (indicating one of great age and therefore with wisdom and authority); transliterated <i>pharaoh</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6547 BDB #829

**Translation:** *Pharaoh then said,...*

More literally: Exodus 5:5a *And Pharaoh said,...*

It is interesting that we have the words, *and Pharaoh said...* He had just been speaking in v. 4. Let me suggest that, some things happened between vv. 4 and 5; and then Pharaoh draws this meeting to a close with v. 5.

The NET Bible: *This is not the kind of thing that Pharaoh is likely to have said to Moses, and so it probably is what he thought or reasoned within himself. Other passages (like Exod 2:14; 3:3) show that the verb "said" can do this. (See U. Cassuto, Exodus, 67.).*<sup>20</sup> The NET Bible makes an interesting point here, suggesting that this is something Pharaoh is thinking.

## Exodus 5:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hên (הֵן) [pronounced <i>hayn</i> ]	<i>lo!, behold, observe, look, look here, get this, listen, listen up</i>	demonstrative adverb/interjection	Strong's #2005 BDB #243
rab (רַב) [pronounced <i>rah<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>many, much, great</i> (in the sense of <i>large</i> or <i>significant</i> , not <i>acclaimed</i> ); <i>enough</i>	masculine plural adjective	Strong's #7227 BDB #912
‘attâh (הַתַּעַן) [pronounced <i>gah<sup>t</sup>-TAWH</i> ]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
‘am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun construct form	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
‘erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i> ]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

**Translation:** *...“Listen, [there are] many people in the land,...*

In v. 5, some Bible translations use the word "lo" to begin Pharaoh's statement, and others use "behold or look." All of these are accurate, but dated. The word is hên (הֵן) [pronounced *hane*], is a primitive particle which means "lo!" There is a prolongation of this particle, hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hin-NAY*], which means the same thing.

<sup>20</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 7, 2017.



We have seen it continually throughout Exodus (and the rest of the Old Testament). It is a word which is supposed to grab the listener's attention. It would be close to the translations "now listen to this" or "look here (now)" or "listen up" or "pay attention to this." The only difference is that it is a particle and not the imperative of a verb. With this in mind, and to capture the brevity of it, I have translated this "listen." This is a freer, more idiomatic translation than a literal one, however, it sounds more modern, which should be one of the goals of any translator. Many modern translations use the word *look*.

The word *people* is in the singular here, and therefore, the noun to be associated with it is *land* rather than *earth*. If we had the plural noun, here, then we would understand this verse to be, *there are many groups of people on the earth*.

I don't know if this is the proper way to say this; or could it be that Pharaoh is speaking Moses' language, but making some mistakes with the language. We will see if any other commentators consider this.

Exodus 5:5a-b **And Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are many now..."**

Pharaoh makes an observation here; and I think that he has stopped temporarily from talking, thought about the situation, and then makes a couple of additional statements to Moses and Aaron (I would assume that the elders of Israel are also in the room). In the alternative, there was some additional discussion which took place; and Pharaoh brought everything to a halt with his final conclusion of what Moses and Aaron were asking for.

I think in Pharaoh's mind, he is even considering the effects of the people of Israel not working for a period of time. I don't mean, considering like, *maybe I should grant this request*; but considering like, *if I granted them this request, here would be the end results...*

Exodus 5:5c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâbath (שָׁבַת) [pronounced <i>shaw-BAHTH</i> ]	<i>to cause to rest, to cause a work to cease; to sit down [still]; to cause to cease, to put an end to something; to exterminate, to destroy; to cause to fail; to remove, to take away</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7673 BDB #992
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	<i>them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
çib <sup>o</sup> loth (סִבְלוֹת) [pronounced <i>sihb-LOHTH</i> ]	<i>(heavy) burdens, forced labours</i>	feminine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5450 BDB #688

**Translation:** ...but you have made them to rest from their burdens."

The verb is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular verb; so let me suggest that Pharaoh is either speaking directly to Moses or (more likely) to Aaron.

I think the idea is, *there are people scattered all over the land (of Egypt), but you have decided that this particular people gets to have a rest day.* Such a request would have been unheard of in that era.

Pharaoh is totally amazed that anyone should come into his palace and ask to let two million of his laborers rest for three days (actually, that is simply their trip into the desert-wilderness to worship God). This catches him completely off guard. God has prepared everyone for their part except Pharaoh. God has allowed the pharaoh to act as he would. This is not too dissimilar to someone walking into the office of the CEO of Apple Computers and asking him to let his workers take a sudden paid seven-day vacation (the total time period if we allow only a single day for worship). You can tell that Pharaoh doesn't even know exactly what to say. He expresses his surprise twice and says the same thing twice, with different words. If it were a part of his vocabulary, the Pharaoh would have prefaced his remarks by, "You have got to be kidding!"

He is so taken back by this ridiculous (in his eyes) request, that he decides that he needs to exert some authority and make the Israelites pay for making this kind of a request. Unfortunately, up to this point in time, the Pharaoh's have added burden upon burden on the Israelites that it would be difficult to make their work any harder.

Exodus 5:5 Pharaoh then said, "Listen, [there are] many people in the land, but you have made them to rest from their burdens." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

*You* is plural, and Pharaoh is speaking to Moses and Aaron and possibly to the elders of Israel. Pharaoh is complaining that Moses and Aaron are causing the people to rest from their labor. The Hebrews make up a massive slave force; and Pharaoh no doubt dislikes the thought of all of his slaves leaving Egypt for awhile to worship their God. This is a preposterous proposition to Pharaoh. There is absolutely no upside to him that he can see.

I mentioned the elders of Israel. It is my guess that they are there, with Moses and Aaron; but standing off to the side. Logically, the elders would have gone with Moses and Aaron for this is the first face to face meeting with Pharaoh. These would have been the men that Moses and Aaron have already met and convinced them to allow Aaron to speak on their behalf. In some way or another, the elders hear Pharaoh's conclusion, that this proposition of Aaron would take the Hebrews away from their work.

Moses and Aaron have come before Pharaoh and stated the demands made by God—that Israel be allowed a time for worship, away from Egypt and Egypt's gods. Not unexpectedly, Pharaoh declined their request. God warned Moses and Aaron that he would.

After speaking with Moses and Aaron, Pharaoh calls in the taskmasters—those over the Israelite slaves.

Exodus 5:5 Pharaoh then said, "Listen, there are many people in this land—who ought to be working—but you have decided to make this people rest from their burdens." (Kukis paraphrase)

Let's look at vv. 4–5 together and perhaps draw some conclusions:

Exodus 5:4 The king of Egypt said to them, "Why do you, Moses and Aaron, take the people from their work? Get back to your burdens!"

Exodus 5:5 Pharaoh said, "Behold, the people of the land are now many, and you make them rest from their burdens." (ESV)

It is odd to add the phrase, *and so Pharaoh said*; when he is the last person to speak in the written narrative. This suggests one of three things to me: (1) Moses, Aaron and Pharaoh talked for awhile after what Pharaoh said, and then Pharaoh added v. 5 to the conversation; it may have been the final thing that Pharaoh said before dismissing Moses and Aaron. Or, as the NET Bible suggests (2) Pharaoh thought v. 5. If the alternate reading, that the

Hebrews have become more numerous than the Egyptians is accurate, then surely, Pharaoh would not have said these words aloud. (3) Another possibility is, Pharaoh gave specific orders to the elders of Israel in v. 4 (“Go back to work”). However, In v. 5, he is specifically addressing Moses and Aaron (“Do you think you can make the people set aside their responsibilities?”).

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Pharaoh Increases the Workload of His Hebrew Slaves

The NET Bible: *In vv. 6-14 the second section of the chapter describes the severe measures by the king to increase the labor by decreasing the material. The emphasis in this section must be on the harsh treatment of the people and Pharaoh’s reason for it – he accuses them of idleness because they want to go and worship. The real reason, of course, is that he wants to discredit Moses (v. 9) and keep the people as slaves.*<sup>21</sup>

And so commands Pharaoh in the day that the taskmasters in the people and his officials, to say, “You [all] will not longer continue to give straw to the people to make the bricks as yesterday, three days ago. They [even] they will go and gather for themselves straw. And a number of bricks which they [the] makers yesterday three days ago, you [all] will lay upon them. You [all] will not lessen from her for idle ones they [are]. Upon so they crying ones, to say, ‘Let us go, let us sacrifice to our Elohim.’ Will be heavy the work upon the men and they will do in her and they will not look in words of deceit.”

Exodus  
5:6–9

So, in that day, Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters among the people and their foremen, saying, “You will no longer give straw to the people as before. They will go out and gather the straw for themselves. Furthermore, the number of bricks which they previously made, you will [continue to] require from them [lit., *lay upon them*]. You will not diminish their work [lit., *from her*] for they [are quite obviously] idle. As a result, they are crying out, saying, ‘Let us go [and] sacrifice to our Elohim.’ The work will be heavy upon the men and they will do it; and they will not look to deceitful words.”

So, in that day, Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters and their foremen who were among the people, saying, “You will not longer provide straw for the people as you did previously. They will go out and gather straw themselves. Furthermore, you will require the same number of bricks to be manufactured as before; you will not diminish their work, even though they now must provide their own straw for the bricks, since they obviously have too much time on their hands. Because of all this idle time, they have become annoying, calling out to us, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to our God.’ I don’t want to hear that nonsense! Therefore, make certain that the work is heavy on these men, so that they will not have time to pursue after deceitful words of their idle prophets.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so commands Pharaoh in the day that the taskmasters in the people and his officials, to say, “You [all] will not longer continue to give straw to the people to make the bricks as yesterday, three days ago. They [even] they will go and gather for themselves straw. And a number of bricks which they [the] makers yesterday three days ago, you [all] will lay upon them. You [all] will not lessen from her for idle

<sup>21</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

ones they [are]. Upon so they crying ones, to say, 'Let us go, let us sacrifice to our Elohim.' Will be heavy the work upon the men and they will do in her and they will not look in words of deceit."

Dead Sea Scrolls  
Targum of Onkelos

.  
And Pharoh that day commanded the masters [Sam. Vers., "the foremen."] of the people and the overseers [Sam. Vers., "his scribes.,"], saying, You shall not continue (add) to give straw to the people to cast bricks, as heretofore; let them go and collect straw for themselves; yet the number [Sam. Vers., "proportion."] of bricks which they have made heretofore you shall still lay upon them and not diminish; for they are idle, and therefore cry, saying, We will go and sacrifice before our God. Make labour heavy upon the men: let them be occupied with it, and not with vain words.

Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)

And Pharoh that day commanded the officers of the people and their exactors, saying, You shall no more give straw to the people to cast bricks as heretofore; let them go and collect straw for themselves; but the (same) number of bricks which they have heretofore made ye shall lay upon them, and not diminish from it, because they are idle; therefore they clamour, saying, Let us go to offer the sacrifice of a festival before our God. Make their work strenuous upon the men, that they may be occupied with it, and not be setting their hopes upon lying words.

Jerusalem targum  
Revised Douay-Rheims

.  
Therefore he commanded the same day the overseers of the works, and the taskmasters of the people, saying: You shall give straw no more to the people to make brick, as before: but let them go and gather straw. And you shall lay upon them the task of bricks, which they did before, neither shall you diminish any thing thereof: for they are idle, and therefore they cry, saying: Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let them be oppressed, with works, and let them fulfill them: that they may not regard lying words.

Latin Vulgate  
Plain English Aramaic Bible  
Peshitta (Syriac)

.  
And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people and their scribes, saying, You shall no more give the people straw to make bricks, as heretofore; let them go and gather straw for themselves. But the number of bricks which they did make heretofore, you shall lay upon them; you shall not reduce the number thereof; for they are idle; that is why they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let more work be assigned to the men, that they may be occupied, so that they may not think to engage in vain conversations.

Aramaic ESV of Peshitta

The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, "You shall no longer give the people straw to make brick, as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. The number of the bricks, which they made before, you require from them. You shall not diminish anything of it, for they are idle; therefore they cry, saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' Let heavier work be laid on the men, that they may labour therein; and do not let them pay any attention to lying words."

V. Alexander's Aramaic T.

And so on that day the Pharaoh commanded his governors over the people and their scribes and he said to them,  
"Do not waste your time [Lit. Ar. idiomatic expression: "Beat a loss."] giving the people straw [Used to hold together sun-baked bricks.] for making bricks, like it was before, like it was the norm [Lit. Ar. idiomatic expression: "Like yesterday and like yesterdays.,"]; let them go and pitch their own straw;  
"For they have developed a system of laying bricks that is based on what they made before and what is expected of them, adding nothing to the count, and they are not getting the lesser [Lit. Ar. idiom retained: "They keep on increasing in number.,"], because they are idlers, that is why they say, 'We must go and make sacrifices to our God.'

"Make the men work harder, so they pay attention to what they are doing and not some empty words."

C. Thompson LXX (updated) So Pharaoh gave orders to the task masters of the people and to the clerks saying, You shall no more give the people straw to make bricks as heretofore; but let them go and gather straw for themselves; yet the dairy task of brick making which they now perform, you shall lay upon them. Thou shalt make no abatement; for they are idle. Therefore they have cried saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let the work of these men be made heavy and let them employ their thoughts about that, and not trouble themselves with vain discourses.

Septuagint (Greek) And Pharaoh gave orders to the task-masters of the people and the accountants, saying, Ye shall no longer give straw to the people for brick-making as yesterday and the third day; but let them go themselves, and collect straw for themselves. And you shall impose on them daily the rate of brick-making which they perform: you shall not abate anything, for they are idle; therefore have they cried, saying, Let us arise and do sacrifice to our God. Let the works of these men be made grievous, and let them care for these things, and not care for vain words.

Brenton's Septuagint .

Significant differences:

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English The same day Pharaoh gave orders to the overseers and those who were responsible for the work, saying, Give these men no more dry stems for their brick-making as you have been doing; let them go and get the material for themselves. But see that they make the same number of bricks as before, and no less: for they have no love for work; and so they are crying out and saying, Let us go and make an offering to our God. Give the men harder work, and see that they do it; let them not give attention to false words.

Easy English On that day, Pharaoh gave a command to the masters of the slaves. He also gave the command to the leaders of the work. This was the command: 'Do not give the people any more straw with which to make bricks. They must find their own straw. But they must still make the same number of bricks as before. Do not let the amount become smaller. They are lazy. That is why they ask to go. They say: "Let us go to give gifts to our God." So you must cause them to work harder. They will then be too busy to listen to false words.'

Verse 7 'straw with which to make bricks' When they made bricks, they mixed straw with the clay. This made the bricks stronger. Pharaoh was making the Israelites work harder. Now they had to look for straw before they could use it in the bricks.

Easy-to-Read Version—2006 Pharaoh Punishes the People

That same day Pharaoh gave a command to the slave masters and Hebrew foremen. He said, "You have always given the people straw to use to make bricks. But now, tell them they have to go and find their own straw to make bricks. But they must still make the same number of bricks as they did before. They have gotten lazy. That is why they are asking me to let them go. They don't have enough work to do. That is why they asked me to let them make sacrifices to their God. So make these people work harder. Keep them busy. Then they will not have enough time to listen to the lies of Moses."

God's Word™

Pharaoh Increases the Israelites' Labor

That same day Pharaoh gave these orders to the slave drivers and foremen: "Don't give the people any more straw to make bricks as you have been doing. Let them gather their own straw, but insist that they make the same number of bricks they were making before. Making fewer bricks will not be acceptable. They're lazy! That's



Good News Bible (TEV)	why they're crying, 'Let us go offer sacrifices to our Elohim.' Make the work harder for these people so that they will be too busy to listen to lies."
<i>The Message</i>	That same day the king commanded the Egyptian slave drivers and the Israelite foremen: "Stop giving the people straw for making bricks. Make them go and find it for themselves. But still require them to make the same number of bricks as before, not one brick less. They don't have enough work to do, and that is why they keep asking me to let them go and offer sacrifices to their God! Make them work harder and keep them busy, so that they won't have time to listen to a pack of lies." Pharaoh took immediate action. He sent down orders to the slave-drivers and their underlings: "Don't provide straw for the people for making bricks as you have been doing. Make them get their own straw. And make them produce the same number of bricks—no reduction in their daily quotas! They're getting lazy. They're going around saying, 'Give us time off so we can worship our God.' Crack down on them. That'll cure them of their whining, their god-fantasies."
Names of God Bible NIRV	. That same day Pharaoh gave orders to the slave drivers and the overseers in charge of the people. He said, "Don't give the people any more straw to make bricks. Let them go and get their own straw. But require them to make the same number of bricks as before. Don't lower the number they have to make. They are lazy. That's why they are crying out, 'Let us go. We want to offer sacrifices to our God.' Make them work harder. Then they will be too busy to pay attention to lies."
New Simplified Bible	Pharaoh gave these orders to the slave drivers and foremen: »Do not give the people any more straw to make bricks as you have been doing. Let them gather their own straw. »Insist that they make the same number of bricks they were making before. Making fewer bricks will not be acceptable. They are lazy! That is why they are crying: Let us go offer sacrifices to our God. »Make the work harder for these people so that they will be too busy to listen to lies.«

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	On the very same day Pharaoh commanded the people's slave masters and supervisors, "Don't supply the people with the straw they need to make bricks like you did before. Let them go out and gather the straw for themselves. But still make sure that they produce the same number of bricks as they made before. Don't reduce the number! They are weak and lazy, and that's why they cry, 'Let's go and offer sacrifices to our God.' Make the men's work so hard that it's all they can do, and they can't focus on these empty lies."
Contemporary English V.	That same day the king gave orders to his slave bosses and to the men directly in charge of the Israelite slaves. He told them: Don't give the slaves any more straw to put in their bricks. Force them to find their own straw wherever they can, but they must make the same number of bricks as before. They are lazy, or else they would not beg me to let them go and sacrifice to their God. Make them work so hard that they won't have time to listen to these lies.
The Living Bible	"Who do you think you are," Pharaoh shouted, "distracting the people from their work? Get back to your jobs!" That same day Pharaoh sent this order to the taskmasters and officers he had set over the people of Israel: "Don't give the people any more straw for making bricks! However, don't reduce their production quotas by a single brick, for they obviously don't have enough to do or else they wouldn't be talking about going out into the wilderness and sacrificing to their God. Load them with work and make them sweat; that will teach them to listen to Moses' and Aaron's lies!"
New Berkeley Version New Century Version	. .



New Life Version                    That same day Pharaoh told the men who made the people work, "Do not give the people straw for making clay blocks any more. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. But have them make the same number of clay blocks as before, and no less. They are crying, 'Let us go and give a gift in worship to our God,' because they are lazy. Let more work be given to the men so they will not have time to listen to lies."

New Living Translation            **Making Bricks without Straw**  
That same day Pharaoh sent this order to the Egyptian slave drivers and the Israelite foremen: "Do not supply any more straw for making bricks. Make the people get it themselves! But still require them to make the same number of bricks as before. Don't reduce the quota. They are lazy. That's why they are crying out, 'Let us go and offer sacrifices to our God.' Load them down with more work. Make them sweat! That will teach them to listen to lies!"

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible            And as the result, Pharaoh gave orders to those who were in charge to tell their supervisors: 'Don't give the people any straw for brick-making as you did yesterday and three days ago. Let them gather and carry the straw for themselves! However, they must maintain the quota for the daily brick making... don't let up on them, because they're lazy! Why, they came here demanding that we must allow them to [go out and] offer a sacrifice to their God. Therefore, make the men's work much harder, so they'll pay attention to that instead of to idle chatter!'

Beck's American Translation .  
International Standard V            **Pharaoh Increases the Israelis' Work**  
That day Pharaoh ordered the taskmasters of the people and their officials, "You're no longer to give the people straw for making bricks, as in the past.<sup>f</sup> They must gather straw for themselves. But you're to impose the previous quotal of bricks that they're making. You're not to reduce it! It is because they're lazy that they're crying out, 'Let's go offer sacrifices to our God.' So increase the work load on the people,<sup>h</sup> and let them do it so they don't pay attention to deceptive speeches."

New Advent (Knox) Bible            So he gave orders, that very day, to overseer and foreman alike: Do not give them any more straw to make bricks with, as your custom has been; let them go and find straw for themselves. Meanwhile, you must give them the same tale of bricks to make as before; there must be no lessening of it. They are idle; that is what has led to this outcry about going and offering sacrifice to their God. Give them heavier work to do; then they will pay no more attention to these lying tales.

Translation for Translators        **The king increased the amount of work the Israelis were forced to do**  
That same day the king commanded the Egyptian slave bosses and the *Israeli* men supervising the slaves, "Do not continue to give the *Israeli* people straw for making bricks, as you have done previously. Make them go *into the fields* and gather straw for themselves. But require them to make the same number of bricks that they did before. Do not decrease the number at all. They *are lazy/do not have enough work to do*. That is the reason they are asking me to let them go into the desert to offer sacrifices to their god. Force the men to work harder, so that they will not have time to listen to lies *from their leaders!*"

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible                    Pharaoh was to lay charge that day, to they driving the people and they being officials, to the intent: Were yous to again give to the people straw, to make white the bricks, as three days ago, formerly? - They were to go and are to have gathered straw. The tally of bricks, they are making three days ago, formerly, were yous to lay on them - were they to be diminished? - They are slacking in their

outcry, to the intent: We were to be let loose, and were to sacrifice to he of mighty ones' Their labor was to be heavy on the men, in their work, that they were to look away from their deceptive concern.

Conservapedia

So that same day, the Pharaoh gave this instruction to the taskmasters of the Hebrews, and their superintendents [These superintendents were actually Hebrews, like slave foremen in a later age.]: "Don't give them any more [crushed] straw to mold bricks with. Let them go and rake up straw for themselves! But their quota of bricks, that they made before, you will still require. You won't subtract one brick from it. They are slacking, and that's why they beg, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.'" So make them work harder, and keep them busy, so they won't pay attention to fantasies."

Ferrar-Fenton Bible

Pharaoh consequently commanded, on that day, to the drivers and overseers, saying, — " You shall not continue to give straw to these people for the bricks they make, as heretofore ; but let them go and collect straw for themselves. Yet the number of the bricks which they had to make heretofore lay upon them ; you shall not diminish from them, for they are idle, therefore they cry out saying, ' Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' Increase the work upon these men, and make them do it, and not listen to absurd speeches."

God's Truth (Tyndale)

And Pharaoh commanded the same day unto the taskmasters over the people, and unto the officers saying: see that you give the people no more straw to make brick withal, as you did in time past: let them go and gather them straw themselves, and the number of bricks which they were wont to make in time past, lay unto their charge also, and minish nothing thereof. For they be idle and therefore cry saying: let us go and do sacrifice unto our God. They must have more work laid upon them, that they may labor therein, and then will they not turn themselves to false words.

HCSB

### Further Oppression of Israel

That day Pharaoh commanded the overseers of the people as well as their foremen: "Don't continue to supply the people with straw for making bricks, as before. They must go and gather straw for themselves. But require the same quota of bricks from them as they were making before; do not reduce it. For they are slackers—that is why they are crying out, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' Impose heavier work on the men. Then they will be occupied with it and not pay attention to deceptive words."

Jubilee Bible 2000

H. C. Leupold

Lexham English Bible

NIV, ©2011

Urim-Thummim Version

Then Pharaoh commanded that day the slave drivers of the people and their officers saying, you will no longer give the people straw to make white brick as previously, let them go and gather straw for themselves. And require them to make the same formula of bricks as before, don't reduce their quota for they are slacking when they cry saying, let us go and sacrifice to our Elohim. Let their service be heavy on the men and let them work at it and not be dazzled by lying words.

Wiki Bible

And Pharaoh commanded on that day, of the people's bosses, and his officers, saying: You shalt not continue to give straw to the people, to form the bricks as yesterday and the day before: they will go and cut down the straw themselves. And the quota of bricks which they did yesterday, day before, you will impose upon them--- you will not subtract from it: because they are idle, because of this they shout out to say: "We will go and sacrifice to our God." The work will become heavier on the people, and they will do it, and they will not be swayed by lying words.

**Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

Christian Community (1988) That same day Pharaoh gave the following order to the taskmasters of the people and to the Israelite foremen, "You will no longer supply the people with straw for making bricks. Let them go and find it themselves; but you will exact from them the same number of bricks as before, not one less. They are lazy and that is why they are crying out to go and sacrifice to their God. Make the work harder for the people and pay no attention to their lies."

The Heritage Bible And Pharaoh commanded that day those who drove the people and their officers, saying, You shall no more give the people straw to make brick as in past days; let them walk, and gather straw for themselves. And you shall put upon them the amount of the bricks which they made in past days; you shall not scrape off from it because they are slack; therefore they cry, saying, Let us walk and sacrifice to our God. Make the work heavy upon the men that they may do it, and do not let them gaze at false words.

New American Bible (2002)

New American Bible (2011) .  
That very day Pharaoh gave the taskmasters of the people and their foremen [the former were higher officials and probably Egyptians; the latter were lower officials (perhaps recordkeepers or clerks), chosen from the Israelites themselves. Cf. v. 14.] this order: "You shall no longer supply the people with straw for their brick making [Straw was mixed with clay to give sun-dried bricks greater cohesion and durability.] as before. Let them go and gather their own straw! Yet you shall levy upon them the same quota of bricks as they made previously. Do not reduce it. They are lazy; that is why they are crying, 'Let us go to offer sacrifice to our God.' Increase the work for the men, so that they attend to it and not to deceitful words."

New English Bible

New Jerusalem Bible

.  
That very day, Pharaoh gave the order to the people's taskmasters and their scribes, 'Do not go on providing the people with straw for brickmaking as before; let them go and gather straw for themselves. But you will exact the same quantity of bricks from them as before, not reducing it at all, since they are lazy, and that is why their cry is, "Let us go and sacrifice to our God." Give these people more work to do, and see they do it instead of listening to lying speeches.'

New RSV

Revised English Bible

.  
Pharaoh issued orders that same day to the people's slave-masters and their foremen not to supply the people with the straw used in making bricks, as they had done hitherto. "Let them go and collect their own straw, but see that they produce the same tally of bricks as before; on no account reduce it. They are lazy, and that is why they are clamouring to go and offer sacrifice to their God. Keep these men hard at work; let them attend to that. Take no notice of their lies."

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

That same day Pharaoh ordered the slavemasters and the people's foremen, "You are no longer to provide straw for the bricks the people are making, as you did before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. But you will require them to produce the same quantity of bricks as before, don't reduce it, because they're lazing around. This is why they're crying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' Give these people harder work to do. That will keep them too busy to pay attention to speeches full of lies."

The Complete Tanach

So, on that day, Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying,...

**the taskmasters:** They were Egyptians, and the officers were Israelites. The taskmaster was appointed over many officers, and the officer was appointed to drive the workers.

"You shall not continue to give stubble to the people to make the bricks like yesterday and the day before yesterday. Let them go and gather stubble for themselves.

**stubble:** Heb. מִיִּבְלָה, estoble in Old French. They would knead it with the clay.

**bricks:** Heb. מִיִּבְלָה, tivles in Old French, [tuiles in modern French, tiles] made from clay and dried in the sun; some people fire them in a kiln.

**like yesterday and the day before yesterday:** As you have been doing until now.

**and gather:** Heb. וַיִּשְׁקְוּ; and they shall gather.

But the number of bricks they have been making yesterday and the day before yesterday you shall impose upon them; you shall not reduce it, for they are lax. Therefore they cry out, saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.'

**But the number of bricks:** The sum of the number of bricks which each one made daily when they were given stubble, that sum you shall levy upon them now too, in order that the labor may fall heavy upon them.

**for they are lax:** from the work. Therefore, their hearts turn to idleness, and they cry out, saying, "Let us go, etc."

**for they are lax:** [The words], תִּנְכַּתְמָם [and] מִיִּבְלָה לָקְחוּ (verse 18) [mean the number of bricks, as in] "and to Him are deeds counted (וַיִּנְפְּתוּ)" (I Sam. 2:3); "and the counted (וַיִּנְתְּמָה) money" (II Kings 12:12). All are terms denoting a quantity.

**lax:** Heb. מִיִּפְרָג. The work is neglected in their hands and abandoned by them, and they are withdrawing themselves from it, retres in Old French, [meaning] withdrawn, removed.

Let the labor fall heavy upon the men and let them work at it, and let them not talk about false matters."

**and let them not talk about false matters:** Heb. וְלֹא יִדְבְּרוּ וְעָשִׂי לֹא. Let them not constantly think and talk about matters of no substance, saying, "Let us go, let us sacrifice." Similar to it is, "and I shall constantly engage (וְהִעָשָׂו) in Your statutes" (Ps. 119:117). "For an example and for a byword (וְהִיָּגְשָׁלוּ)" (Deut. 28:37) is rendered [by Onkelos] as וַיֵּנוּ שְׁלוֹ. "And [the servant] told" (Gen. 24:66) is rendered וַיַּעֲתֶרְשָׂאוּ. It is, however, impossible to say that וְעָשִׂי is [related to the] expression of "and the Lord turned (וְעָשִׂי) to Abel" (Gen. 4:24); "But to Cain and to his offering He did not turn (וְהָעֵשׂ אֵל)" (Gen. 4:5); and to explain וְעָשִׂי as "and let them not turn." If this were the case, Scripture should have written: וְלֹא וְעָשִׂי לֹא. וְהִבְדִּיל רִקְשׁוֹ or וְהִבְדִּיל רִקְשׁוֹ, for that is the construction in all similar cases, e.g., "and shall turn (וְהָעֵשִׂי) to (לֵעַ) His Maker" (Isa. 17:7); "and he shall not turn (וְהָעֵשִׂי אֵלָיו) to (לֵא) the altars" (Isa. 17:8); "and they did not turn (וְעָשׂוּ אֵלָיו) to (לֵעַ) the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 31:1). I have not found the prefix "beth" immediately following them; after an expression of speech, however, concerning one who is engaged in speaking of a matter, the prefix "beth" is appropriate, e. g., "who talk about you (בְּ)" ; (Ezek. 33:30); "Miriam and Aaron talked about Moses (וְהִשְׁמְבוּ)" (Num. 12: 1); "the angel who spoke with me (בְּ)" (Zech. 4:1); "to speak of them (בְּ)" (Deut. 11:19); "And I shall speak of Your testimonies (וְיִתְדַעְבוּ)" (Ps. 119:46). Here too, וְלֹא וְהִבְדִּיבוּ וְעָשִׂי לֹא means: Let them not engage in speaking of words of vanity and nonsense.

exeGeses companion Bible

And the same day,  
Pharaoh misleads the exactors of the people  
and their officers, saying,  
Never again give the people straw for brickmaking,  
as three yesters ago:  
let them go and gather straw for themselves:

and set on them the quantity of bricks  
they worked three yesters ago:  
diminish naught thereof, for they are lazy:  
so they cry, saying,  
Let us go and sacrifice to our Elohim.  
Let the service be heavy on the men and their work;  
and look not to false words.

Hebraic Roots Bible

And Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people, and their overseers, that day, saying, You shall not go on giving straw to the people to make bricks, as yesterday and the third day. They shall go and pick up straw for themselves. And the fixed number of bricks which they were making yesterday and the third day you shall put on them. You shall not diminish from it. For they are idle; so they are crying, saying, Let us go, let us sacrifice to our Elohim. Let the bondage be heavy on the men, that they may work in it, and may not trust in the lying words.

JPS (Tanakh—1985)

That same day Pharaoh charged the taskmasters and foremen of the people, saying, "You shall no longer provide the people with straw for making bricks as heretofore; let them go and gather straw for themselves. But impose upon them the same quota of bricks as they have been making heretofore; do not reduce it, for they are shirkers; that is why they cry, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God!' Let heavier work be laid upon the men; let them keep at it and not pay attention to deceitful promises."

Judaica Press Complete T.  
Kaplan Translation

.  
That day, Pharaoh gave new orders to the people's administrators and foremen. He said, 'Do not give the people straw for bricks [Unbaked mud bricks were used, and these had to be held together with straw. Such bricks can still be found.] as before. Let them go and gather their own straw. Meanwhile, you must require them to make the same quota of bricks as before. Do not reduce it. They are lazy, and are protesting that they want to go sacrifice to their God. Make the work heavier for the men, and make sure they do it. Then they will stop paying attention to false ideas.'

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And Pharaoh commanded the same day the nogesim of the people, and their foremen, saying,  
Ye shall no more give HaAm straw to make brick, as heretofore; let them go and gather straw for themselves.  
And the matkonet (quota) of the bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish ought thereof; for they are idle; therefore they cry out, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to Eloheinu.  
Let there more avodah be laid upon the anashim, that they may labor therein; and let them not regard divrei sheker.

*The Scriptures* 1998

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

*The Amplified Bible*

The very same day Pharaoh gave orders to the [Egyptian] taskmasters in charge of the people and their [Hebrew] foremen, saying, "You will no longer give the people [a]straw to make brick as before; let them go and gather straw for themselves. But the number of bricks which they were making before, you shall [still] require of them; you are not to reduce it in the least. For they are idle and lazy; that is why they cry, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' Let labor be heavier on the men, and let them work [hard] at it so that they will pay no attention to [their God's] lying words."

The Expanded Bible

That same day ·the king [L Pharaoh] gave a command to the slave masters and ·foremen [supervisors]. He said, "Don't give the people straw to make bricks as you used to do. Let them gather their own straw. But they must still make the same number of bricks as they did before. Do not accept fewer. They have become lazy,



and that is why they are asking me [cry; whine], 'Let us go to offer sacrifices to our God.' Make these people work harder and keep them busy [<sup>L</sup>they will labor on it]; then they will not have time to listen to the lies of Moses [<sup>L</sup>pay no attention to false words/reports]."

The Geneva Bible  
Kretzmann's Commentary

And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters, the overseers who drove them to their work and while they were at work, and their officers, saying, Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore, chopped straw being used for binding the clay in the bricks before they were dried in the sun; let them go and gather straw for themselves. In the past this straw had been furnished by the Egyptian overseers, and the Hebrew officers had kept a record of the work done by their countrymen. And the tale of the bricks which they did make heretofore ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish aught thereof, the Israelites were to make and to deliver to the Egyptian overseers the same number of bricks as had always been required of them; for they be idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Thus Pharaoh ascribed their request to be allowed to worship their God to a lack of sufficient occupation, to the fact that time was hanging heavy on their hands. Let there more work be laid upon the men that they may labor therein, literally: Let the service rest heavily upon the men and keep them busy therewith; and let them not regard vain words, let them not listen to the lying representations of that man Moses. Similar charges are preferred against the Christians to this day, namely, that they are restless, dissatisfied people, having only worship and prayer in mind and neglecting their duties as citizens—false accusations all of them.

NET Bible®

That same day Pharaoh commanded [*Heb* "and Pharaoh commanded on that day."] the slave masters and foremen who were [The phrase "who were" is supplied for clarity.] over the people: "You must no longer give straw to the people for making bricks as before. Let them go and collect straw for themselves. But you must require of them the same quota of bricks that they were making before. Do not reduce it, for they are slackers [Or "loafers."]. That is why they are crying, 'Let us go sacrifice to our God.' Make the work harder [*Heb* "let the work be heavy."] for the men so they will keep at it and pay no attention to lying words!"

The Pulpit Commentary  
Syndein/Thieme  
The Voice

That same day, Pharaoh gave instructions to the slave drivers who were over the people and their supervisors.

**Pharaoh:** Don't supply the people with any more straw to make bricks as you have been doing. Let them go out and find their own straw. But *I still want you* to expect the same number of bricks from them as before. *Even though the task will be harder*, do not lessen their load! They are lazy and are asking for time off, saying, "Release us so that we can go sacrifice to our God *in the desert and feast in His honor*." Therefore, make the work so heavy that the men *don't have the energy to do anything but* work; perhaps then they won't be distracted by these lies!

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans. ...and in (that) day, "Paroh <sup>Great house</sup>" directed the pushers (over) the people and his dominators, saying, you must not [again] give straw to the people to make bricks like the bricks <previously> , they will walk and they, they will collect straw (for) themselves, and the sum of the bricks which they were doing <previously> , you will place upon them, you will not take away from him given that they are [lazy], <therefore> , they are crying out saying, we will walk, we will sacrifice to our "Elohiym <sup>Powers</sup>", the service will be heavy upon the men and they will do her , and do not do words of falseness,...

Concordant Literal Version



Context Group Version	And the same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people, and their officers, saying, You (pl) shall no more give the people straw to make bricks, as before: let them go and gather straw for themselves. And the number of the bricks, which they made before, you (pl) shall lay on them; you (pl) shall not diminish anything: for they are idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let heavier work be laid on the men, that they may labor at it; and don't let them regard lying words.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	So then Pharaoh gave command on that day, unto the taskmasters over the people and unto their overseers—saying: Ye shall no more give straw unto the people, for making the bricks as heretofore: Let them, go, themselves, so shall they gather for themselves straw: Nevertheless, the fixed number of bricks, which they have been making heretofore, shall ye lay upon them, ye shall not diminish therefrom,—for idle, they are, on this account, it is that they are making an outcry, saying, We must go our way, we must sacrifice to our God. The service must be made heavy on the men that they may labour on it,—and let them not pay regard to words of falsehood.
English Standard Version	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	So the same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters over the people and their foremen, saying, "You are no longer to give the people straw to make brick as previously; let them go and gather straw for themselves. But the quota of bricks which they were making previously, you shall impose on them; you are not to reduce any of it. Because they are lazy, therefore they cry out, 'Let [Lit <i>saying</i> , 'Let] us go and sacrifice to our God.' Let the labor be heavier on the men, and let them work at it so that they will pay no attention to false words."
New European Version	.
New King James Version	Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying, "You shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. However, the quota of the bricks, which they were making previously, you shall lay upon them. You shall not diminish any of it. For they are idle. Therefore they cry out, saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' Let there be more work laid upon the men so that they may labor therein, and let them not regard deceptive words."
New Standard Bible	The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their foremen, "You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as heretofore; let them go and gather straw for themselves. But the number of bricks which they made heretofore you shall lay upon them, you shall by no means lessen it; for they are idle; therefore they cry, 'Let us go and offer sacrifice to our God.' Let heavier work be laid upon the men that they may labour at it and pay no regard to lying words."
Owen's Translation	.
Third Millennium Bible	And Pharaoh commanded the same day the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying, "Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. And the tally of bricks which they made heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish any thereof. For they are idle; therefore they cry, saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labor therein, and let them not regard vain words."
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Unlocked Literal Bible	On that same day, Pharaoh gave a command to the people's taskmasters and foremen. He said, "Unlike before, you must no longer give the people straw to make

bricks. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. However, you must still demand from them the same number of bricks as they made before. Do not accept any fewer, because they are lazy. That is why they are calling out and saying, ‘Allow us to go and sacrifice to our God.’ Increase the workload for the men so that they keep at it and pay no more attention to deceptive words.”

Updated Bible Version 2.11  
A Voice in the Wilderness  
Webster’s Bible Translation  
World English Bible  
Young’s Literal Translation  
Young’s Updated LT

And Pharaoh commands, on that day, the exactors among the people and its authorities, saying, “You [all] do not add to give straw to the people for the making of the bricks, as heretofore—they go and have gathered straw for themselves; and the proper quantity of the bricks which they are making heretofore you [all] do put on them, you [all] do not diminish from it, for they are remiss, therefore they are crying, saying, Let us go, let us sacrifice to our God; let the service be heavy on the men, and let them work at it, and not be dazzled by lying words.”

**The gist of this passage:**  
vv. 6-9

<b>Exodus 5:6</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong’s Numbers</b>
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
tsâvâh (צָוָה) [pronounced <i>tsaw-VAW</i> ]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to appoint; to ordain; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, to charge [command, order]; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong’s #6680 BDB #845
par <sup>es</sup> ôh (פַּרְעֹה) [pronounced <i>pahr<sup>es</sup>-GOH</i> ]	<i>great house; possibly hair head (indicating one of great age and therefore with wisdom and authority); transliterated <i>pharaoh</i></i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong’s #6547 BDB #829
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong’s # BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day; time; today or this day (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong’s #3117 BDB #398
hûw’ (אוּהוּ) [pronounced <i>hoo</i> ]	<i>he, it; him, himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> , is implied	Strong’s #1931 BDB #214
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong’s #853 BDB #84

## Exodus 5:6

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâgas (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced naw-GAS]	<i>taskmasters, slave drivers; exacters; ruler, tyrant</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #5065 BDB #620
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'am (עַם) [pronounced ġahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shôṭêr (שׁוֹטֵר) [pronounced show-TARE]	<i>official, commissioned officer, officer; this word refers to an official or an officer who is not the highest in command, but holds a subordinate position</i>	masculine plural noun (this is actually a masculine plural, Qal active participle) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7860 BDB #1009
The NET Bible: <i>The Greek has "scribes" for this word, perhaps thinking of those lesser officials as keeping records of the slaves and the bricks.</i> <sup>22</sup>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'amar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55

**Translation:** So, in that day, Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters among the people and their foremen, saying,...

The Pharaoh decides to take charge and end this absolute nonsense (in his eyes) of the people going out and worshiping their God. So he goes out and issues orders to the taskmasters and the officials. This does not mean that Pharaoh goes out himself and gathers the taskmasters together, but he has men who deliver orders. Therefore, he speaks and gives the new policy; and then this new policy is taken out and given to the taskmasters and to those who are in charge of the slave labor.

<sup>22</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

Exodus 5:6 **So the same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying...** (NKJV)

Pharaoh apparently did not like having this demand made by Moses and Aaron, so he issues an edict. The idea that two men could just show up and make a request like this is quite amazing to Pharaoh. He wasn't going to have it; and he was going to take it out on the people of God.

Pharaoh likely thought about these demands, probably fumed a bit, and then put together a new law. He calls in the taskmasters and the officers, who would carry out his commands. It says that this occurs on the same day, so let me suggest that, within a few hours of Moses and Aaron speaking to Pharaoh, he put together a new law.

The taskmasters are the Egyptian officials in charge of the slave units; the officers (or, foremen) are Hebrew men who oversee their own people. They act as a buffer, so to speak, between the Egyptians and their own people. On the one hand, their work is mostly administrative; on the other hand, they will take the first wave of punishment from Egypt if the people do not do as ordered. This approach by Egypt is a logical practicality. There are 2 million Israelites, and over half of them are slaves. You cannot physically punish that many people if they do wrong. Therefore, those Hebrew men who have some authority over them and privileges, they are punished if people of Israel do not meet the expectations of Pharaoh.

The next 3 verses contain the official edict of Pharaoh, issued as a result of the request put forth by Moses and Aaron.

Exodus 5:6 **So, in that day, Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters among the people and their foremen, saying...** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

### Exodus 5:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lō' (לא or לו) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yâçaph (יָצַף) [pronounced yaw-SAHPPH]	<i>to add, to augment, to increase, to multiply; to add to do = to do again; to continue to</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #3254 BDB #414
With the negative, this verb means <i>to stop, to discontinue [doing something], to no longer [do something], to never again [do something]</i> .			
The NET Bible: <i>The construction is a verbal hendiadys: לֹא תִתֵּן וְנָתַתְּ (lo' to'sifun latet, "you must not add to give"). The imperfect tense acts adverbially, and the infinitive becomes the main verb of the clause: "you must no longer give."</i> <sup>23</sup>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
teben (תֵּבֶן) [pronounced TE <sup>B</sup> -ven]	<i>straw, fodder; possibly chaff for building material</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8401 BDB #1061

<sup>23</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

## Exodus 5:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿam (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâbab (לָבַב) [pronounced <i>law-BAHN</i> ]	<i>to make bricks</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #3835 BDB #526 & #527
The NET Bible: <i>The expression “for making bricks” is made of the infinitive construct followed by its cognate accusative: מִיִּבְלָהּ לַבִּל (lilbon hallÿvenim).</i> <sup>24</sup>			
lêbênâh (הַבְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>leb-ay-NAW</i> ]	<i>a brick, a tile, a pavement</i>	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3843 BDB #527
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k</i> ʰ]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
t <sup>e</sup> môwl (לִּמְחָה) [pronounced <i>t<sup>e</sup>MOHL</i> ]	<i>yesterday; and is used figuratively for recently, formerly</i>	adverb	Strong's #8543 (and #865) BDB #1069
shil <sup>e</sup> shôwm (שְׁלֹשָׁה) [pronounced <i>shil-SHOHM</i> ]	<i>three days ago, the day before yesterday</i>	adverb	Strong's #8032 BDB #1026

Together, this preposition and two adverbs mean *as before, previously, formerly, heretofore*.

The NET Bible: *Heb “as yesterday and three days ago” or “as yesterday and before that.” This is idiomatic for “as previously” or “as in the past.”*<sup>25</sup>

**Translation:** ...“You will no longer give straw to the people as before.

At one time, there was straw provided, which helped to hold the bricks together. This straw was no longer going to be provided.

There was no practical reason for doing this; the Egyptians did not gain anything by not giving the Hebrew slaves straw. This was simply a vindictive move by Pharaoh to punish the people for having any thought toward worshiping their God (and thus taking them away from their work).

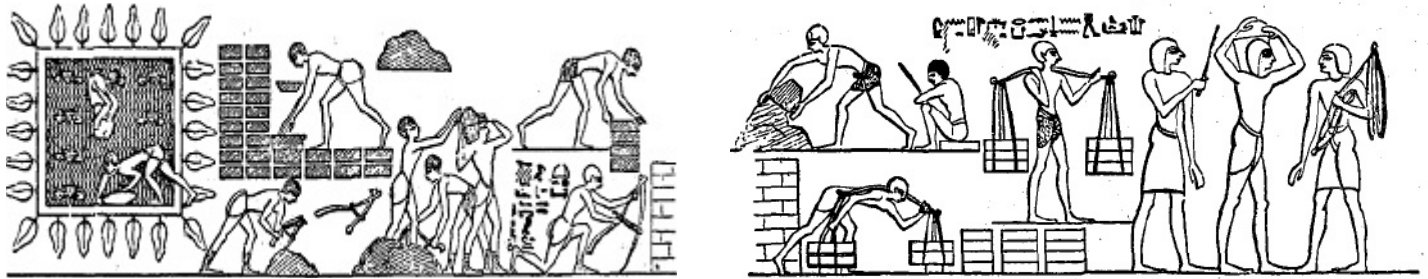
<sup>24</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

<sup>25</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.



We would be speculating to ask, *who brought them the straw in the first place?* It appears that the straw was provided before by means of a completely separate process, which suggests to me that the Jews were not involved in that aspect of the brick-making. The straw was provided—it was just there—and the Jewish slaves used it. Let me suggest that this is some recycling done by the Egyptian farms. This does not mean that the Egyptians provided the straw; nor does it mean that Egyptian farmers worked on their own farms. Let me suggest that they had a whole other set of slaves, and those slaves perhaps used the straw and chaff from wheat and other grains which were harvested. This is simply a logical guess.

**Slaves Making Bricks in Egypt** (a graphic); from <http://icotb.org/resources/Exodus.pdf> accessed July 13, 2017.



College Press Bible Study: *The drawing<sup>26</sup> shown above was made from a wall painting on the tomb of Rekh-mire at Thebes, from the time of Thutmose III (probable pharaoh of the oppression), about 1450 B.C. At the upper left two slaves fetch water from a pool surrounded by trees. The water-softened Nile clay is lifted with mattocks, and placed in baskets borne on workmen's shoulders. The man in the center top is pressing the mud into a wooden frame to form bricks. In the lower drawing three piles of bricks dry in the sun. The dry bricks are carried by slaves using poles over their shoulders. Two overseers with sticks urge the workers on. Part of the inscription quotes the overseer: "The rod is in my hand; be not idle." The Israelites were involved in work like this.<sup>27</sup>*

Exodus 5:7a **"You shall no longer give the people straw to make brick as before.**

Pharaoh is surrounded by men who carry out his wishes. People in power like Pharaoh do very little apart from make decisions and give orders. He has men there who are in charge of the slaves, overall. It would be like several cabinet-level positions, as the slaves make up a very large population in Egypt.

So Pharaoh turns toward these men who are in charge of the slaves (we know that there is more than one, as the 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine plural verb is used here). The verb is *yâçaph* (יָצַף) [pronounced *yaw-SAHPH*], which means, *to add, to augment, to increase, to multiply; to add to do = to do again; to continue to*. It is in the Hiphil (causal) stem. With this verb is a negative, and with the negative, it means, *to stop, to discontinue [doing something], to no longer [do something], to never again [do something]*. Strong's #3254 BDB #414. There was a program in place where the straw from Egyptian farming was brought to various locations and it was used to make bricks. This was Pharaoh's recycling program. The chaff from the wheat (or whatever grain); was, otherwise, useless. However, it gave the brick strength. Useless straw became quite useful. However, this program would no longer be offered. That practice of providing straw to be used for bricks would be discontinued.

<sup>26</sup> From E. A. Wallis Budge. *The Dwellers on the Nile* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1888), p. 91.

<sup>27</sup> *The College Press Bible Study Textbook Series*; (a compilation of many commentaries); from e-sword; Exodus Book Commentary (Introductory Section V).



## Exodus 5:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hêm (הֵם) [pronounced haym]	<i>they, those; themselves; these</i> [with the definite article]	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #1992 BDB #241
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
The NET Bible: <i>The jussive וַיֹּאמֶר (yelykhu) and its following sequential verb would have the force of decree and not permission or advice. He is telling them to go and find straw or stubble for the bricks.</i> <sup>28</sup>			
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
qâshash (קָשַׁשׁ) [pronounced kaw-SHASH]	<i>to gather [assemble, collect] straw, stubble and/or sticks</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Poel perfect	Strong's #7197 BDB #905
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
teben (תֵּבֵן) [pronounced TE <sup>B</sup> -ven]	<i>straw, fodder; possibly chaff for building material</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8401 BDB #1061

**Translation:** They will go out and gather the straw for themselves.

The slaves needed to go out and scrounge up this materials that were previously provided.

Exodus 5:7b **Let them go and gather straw for themselves.** (NKJV)

Apparently, the Egyptians did some of the labor; as they had been providing the straw for the bricks (it is not clear whether the Hebrews are used as slaves on Egyptian farms—although that seems logical that they would be). Presumably, they farm their crops and their excess material can be used in the making of bricks—this was the Egyptian way of making use of the entire stalk of grain. Apparently the straw which was separated from the grain was gathered and brought to where there Hebrew slaves made bricks. It is this straw which gave the bricks some additional strength and volume. However, this practice came to an abrupt end, considerably increasing the workload of the Hebrew slaves.

Pharaoh is being vindictive here. He has decided that he needs to bring the hammer down, so to speak, on his slaves. They have come to him asking for some time off—that is simply an unacceptable request on its face. Pharaoh finds this request so repugnant that he will punish the people of Israel for even considering making such a request.

Exodus 5:7 ...“You will no longer give straw to the people as before. They will go out and gather the straw for themselves. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

<sup>28</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

**A Review of Exodus 5:1–7:** We are studying the first time that Moses and Aaron went before Pharaoh.

Exodus 5:1 Afterward Moses and Aaron went and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.'"

Exodus 5:2 But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and moreover, I will not let Israel go."

Exodus 5:3 Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."

At this point, we have recognized that we are seeing this first meeting from man's point of view. When we come back and revisit this meeting, we will see it from God's point of view.

Exodus 5:4 But the king of Egypt said to them, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people away from their work? Get back to your burdens."

In essence, Pharaoh is saying, "I don't know what you are all doing here—it is a work day today. You all need to be working right now."

Exodus 5:5 And Pharaoh said, "Behold, the people of the land are now many, and you make them rest from their burdens!"

What Moses and Aaron have proposed is absurd in Pharaoh's eyes.

Exodus 5:6–7 The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their foremen, "You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as in the past; let them go and gather straw for themselves. (ESV; capitalized)

## Exodus 5:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mathkô <sup>n</sup> eth/mathkû <sup>n</sup> eth (מִתְּנָה/מִתְּנָה) [pronounced <i>math-KO-neth/math-KOO-neth</i> ]	<i>number, tally; measurement, tale, proportion</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #4971 BDB #1067
l <sup>e</sup> bênâh (הַבְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>leb-ay-NAW</i> ]	<i>a brick, a tile, a pavement</i>	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3843 BDB #527

## Exodus 5:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where; in that, in which, in what</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
hēm (הֵם) [pronounced haym]	<i>they, those; themselves; these</i> [with the definite article]	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #1992 BDB #241
ʾāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ǵaw-SAWH]	<i>doers, makers, creators, those who construct</i> [fashion, preparer]	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
Possibly what is meant is simply the participle form: <i>doing, making, manufacturing, constructing, fashioning, forming, preparing; producing.</i>			
t̄môwl (לִּמְחָל) [pronounced t̄MOHL]	<i>yesterday; and is used figuratively for recently, formerly</i>	adverb	Strong's #8543 (and #865) BDB #1069
shil <sup>e</sup> shôwm (שְׁלוֹשָׁיִם) [pronounced shil-SHOHM]	<i>three days ago, the day before yesterday</i>	adverb	Strong's #8032 BDB #1026
Together, these two adverbs mean <i>before, previously, afore time, hitherto, heretofore</i> (see Gen. 31:2 2Kings 13:5).			
The NET Bible: <i>Heb "yesterday and three days ago" or "yesterday and before that" is idiomatic for "previously" or "in the past."</i> <sup>29</sup>			
sîym (שִׂים) [pronounced seem]; also spelled sūwm (שׁוּם) [pronounced soom]	<i>to put, to place, to set; to make; to appoint</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
The NET Bible: <i>The verb is the Qal imperfect of שִׂים (sim, "place, put"). The form could be an imperfect of instruction: "You will place upon them the quota." Or, as here, it may be an obligatory imperfect: "You must place."</i> <sup>30</sup>			
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ǵahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

**Translation:** Furthermore, the number of bricks which they previously made, you will [continue to] require from them [lit., lay upon them].

They would still be required to make the same number of bricks as before.

<sup>29</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

<sup>30</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

## Exodus 5:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lō' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
gâra' (גָּרַע) [pronounced gaw-RAHG]	<i>to diminish, to restrain, to withdraw, to reduce, to lessen</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1639 BDB #175
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

**Translation:** You will not diminish their work [lit., from her]...

You will not diminish their work.

Those who had ruled over the Israelites had become cruel and unrealistic. They expected far too much of the Hebrew people. Each ruler attempted to outdo the previous one when it came to production and increasing the burdens that the Jews bore. The Jews were already under almost unbearable cruelty. This Pharaoh, even hours later, was still taken aback by Moses and Aaron walking into his palace and demanding time off for the Israelites. He decided that the Hebrews must have too much time on their hands for them to be concerned about having a feast to their God. Prior to this, it was the responsibility of those over them to see that straw was provided for them to make the bricks. Now they would have the added responsibility of gathering this straw themselves.

It is here that we can see how Aaron's addition to divine revelation misled Pharaoh (about God falling upon them with sickness or war). The Israelites would not be disciplined if they didn't go out to worship God. This was not an option given to the Israelites to decide—they were commanded to go out and worship God and Pharaoh would be under grave discipline if *he* did not comply. You see how the slightest change or addition to God's Word, and something entirely different is perceived. Aaron made it sound as though the Jews, during their down-time, got together and decided that they had better go worship God or God would discipline them.

Exodus 5:8a-b **And you shall lay on them the quota of bricks which they made before. You shall not reduce it.** (NKJV)

Ancient Egyptian bricks were made of clay mixed with water, some with straw and some without, and then the mixture is put into a mold, 14.5–20" long, 4.5–7" thick and 6.5–8.75" wide. Once they had set, the mold was removed and they were placed in the sun to dry completely. These bricks were used in Egyptian homes, tombs, tower walls, fortresses, various buildings and for the sacred inclosures of temples. Often they would bear the imprint of the name of the king who was in power when they were made (which helps us to date the buildings found). The Egyptians also use stones, but they were confined to temples, quays (these are docks built out into navigable waters for loading and unloading ships) and reservoirs.

Pharaoh requires that the people continue making the same number of bricks as before; but now they must gather the straw themselves as well. His reasoning is, they have far too much free time on their hands to want to go out and sacrifice to their God. He assumes that the additional work will cure them from having such notions. In the opinion of Pharaoh, these elders should not have brought Moses and Aaron in to see him in the first place. Obviously, Pharaoh does not fully appreciate that the request made by Moses and Aaron originated with their God. No matter where this idea came from, Pharaoh assumes that a quick and severe response will whip the people of Israel back into line.

No doubt, the Hebrew people had just enough time to make the bricks and build. No doubt, they worked from dawn til dusk (or longer). Adding more work—work which could not be done—was one approach Pharaoh could take. His intent, I believe, was to drive a wedge between Moses and Aaron and the people of Israel. Pharaoh does not harm or threaten to harm Moses and Aaron.

There is an interesting thing that Pharaoh does. His expressed concern is, the worship of God will take his slaves away from Egypt and away from their work (thus, reducing their work output). His edict will ultimately reduce their work output. Requiring the Israelite slaves to produce the same amount of bricks does not mean that they will be able to do this.

**Application:** An interesting application of this is, just because you pass a law, that does not mean that people will obey that law or that the intended results of that law will be the actual results.

Pharaoh has laid down an edict which cannot be obeyed. He knows this. He will also punish the people for not obeying it.

Exodus 5:8a-b *And you shall lay on them the quota of bricks which they made before. You shall not reduce it.* (NKJV)

Pharaoh's new requirements for the slaves will be this: they will continue to make bricks as they had in the past, but they themselves will have to ferret out the straw necessary to use in these bricks, in order to give them strength and volume. This is a considerable amount of additional work and impossible for the people of Israel to do. Pharaoh has just given his slaves an impossible task to do.

There is another issue here. There is this delicate interaction of natural consequences, man's sinful behavior, God's discipline and God's ability to mix everything together for good to those who love Him (Gen. 50:20 Rom. 8:28). We tend to get these all mixed up, so we let's take this in points:

#### **God Produces Good from Man's Free Will, Sin, and Failures**

1. God is able to take man's free will, the natural consequences of man's sin along with His divine discipline and produce divine good from mixing all of that together.
2. What the Egyptians had done to the Jews was wrong. Enslaving Jews in the first place was wrong and increasing their burdens to a point of making their work requirements impossible was wrong.
3. For committing those sins, Egypt will have to be disciplined. God will discipline Egypt.
4. Today, even though we do not live in the Jewish age, the Jews are still God's peculiar people and we are blessed by God when we treat them with compassion and respect. On the other hand, we are disciplined (either individually or as a nation) when we commit acts of prejudice against them or when we bear mental attitude sins against them. Gen. 12:1–3
  - 1) Antisemitism always results in divine discipline. Now you may think, *but what about all of those Arab nations? Aren't they rich with great oil reserves?* Some of the worst nations in the world to live in would be any of the Arabic nations, Pakistan or Iran. At any given time, there are 40–60 armed conflicts (= wars) occurring in the world. 80–90% of them are always happening in the Middle East. Some of the greatest humanitarian disasters of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are happening right now in Syria and Yemen (I write this in 2019). A 2019 graphic of these conflicts will be found below.
  - 2) We have seen, by means of YouTube, the brutality of ISIS. They have burned people alive, drown them in cages, and slowly cut off their heads. For many of us, their evil and brutality are difficult to even contemplate.
  - 3) Antisemitism, at any time in history, always results in far greater harm to its perpetrators.
  - 4) Large portions of the Middle East are severely upset with nation Israel, despite the fact that it takes up about 0.2% of the land mass of the Middle East. Some Arabic nations blame so many of their problems and failures on that tiny, postage stamp of a nation.
  - 5) In modern-day history, we have seen that the Arabic people are capable of marvelous building projects and improvements to their land which defy the horrendous weather conditions in which they



### God Produces Good from Man's Free Will, Sin, and Failures

live. For the past century or so, they could have been taking their oil profits and pouring them into projects to make conditions in their land more bearable—and some Arabic nations have done this. However, most of these nations have poured much of their money into war and terrorism, resulting in great self-induced misery.

5. It was God's plan for the Hebrews to be under slavery to Egypt and to endure great suffering; otherwise, they would not have left Egypt as a unified whole and return to the land that God had given them. In fact, their lives in Egypt had to get so bad that, they will have no other choice but to exit Egypt. Egypt's sinful and hostile actions towards Israel will cause the sons of Israel to leave.
6. However, this does not mean that Egypt will be rewarded for enslaving Israel, nor is Pharaoh rewarded for making their work tasks impossible to complete. God uses the fact that Egypt enslaved Israel; but that does not mean what they did is good or right. The actions of the pharaohs towards Israel were evil. Nevertheless, God is able to use their actions to produce good.
  - 1) Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery to Egypt and he endured some difficult times as a result. But, that made Joseph tough and he rose to a high political position in Egypt. As a result, he was able to preserve the lives of many Egyptians and his family. He said to his brothers, "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today." (Gen. 50:20, ESV).
  - 2) Paul assured the believers in Rome: **And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.** (Rom. 8:28, ESV)
7. Because of the impossible pressure that Pharaoh places upon the people of Israel, they will move, en masse, out of Egypt. They will act as a unified whole to defy Pharaoh. They will choose to follow their God rather than obey the dictates of Pharaoh, because of the power the God reveals in Egypt.
8. Even though God is able to take the evil actions of Pharaoh and producing good from them, this does not somehow cancel out his personal responsibility for doing evil against Israel.
9. In this age, it is God's plan for the Jews to be scattered throughout the world; and regardless of the status of that little country in the mid-east; the Jews as a whole will remain a separate entity throughout all of the nations wherein they reside; and they will face attacks of prejudice from man and from Satan. This is God's plan for their lives prior to the second advent of Jesus Christ.
10. God's people, the Jews, are not the dominant factor in human history today; but God has not forgotten them; nor will He overlook evil done to them.
11. Even though these things are all a part of God's plan, this does not relieve any individual or nation from the discipline that they will receive due to their anti-Semitism.
12. God is able to take things which are wrong and combine them with motivations which are sinful and work these things into His plan so that it will all result in good. God is perfect and He is able to not only rectify, supercede and nullify the results of the sinfulness of man; but, at the same time, God is able to actually use those results to fulfill His perfect plan.
13. Even though God is able to work all things together for good, we are not pardoned for our sinful behavior, even if our wrong actions are used in His plan. We cannot use God's abilities or our personal predilections to pardon us from sin.
14. For those who want to deal with the *what if's*: if man did not sin, God's plan would still work all things together for good. God's plan will continue to work all things together for good to those who love Him even in the millennium, under perfect environment; and in eternity, where there will be no sin.
15. For the believer, the smart thing to do is to remain filled with the Spirit and run our lives in accordance with the guidance and power of **Bible doctrine**. In that way, we produce divine good in the devil's world. In that way, we participate in the plan of God in such a way that we will be rewarded for it.



**God Produces Good from Man’s Free Will, Sin, and Failures**

**Conflicts Across the Globe** (a map), from [Express.co.us](http://Express.co.us); accessed December 4, 2018. There are a few



websites with *war/conflict* maps; and they do not all agree, simply because there is no universal agreement as to when an armed conflict is taking place. However, what all of these maps agree upon is, there are always armed conflicts taking place in Middle East countries and in Pakistan and in Iran. These are unhappy places to live because they are ruled by Islam, Satan’s religion.

Furthermore, nearly all of those conflicts shown above involve Islam.

In the chapters that we are studying, God will take these hostile and retaliatory acts of Pharaoh and use them to further His plan.

Now I realize that does not put it all together for everyone, that should at least help you to understand God's plan, man's sin, and our responsibilities. All of these things coexist and are used by God for His good.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

**Exodus 5:8c**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
râphâh (רפּוּא) [pronounced <i>raw-FAW</i> ]	<i>slackers, idle ones; they are being idle [or slacking off]; being idle, slacking off</i>	masculine plural, Niphal participle	Strong's #7503 BDB #951

## Exodus 5:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The NET Bible: <i>The form סִפְּרוּ (nirpim) is derived from the verb רָפַח (rafah), meaning "to be weak, to let oneself go." They had been letting the work go, Pharaoh reasoned, and being idle is why they had time to think about going to worship.</i> <sup>31</sup>			
hêm (הֵם) [pronounced haym]	they, those; themselves; these [with the definite article]	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural personal pronoun; sometimes the verb to be is implied	Strong's #1992 BDB #241

**Translation:** ...for they [are quite obviously] idle.

The workers are obviously too idle, is what Pharaoh has decided, if they have the time to think about worshipping their God in the desert-wilderness.

Pharaoh saw this as a great threat.

## Exodus 5:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘al (עַל) [pronounced gahl]	upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced kane]	so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted	adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
Together, ‘al kên (עַל כֵּן) mean so, upon the ground of such conditions, therefore, consequently, on this account, on account, for this reason. Literally, these words would be translated upon so, upon therefore, upon then.			
hêm (הֵם) [pronounced haym]	they, those; themselves; these [with the definite article]	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural personal pronoun; sometimes the verb to be is implied	Strong's #1992 BDB #241
tsâ‘aq (צָעֲקִים) [pronounced tsaw-ÇAHK]	those crying [out], the ones calling [out], those summoning	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #6817 BDB #858
I think what is meant here is simply crying [out], calling [out], summoning.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	to, for, towards, in regards to	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

<sup>31</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

## Exodus 5:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'āmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
hālak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect; with the cohortative hê	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
The cohortative expresses volition. In the English, we often render this with <i>let</i> or <i>may</i> ; in the plural, this can be <i>let us</i> . The cohortative is designed for the 1 <sup>st</sup> person, it can express a wish or a desire or purpose or an intent. It is found in conditional statements. Generally there is the hê suffix to indicate this.			
zābach (זָבַח) [pronounced zaw <sup>b</sup> -VAHKH]	<i>to slaughter [usually an animal for sacrifice]; to sacrifice [an animal]; to slay, to immolate [an animal sacrifice]</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect; with the cohortative hê	Strong's #2076 BDB #256
The cohortative expresses volition. In the English, we often render this with <i>let</i> or <i>may</i> ; in the plural, this can be <i>let us</i> . The cohortative is designed for the 1 <sup>st</sup> person, it can express a wish or a desire or purpose or an intent. It is found in conditional statements. Generally there is the hê suffix to indicate this.			
lāmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'Ēlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43

**Translation:** As a result, they are crying out, saying, 'Let us go [and] sacrifice to our Elohim.'

Because the people are too idle and they have too much time on their hands, and so they are making these absurd demands (*absurd* in the view of Pharaoh).

In this verse we have the negative plus the Qal imperfect, 2<sup>nd</sup> masculine plural of gāra' (גָּרַע) [pronounced gaw-RAH] and it means *to diminish, to restrain, to withdraw*.

It is obvious to Pharaoh that these Jews have far too much time on their hands if they are sending representatives to him to discuss time off for feasting. Moses should have told Pharaoh that God had come to him, Moses, and ordered him to take the people from Egypt to worship; and if Pharaoh didn't, then there would be hell to pay. It may not have had any different affect, but it would have been more accurate than claiming they might face sickness or war.

Pharaoh has told the people that they must collect the straw with which to make bricks. Then he gives this rationale for his edict:

Exodus 5:8d For they are idle; therefore they cry out, saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.'

This is quite fascinating. The people of Israel are not idle; nor are they crying out to go and sacrifice to their God; this is all coming from Moses and Aaron and the elders of Israel. Ultimately, that comes from the will of God. However, Pharaoh will find it more instructive to punish all Israel rather than just Moses and Aaron.

Pharaoh approaches the problem in this way: the children of Israel have far too much excess time on their hands if they think that they can come and make a request of him to leave en masse for a week or so to worship their God. This sort of request he finds flabbergasting. Nevertheless, his response indicates that he takes the request seriously. He does not dismiss Moses and Aaron as just two nutcases (they have performed miracles in Pharaoh's sight—we will find this out later).

Pharaoh's intent is to nip this and all such future requests in the bud and make life so miserable for the people that they will never consider making such a request to him ever again—or so he thinks. It is Pharaoh's response to this initial request which will result in Israel becoming unified as a people against him (not right away, but eventually). Pharaoh's response it is intended to turn Israel against Moses and Aaron; but the end result will be, this will begin to unify the people of Israel against Pharaoh.

Obviously, Pharaoh has no regard whatever for the Hebrew God or the relationship of the Hebrew people to their God.

Exodus 5:8 Furthermore, the number of bricks which they previously made, you will [continue to] require from them [lit., lay upon them]. You will not diminish their work [lit., from her] for they [are quite obviously] idle. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Moses and Aaron have come before Pharaoh and have asked that the people be given some time in order to worship their God. This is how Pharaoh responded to their request:

Exodus 5:6–8 The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their foremen, "You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as in the past; let them go and gather straw for themselves. But the number of bricks that they made in the past you shall impose on them, you shall by no means reduce it, for they are idle. Therefore they cry, 'Let us go and offer sacrifice to our God.' (ESV; capitalized)

Pharaoh would not put up with such a foolish request from the Hebrew people. He then gave his Hebrew slaves an impossible task.

### Exodus 5:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kâbêd (כָּבֵד) [pronounced kaw <sup>b</sup> -VADE]	<i>to honor, to glorify, to recognize; to be great, to be vehement, to be heavy, weighty, burdensome; to be insensible, to be dull</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3513 BDB #457
ʿăbôdâh (עֲבֹדָה) [pronounced ġu <sup>b</sup> -vo-DAWH]	<i>labour, work, service; possibly: bondage; enslavement</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5656 & #5647 BDB #715
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ġah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

## Exodus 5:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾānāshîym (אֲנָשִׁים) [pronounced <i>uh-NAW-sheem</i> ]; also spelled ʾīyshîym (אִישִׁים) [pronounced <i>ee-SHEEM</i> ]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions; soldiers, followers</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35

**Translation:** [The work will be heavy upon the men...](#)

There is supposed to be heavy work placed upon these idle slaves.

The result that Pharaoh expects to have when the labor is made heavy upon the Jews is that they may 'āsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced *aw-SAWH*] in it. This is a verb which goes way back to Gen. 1:7, 16, 25, 26, 31 2:2, 3, 4. It is a widely applied verb which generally means *to do, to make, to make something out of something*. They are given the materials to make brick; prior to this, they did not have enough time to fill so Pharaoh has added to their responsibilities. This verb is followed by a preposition with a 3<sup>rd</sup> feminine singular suffix, meaning *at it, on it, in it*. It refers back to *labor*. I did a rather free translation at this point (although many other translators have also).

The point of what Pharaoh is saying is that they have too much time on their hands if they are contemplating going out into the desert-wilderness to sacrifice to their God. Because of this outrageous demand (which Pharaoh sees as having come from the people as a whole; and not as having come from God), he increases their burden. Apparently there were other workers, very possibly paid Egyptians (or possibly other slaves) who provided the straw with which to make bricks (my guess is, this was the excess produced by agriculture). That additional task was given to the Hebrews. What was expected of them was a set number of bricks from each crew; they had apparently decided that it was easier to say, "we will now require you to produce 500 bricks where you must gather the straw for these bricks, instead of 500 bricks" rather than to increase the hours. Very likely they worked from dawn to dusk as it was.

Exodus 5:9a [Let more work be laid on the men,...](#)

We have yet another word for *work* in v. 9; the feminine singular of 'ābōdâh (עָבְדָה) [pronounced *ab-o-DAWH*] and it means *labor, service, work*. It is very similar to the Hebrew word for slave: 'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced *eh-bed*]. The transliteration and the pronunciation make them sound like very different words; however, the Hebrew was written originally in all consonants and in this way they are exactly the same word (in written form) except that *labor* has an ה (he) on the end of it.

Moses and Aaron have come before Pharaoh and have requested that all Israelites be given the chance to leave Egypt for a week so that they may worship their God. Pharaoh's response to this request is to give them more work—in fact, he places an impossible burden upon them.

## Exodus 5:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## Exodus 5:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88

The NET Bible: *The text has וַיַּעַיְוּ (vÿya'asu-vah, "and let them work in it") or the like. The jussive forms part of the king's decree that the men not only be required to work harder but be doing it: "Let them be occupied in it."*

The NET Bible adds: *For a discussion of this whole section, see K. A. Kitchen, "From the Brickfields of Egypt," TynBul 27 (1976): 137-47.<sup>32</sup>*

**Translation:** ...and they will do it;...

The slaves will be expected to do the work assigned to them, no matter how unfair or impossible the requirements are.

Exodus 5:9a-b **Let more work be laid on the men, that they may labor in it,...** (NKJV)

Pharaoh was quite perturbed that Moses and Aaron came to him and asked for time off for the people—his slaves. Therefore, he made a ruling that the Hebrew slaves would no longer have straw but they would have to make the bricks for their construction projections out of mud and clay alone. Pharaoh has announced this to the taskmasters, and now the taskmasters will inform the people.

## Exodus 5:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא or לוֹל) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
shâ'âh (שָׁחָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-GAW</i> ]	<i>to look, to look around [for help]; to gaze at [steadily, with interest]; to look at [with approval or interest], to regard; to behold</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8159 BDB #1043
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88

<sup>32</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.



## Exodus 5:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
d <sup>o</sup> bârîym (דְּבָרִים) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -vawr-EEM]	words, sayings, doctrines, commands; things, matters, affairs; reports	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
sheqer (שֶׁקֶר) [pronounced SHEH-ker]	a lie, lying words, deception, falsehood; a liar; whatever deceives, fraud, vanity; falsely [absolute used as adverb]	masculine singular noun; pausal form	Strong's #8267 BDB #1055

This is the first occurrence of this word in the Bible.

The NET Bible: *The words of Moses are here called "lying words" (דְּבָרִים שֶׁקֶרֶשׁ, divre-shaqer). Here is the main reason, then, for Pharaoh's new policy. He wanted to discredit Moses. So the words that Moses spoke Pharaoh calls false and lying words. The world was saying that God's words were vain and deceptive because they were calling people to a higher order. In a short time God would reveal that they were true words.*<sup>33</sup>

**Translation:** ...and they will not look to deceitful words."

The idea of the people going out and worshipping represents the people being played and giving in to deceitful words. Some translations add in the words *of Moses [and Aaron]*.

Pharaoh could have reacted to the demands of Moses in a number of different ways. He could have considered making some accommodations for his slaves, but he chose not to.

Exodus 5:9 *As a result, they are crying out, saying, 'Let us go [and] sacrifice to our Elohim.' The work will be heavy upon the men and they will do it; and they will not look to deceitful words.*" (Kukis mostly literal translation)

This is clearly more work required of the people. Pharaoh regards the things said by Moses and Aaron as *false words*. They have stirred up the sons of Israel. The idea that they have a God Who looks after them, Who thinks about them—this is false, in Pharaoh's estimation.

While these men are working much harder than they did before, Pharaoh wants them to think about requests like these; and to realize that such requests are false hopes. These fantasies proposed by Moses and Aaron will result in the lives of the Israelites becoming even more miserable.

No direct action is taken against Moses or Aaron at this point. Pharaoh does not say to them, "Don't you two belong with the slaves?" He does not put them in jail. He does not have them beaten. He listened to them and then he acted. Even though he urged these men to return to their burdens (which would have included the elders of Israel), he does nothing to Moses and Aaron. He does not put guards on them, to send them back into slave labor.

My theory is this: if Pharaoh is extremely harsh towards the Hebrew people, and yet Moses and Aaron and wandering about free, that would cause a serious riff between them. If the Hebrew overseers are beaten (many of whom are also the elders of the Hebrew people), but Moses and Aaron are not, then this original bond would be broken (the one which had been established between Moses and Aaron and the elders—recall that Moses and Aaron went before them first and, it appears, they all went before Pharaoh).

<sup>33</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

Would the Hebrew people look to Moses and Aaron as leaders, if what they did simply increased the requirements of their work, to the point of impossibility? And, while they are given an impossible task to do, Moses and Aaron are simply wandering about without any responsibility. If anything, the Hebrews would quickly come to resent Moses and Aaron. Whatever respect that these two men have among the people, Pharaoh's actions are designed to destroy that respect.

Exodus 5:6–9 So, in that day, Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters among the people and their foremen, saying, "You will no longer give straw to the people as before. They will go out and gather the straw for themselves. Furthermore, the number of bricks which they previously made, you will [continue to] require from them [lit., *lay upon them*]. You will not diminish their work [lit., *from her*] for they [are quite obviously] idle. As a result, they are crying out, saying, 'Let us go [and] sacrifice to our Elohim.' The work will be heavy upon the men and they will do it; and they will not look to deceitful words." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Pharaoh will exhibit strong will against God; but he is not a stupid man. If God were not real, then his plan here would be considered brilliant.

Exodus 5:6–9 So, in that day, Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters and their foremen who were among the people, saying, "You will no longer provide straw for the people as you did previously. They will go out and gather straw themselves. Furthermore, you will require the same number of bricks to be manufactured as before; you will not diminish their work, even though they now must provide their own straw for the bricks, since they obviously have too much time on their hands. Because of all this idle time, they have become annoying, calling out to us, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' I don't want to hear that nonsense! Therefore, make certain that the work is heavy on these men, so that they will not have time to pursue after deceitful words of their idle prophets." (Kukis paraphrase)

**And so go out taskmasters of the people and his foremen and so they say unto the people, to say, "Thus said Pharaoh: '[There is] none [from] me giving to you [all] straw. You yourselves go out; you [all] fetch for yourselves straw from where you [all] will find [it]. For, [will] not be lessened from your work a word.'** "

Exodus  
5:10–11

**So the taskmasters of the people and their foremen go out and spoke to the people, saying, "Thus proclaims Pharaoh: 'I [will] no longer give you straw. You yourselves will go out [and] you will fetch the straw for yourselves from wherever you [might] find [it]. Nevertheless [lit., *for*], your work will not be lessened at all [lit., *a word, a thing*].'** "

**So the taskmasters of the people and their foremen all went out and spoke to the people, "Thus proclaims Pharaoh: 'I will no longer provide straw for your bricks. From hereon out, you must go out and find your own straw. You will bring this straw back to the job site from wherever you might find it. Nevertheless, your work requirement will not be reduced.'** "

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so go out taskmasters of the people and his foremen and so they say unto the people, to say, "Thus said Pharaoh: '[There is] none [from] me giving to you [all] straw. You yourselves go out; you [all] fetch for yourselves straw from where you [all] will find [it]. For, [will] not be lessened from your work a word.'

Dead Sea Scrolls  
Targum of Onkelos

.  
And the masters of the people and the overseers went forth and spake to the people, saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw; you shall go and gather

	up straw for yourselves wheresoever you can find it; though from you work there shall be mother diminished.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And the officers and exactors of the people went forth, and said to the people, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw; you must go and take straw wherever you can find it; for your work will not in anywise be diminished.
Jerusalem targum	.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And the overseers of the works and the taskmasters went out and said to the people: Thus said Pharaoh, I allow you no straw: Go, and gather it where you can find it: neither shall any thing of your work be diminished.
Latin Vulgate	.
Plain English Aramaic Bible	.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the taskmasters of the people and their scribes went out and said to the people, Thus says Pharaoh, I will not give you straw. Go, get straw for yourselves wherever you can find it; but your work shall not be reduced.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	The taskmasters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spoke to the people, saying, "This is what Pharaoh says: 'I will not give you straw. Go yourselves, get straw where you can find it, for nothing of your work shall be diminished.'"
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	And the governors of the nation and their scribes went out and told the people that this is what the Pharaoh said, "I am not giving you any straw. "You go and get yourself the straw wherever you may find it and let not your work be any the lesser."
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	Upon this the task masters and clerks hurried them and spoke to the people saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will no more give you straw; go and collect straw for yourselves where you can find it; for no abatement shall be made of your task.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the taskmasters and the accountants hastened them, and they spoke to the people, saying, thus says Pharaoh, I <i>will</i> give you straw no longer. Go, yourselves, get for yourselves straw wherever you can find it, for nothing is diminished from your rate.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And the overseers of the people and their responsible men went out and said to the people, Pharaoh says, I will give you no more dry stems. Go yourselves and get dry stems wherever you are able; for your work is not to be any less.
Easy English	.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	So the Egyptian slave masters and the Hebrew foremen went to the Israelites and said, "Pharaoh has decided that he will not give you straw for your bricks. You must go and get the straw for yourselves. So go and find straw, but you must still make as many bricks as you made before."
God's Word™	The slave drivers and foreman went out and said to them, "This is what Pharaoh says: I'm no longer giving you straw. Get your own straw wherever you can find it, but your work load will not be reduced one bit."
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
The Message	The slave-drivers and their underlings went out to the people with their new instructions. "Pharaoh's orders: No more straw provided. Get your own straw wherever you can find it. And not one brick less in your daily work quota!"
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	The slave drivers and the overseers left. They said to the people, "Pharaoh says, 'I won't give you any more straw. Go and get your own straw anywhere you can find it. But you still have to make the same number of bricks.' "

New Simplified Bible .

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible .

Contemporary English V.

The slave bosses and the men in charge of the slaves went out and told them, "The king says he will not give you any more straw. Go and find your own straw wherever you can, but you must still make as many bricks as before."

The Living Bible

So the taskmasters and officers informed the people: "Pharaoh has given orders to furnish you with no more straw. Go and find it wherever you can; but you must produce just as many bricks as before!"

New Berkeley Version .

New Century Version .

New Life Version .

New Living Translation

So the slave drivers and foremen went out and told the people: "This is what Pharaoh says: I will not provide any more straw for you. Go and get it yourselves. Find it wherever you can. But you must produce just as many bricks as before!"

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible

Well, the taskmasters and the supervisors acted quickly, and they told the people, 'This is what Pharaoh says: *I'm not going to give you straw anymore. Go get it yourselves! Take it from wherever you can find it... but you must still make the same number of [bricks]!*'

Beck's American Translation .

International Standard V

Then the taskmasters of the people and their officials went out and told the people, "This is Pharaoh's response: 'I'll no longer give you any [The Heb. lacks *any*] straw. Go get straw for yourselves wherever you can find it, but your work quotas won't be reduced at all [Lit. *from your labor*].'"

New Advent (Knox) Bible

So overseer and foreman gave it out to the people as a message from Pharaoh, You shall have no more straw from me; go and gather it for yourselves where you can find it; meanwhile, there is to be no lessening of the work done.

Translation for Translators

So the slave bosses and supervisors of the slaves went to where the *Israeli* people were and said to them, "The king has said that he will no longer give you any straw. So you yourselves must go and get straw wherever you can find it. But you must still keep working to make the same number of bricks as before." [LIT]

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Awful Scroll Bible

They driving the people were to go out, and they being officials, even were they to say to the people, to the intent: Pharaoh is to have said: Was I to give you straw? - Be going, be getting straw where you were to find it. Is indeed, that concerning you all's labors to diminish?

Conservapedia

And so the taskmasters went out, with their superintendents, and told the people, "The Pharaoh has told us not to give you any more straw. So go, get the straw yourself, we don't care from where, but don't make one brick less than you used to."

Ferrar-Fenton Bible

The drivers and overseers of the people consequently went and reported it to the people, saying thus ; " Pharaoh has ordered us no more to give you straw. Therefore go, collect straw for yourselves wherever you can find it, for there is to be no diminution of your labours whatever. ' '

God's Truth (Tyndale)

Then went the taskmasters of the people and the officers out and told the people saying: Thus says Pharaoh: I will give you no more straw, but go yourselves and gather you straw where you can find it, yet shall none of your labor be minished.

Then the people scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt for to gather them stubble to be instead of straw.

HCSB	.
Jubilee Bible 2000	.
H. C. Leupold	.
Lexham English Bible	.
NIV, ©2011	.
Unlocked Literal Bible	So the people's taskmasters and foremen went out and informed the people. They said, "This is what Pharaoh says: 'I will no longer give you any straw. You yourselves must go and get straw wherever you can find it, but your workload will not be reduced.'"
Urim-Thummim Version	So the slave drivers of the people went out with their officers and they spoke to the people saying, Pharaoh declares, I will not give you straw. Go you now and get your straw wherever you can find it, yet none of your work shall be curtailed.
Wiki-Bible	And the people's bosses went, and his officers, to the people to say: "Thus said Pharaoh: I am not giving you straw. You go and take straw for yourself from what you shall find: because not a thing is subtracted from your work."
Tree of Life Version	.

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	First difficulties The slave drivers and their Isra elite foremen went out and said to the people, "Pharaoh will not give you any more straw. Go and get it yourselves wherever you can find it, but the amount of work done must be the same as before."
The Heritage Bible	And those who drove the people went out, and their officers, and they said to the people, saying, Thus says Pharaoh, I will not give you straw. Walk, take to yourselves straw where you can find it because not a word shall be scraped off from your work.
New American Bible (2002)	.
New American Bible (2011)	So the taskmasters of the people and their foremen went out and told the people, "Thus says Pharaoh,* 'I will not provide you with straw. Go and get your own straw from wherever you can find it. But there will not be the slightest reduction in your work.'"
New English Bible	.
New Jerusalem Bible	The people's taskmasters and scribes went out to speak to the people and said, 'Pharaoh says this, "I shall not provide you with any more straw. Go and collect straw for yourselves where you can find it. But your output is not to be any less."'
New RSV	.
Revised English Bible	The slave-masters and foremen went out and said to the people, "Pharaoh's orders are that no more straw is to be supplied. Go and get it for yourselves wherever you can find it; but there is to be no reduction in your daily task."

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	.
The Complete Tanach	So the taskmasters of the people and their officers came out and spoke to the people, saying, "So said Pharaoh, 'I am not giving you stubble. You go take for yourselves stubble from wherever you find [it], because nothing will be reduced from your work.'"

**You go take for yourselves stubble:** And you must go with alacrity.

**because nothing will be reduced from your work:** from the entire amount of bricks that you were making daily, when you were given stubble prepared from



the king's house.

exeGesés companion Bible	And the exactors and the officers of the people go out and say to the people, saying, Thus says Paroh, I give you no straw. You - you go: take straw where you find it: that no word of your service diminishes.
Hebraic Roots Bible JPS (Tanakh—1985)	. So the taskmasters and foremen of the people went out and said to the people, "Thus says Pharaoh: I will not give you any straw. You must go and get the straw yourselves wherever you can find it; but there shall be no decrease whatever in your work."
Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation	. The administrators and foremen went out and told the people, 'Pharaoh has said that he will no longer give you straw. You must go and get your own straw wherever you can find it. Meanwhile, you may not reduce the amount of work you must complete.'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the nogesim of HaAm went out, and their foremen; they spoke to HaAm, saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw. Go ye, get you straw where ye can find it; yet not ought of your avodah shall be diminished.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	.

#### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Then the [Egyptian] taskmasters [in charge] of the people and their [Hebrew] foremen went out and said to the people, "Thus says Pharaoh, 'I will not give you any straw. Go, get straw for yourselves wherever you can find it, but your work [quota] will not be reduced in the least.'"
The Expanded Bible	<b>Moses Complains to God</b> So the slave masters [ <sup>L</sup> of the people] and foremen [supervisors] went to the Israelites [ <sup>L</sup> out] and said [ <sup>L</sup> to the people], "This is what the king [ <sup>L</sup> Pharaoh] says: I will no longer give you straw. Go and get your own straw wherever you can find it. But you must make as many bricks as you made before [L your work will not diminish at all]."
The Geneva Bible Kretzmann's Commentary	. <b>Verses 10-19</b> The People Complain to Pharaoh And the taskmasters of the people went out and their officers, the Egyptian overseers and their Hebrew subordinates, and they spoke to the people, saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw. The royal decree was to be carried out to the letter not a single straw was to be furnished. The Jewish scribes, or officers, had by this time become willing tools in the hands of the despots. Go ye, get you straw where ye can find it; yet not ought of your work shall be diminished. There is an emphasis on the pronoun: Ye yourselves go, not others, as heretofore.
NET Bible®	So the slave masters of the people and their foremen went to the Israelites and said [Heb "went out and spoke to the people saying." Here "the people" has been specified as "the Israelites" for clarity.], "Thus says Pharaoh: 'I am not giving you straw. You go get straw for yourselves wherever you can find it, because there will be no reduction at all in your workload.'"
The Pulpit Commentary Syndein/Thieme The Voice	. . <b>Slave Drivers and Supervisors (to the people):</b> Pharaoh has a message for you: "I am not going to supply you with any more straw. You must go out and get it for



yourselves—wherever you can find it—but you must produce the same number of bricks as before. Your workload will not be reduced.”.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and the pushers of the people, and his dominators, went out and they said to the people saying, in this way "Paroh <sup>Great house</sup> " said, I am (not) giving straw to you, you, walk, take straw (for) yourself from which you will find, given that (not) a (thing) will be taken away from your service,...
Concordant Literal Version	So the exactors of the people and their superintendents went forth and spoke to the people, saying: Thus says Pharaoh: I am not giving crushed straw to you. As for you, go, take for yourselves crushed straw from whatever you may find, because there shall be nothing subtracted from your service.
Context Group Version	And the taskmasters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spoke to the people, saying, Thus says Pharaoh, I will not give you (pl) straw. Go yourselves, you (pl) get straw where you (pl) can find it: for nothing of your (pl) work shall be diminished.
Darby Translation <i>Emphasized Bible</i>	. Then went forth the taskmasters of the people and their overseers, and spake unto the people,—saying,—Thus, saith Pharaoh, I am not going to give you straw, Ye yourselves go fetch you straw, of any ye can find,—yet hath there not been diminished from your service a single thing.
English Standard Version	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	The taskmasters of the people and their officers went out, and they spoke to the people, saying, "Thus says Pharaoh, 'I will not give you straw. Go, get straw where you can find it, yet nothing of your work shall be diminished.' "
Modern KJV	.
NASB	.
New European Version	<b>The Israelites Abused Even More</b> The taskmasters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spoke to the people, saying, This is what Pharaoh says: 'I will not give you straw. Go yourselves, get straw where you can find it, for nothing of your work shall be diminished'.
New King James Version	And the taskmasters of the people and their officers went out and spoke to the people, saying, "Thus says Pharaoh: 'I will not give you straw. Go, get yourselves straw where you can find it; yet none of your work will be reduced.' "
New Standard Bible	So the taskmasters and the foremen of the people went out and said to the people, "Thus says Pharaoh, 'I will not give you straw. Go yourselves, get your straw wherever you can find it; but your work will not be lessened in the least.' "
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	.
Young's Updated LT	And the exactors of the people, and its authorities, go out, and speak unto the people, saying, "Thus said Pharaoh, I do not give you straw, ye—go ye, take for yourselves straw where you [all] find it, for there is nothing of your service diminished."

**The gist of this passage:**  
10-11

<b>Exodus 5:10a</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
nâgas (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-GAS</i> ]	<i>taskmasters, slave drivers; exacters; ruler, tyrant</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle construct form	Strong's #5065 BDB #620
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ, וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shôṭêr (שׁוֹטֵר) [pronounced <i>show-TARE</i> ]	<i>official, commissioned officer, officer; this word refers to an official or an officer who is not the highest in command, but holds a subordinate position</i>	masculine plural noun (this is actually a masculine plural, Qal active participle) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7860 BDB #1009

**Translation:** [So the taskmasters of the people and their foremen go out...](#)

So Pharaoh has either called them in and given them the word, or there are go-between's between the taskmasters and foremen and Pharaoh. Once they receive the word (it sounds like the taskmasters and foremen were called in to Pharaoh's palace for a ruling), then they will go out and tell their slaves of the new policy.

Exodus 5:10a [And the taskmasters of the people and their officers went out...](#)

In all organizations, there has to be a hierarchy; and, ideally speaking, a clear line of authority. Pharaoh would not go out and tell his slaves what ought to be done from day-to-day; he told the overseers and the Israeli foremen; and then they would go out and inform the people what was going on.

There were two primary sets of authority over the slaves: the taskmasters (who were Egyptians) and the overseers (who were fellow Hebrews). *Taskmaster* is nâgas (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced *naw-GAS*], which means *to drive [an animal, workman, debtor or army]*. By implication, it means *to tax, tyrannize or harass*. It is a verb, found here in the Qal active participle masculine plural construct. A participle acts as an adjectival noun (that is, it is a noun which often modifies another noun) or as a verbal adjective, and in the construct, it is also dependent upon another noun. The noun that this word modifies is the word for *people*. *Taskmasters of the people* is a reasonable translation and the *people's taskmasters* is even closer in meaning.

The second word is *shôṭêr* (שׁוֹטֵר) [pronounced *sho-TARE*], which comes from an unused primitive root word which means *to write*. Therefore, this means *writer* or *scribe*. However, in this context it would mean *an official, a foreman, a superintendent, an overseer*. I suspect that a part of their duties included a recording of what had been done on any given day by the people that they oversaw. They would report the number of bricks made by their crew; or the amount of wall or building completed by their crew.

So, Egyptian slave service was organized into levels of authority over the slaves; those who were constantly with the slaves while they did their work, seeing that everything was done as expected, and people above them who gave the directives, spot checked the work and the amount of production and reported back to Pharaoh when necessary. The writing is probably related to them keeping records of what work was done (for instance, how many bricks were produced).

It is not clear from "Strong's" which word is which, but v. 10 indicates that the *overseers* (or *foremen* or *officers*) were out in the field with the Jewish slaves and v. 14 indicates that these *overseers* were taken from the men of Israel. The Egyptians had found that it was better to set up levels of authority with the Hebrews themselves in those levels; that would possibly set up a buffer between the slave laborers and the taskmasters themselves. The point is that the Egyptian were very organized. They had to be. With two million slaves, they could not be haphazard about this. These were not primitive, two steps away from being cavemen civilization. Egypt was a highly organized, highly civilized nation. Two million slaves requires an incredible amount of organization.

I have had my own, very small business over the past 30 years, and on occasion, it involved coordinating 4 or 5 workers at the same time on a variety of projects (but sometimes on the same house). This requires great skill and organization (and, obviously, that is a very small number of workers). So, with two million slaves, there must be very skilled people in the hierarchy as well as excellent organization and paperwork. There must always be well-defined goals and projects to complete. Otherwise, there would be very large groups of men just standing about, unable to do what they were required to do. In any building project, there is a proper order which must be followed and coordinated. Quite obviously, when a modern house is build, the framing must be build before the windows are put in. You cannot have your window people standing around with nothing to do at a building project, where the framing has not already been done. A builder today does very little building; but he is a master at coordinating various groups of people, each of whom has his or her own particular skill which is put to use. Now, I don't know how many artisans are involved with building a house—but, as a guess, those who must be on-site might number 200. The builder has to carefully coordinate these 200 men so that they are not all there at the same time, and that things are done in order (the electrical work must be done before the sheetrock is install, for instance).

Pharaoh has 2 million Hebrews, at least half of whom are working as his slaves. Even though the construction of any building or wall is less complex than our homes are today, there still is the careful coordination of such a massive workforce. Pharaoh cannot have a quarter million slaves standing around with nothing to do.

### Exodus 5:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'amar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

Exodus 5:10b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
lâmed (ל) [pronounced lʹ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55

**Translation:** ...and spoke to the people, saying,...

So, the taskmasters probably gather a group of the elders or slaves with a higher ranking, and they receive the words of Pharaoh. It is certainly possible that all of the slaves were gathered, and various taskmasters and foremen spoke to their own groups.

Exodus 5:10c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced koh]	<i>so, thus, here, hence; now; in the meantime</i>	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
par <sup>e</sup> ôh (פַּרְעֹה) [pronounced pah <sup>r</sup> -GOH]	<i>great house; possibly hair head (indicating one of great age and therefore with wisdom and authority); transliterated pharaoh</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6547 BDB #829

This is in literary contrast to v. 1, where Moses and Aaron use the same language to describe God speaking to Pharaoh.

**Translation:** ...“Thus proclaims Pharaoh:...

The following laws have the ultimate authority behind them, the words of Pharaoh (the ultimate authority within Egypt).

Exodus 5:10d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'êyn (אין) [pronounced ān]	<i>nothing, not, [is] not; not present, not ready; expresses non-existence, absence or non-possession; [there is] no [none, not one, no one, not]</i>	particle of negation; substantive of negation; with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #369 BDB #34
nâthan (נתן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>is giving, granting, is placing, putting, setting; is making</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
The NET Bible: <i>The construction uses the negative particle combined with a subject suffix before the participle: אֵינִי נֹתֵן (enenni noten, "there is not I – giving").</i> <sup>34</sup>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
teben (תבן) [pronounced TE <sup>B</sup> -ven]	<i>straw, fodder; possibly chaff for building material</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8401 BDB #1061

**Translation:** ...'I [will] no longer give you straw.

I am not sure if the Hebrew is good here; but it certainly does communicate to the Hebrews the new policy. Pharaoh will no longer provide the straw. We do not know if slaves gathered the straw and brought it from the fields; but, whatever. Those who used to provide it, provide it no more.

Exodus 5:10 *So the taskmasters of the people and their foremen go out and spoke to the people, saying, "Thus proclaims Pharaoh: 'I [will] no longer give you straw. (Kukis mostly literal translation)*

There is apparently a very organized system of authorities. Pharaoh can speak to 2 or more men in his cabinet and lay down the law; but those actually in charge of the people and the supplies are a much larger group. So, immediately the edict of Pharaoh is spread across the land.

The taskmasters go out, gather together the slaves under them (or the representative leaders of their slaves) and announce Pharaoh's decision to make them gather the straw themselves.

Bear in mind that there are 2 million descendants of Israel and most of them are unaware of what is going on. They don't know who Moses and Aaron are; they don't know about this request for worship. On one day, things are normal and miserable; the next day when they get up and are gathered together in various groups, they find out that things are now abnormal and far more miserable than before. For the average Israelite, this would have quite disconcerting. No doubt, they would ask why, and they would hear something about Moses and Aaron going to speak to Pharaoh. No doubt, the people in general would place the blame on Moses and Aaron, who managed to step in and make their miserable lives even more miserable.

Pharaoh, by means of the Egyptian farmers, would no longer provide straw for the bricks.

<sup>34</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

## Exodus 5:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾattem (אַתֶּם) [pronounced aht-TEM]	<i>you all, you guys, you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
The NET Bible: <i>The independent personal pronoun emphasizes that the people were to get their own straw, and it heightens the contrast with the king. "You – go get."</i> <sup>35</sup>			
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>go, come, depart, walk; advance</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	<i>take, seize, take away, take in marriage; send for, fetch, bring, receive</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
teben (תֵּבֶן) [pronounced TE <sup>B</sup> -ven]	<i>straw, fodder; possibly chaff for building material</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8401 BDB #1061
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, the min preposition and the relative pronoun can mean <i>from where; from wherever; more than</i> .			
mâtsâ' (מָצָא) [pronounced maw-TSAW]	<i>to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover; to meet (encounter)</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
The NET Bible: <i>The tense in this section could be translated as having the nuance of possibility: "wherever you may find it," or the nuance of potential imperfect: "wherever you are able to find any."</i> <sup>36</sup>			

**Translation:** You yourselves will go out [and] you will fetch the straw for yourselves from wherever you [might] find [it].

The emphasis is on *you [plural]*. It is found in one way or another 5x in this verse. Pharaoh used to have things set up so that straw was provided for the bricks, to make them more cohesive. Now, those making the bricks were also responsible for finding the straw to make the bricks more cohesive.

The proclamation is the announcement directly to the Jews that they must obtain straw for themselves by themselves. Pharaoh, with his wording of this proclamation, is rubbing it in. In five places, the Pharaoh used the

<sup>35</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

<sup>36</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.



word *you* or the second masculine plural of the verbs. This verse also tells us who did what. The taskmasters were those who were in charge of the overseers and the slaves both. When proclamations and policies came down from the king (Pharaoh), the taskmasters and overseers announced them. The overseers then heard what they were responsible to expect from the Jews. Already, their expectations had been driven to a point where the Jews were no longer content with living in Egypt. In Ex. 1:11-14, we have seen that their labors were increased, but the Jews increased also. However, in Ex. 2:23–25, we see that their slavery had become a burden and the security which they received was no longer enough to compensate for the incredible work and degradation that they had to suffer.

### Exodus 5:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
'ēyn (אֵין) [pronounced <i>ān</i> ]	<i>nothing, not, [is] not; not present, not ready; expresses non-existence, absence or non-possession; [there is] no [none, not one, no one, not]</i>	particle of negation; substantive of negation	Strong's #369 BDB #34

With the *kîy* conjunction, we do not have a given meaning in BDB or in Gesenius. Literally, this would mean *for [there is] nothing, because [there is] not*; and together, these two words have been translated *that [they were] nowhere* [KJV, MKJV]; *that [they were] not* [LTHB]; *that [they were] nowhere [to be found]* [NKJV]; *they were not to be found* [ESV, Owen]; *that they were not found* [HNV, WEB]; *that they could not be found* [NASB]; *that they are not* [Young]; *they weren't there* [HCSB]. These means are taken from Psalm 73:2.

This is the first time that this combination is found in Scripture.

gâra' (עָרַב) [pronounced <i>gaw-RAHG</i> ]	<i>diminished, restrained, withdrawn; lessened, reduced</i>	Niphal participle	Strong's #1639 BDB #175
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'ăbôdâh (עֲבֹדָה) [pronounced <i>gû<sup>b</sup>-vo-DAWH</i> ]	<i>labour, work, service; possibly: bondage; enslavement</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5656 & #5647 BDB #715
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command; business, occupation; case; something; manner</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182

**Translation:** *Nevertheless [lit., for], your work will not be lessened at all [lit., a word, a thing].'* "

However, there would be no lessening of the requirements. However many bricks were required before are still required.

This is an extremely harsh and retaliatory policy.

The Pharaoh, like each preceding Pharaoh, increased their labors again with this proclamation. Having been a teacher, I would dread the beginning of each year after the legislature had met. There would always be additional

duties or changes which would make my job of teaching more and more difficult. Rarely did new legislation come down the pipe and cause us as teachers to exclaim, "This is great news." It was far worse for the Jews. With each succeeding Pharaoh, more and more burdens were imposed upon them.

As is true of all of the details in Exodus, this kind of cruelty is typical of that inflicted on slaves in Egypt. A French Egyptologist (M. Chabas) discovered some papyrus on which a story of twelve brick-making slaves who had failed to produce what was expected of them and had their work increased as punishment. This was not from this time period nor did it involve Jews; it is just corroborating evidence of the reasonableness of this narrative.

On the walls of one spacious vault there are a series of ancient paintings which depict the life of vizier Rekhmirê of Egypt. One has him overseeing the manufacturing of bricks and the workmen who are involved are light skinned as opposed to the darker skin of the Egyptians. An overseer is saying, by the inscription, "The rod is in my hand; be not idle."

Exodus 5:11 *You yourselves will go out [and] you will fetch the straw for yourselves from wherever you [might] find [it]. Nevertheless [lit., for], your work will not be lessened at all [lit., a word, a thing].'* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Their work was not to be reduced to make up for their gathering the straw for the bricks. Gathering straw was a lot of additional work, and removing this step in the process places the Israeli slaves in an impossible situation. Even if the Hebrew people wanted to reject their God and do just as Pharaoh demanded, they were physically unable to.

One of the things not recorded is, the response of the slave leaders to their taskmasters. "What is this all about? What's Pharaoh's beef?" Their questions would have been far more respectful than this, but that would have been the gist of their questions (as the Hebrew slave leaders know that those under them would have these same questions). It is logical that they would then be told what the problem is. "Your Moses and Aaron came to us demanding that you have time off to worship your God; so Pharaoh believes that you are idle and without enough work to do." This is certainly reasonable to assume. Very likely, the Hebrew slaves will come to understand that Moses and Aaron are the cause for their additional misery.

Exodus 5:10–11 *So the taskmasters of the people and their foremen go out and spoke to the people, saying, "Thus proclaims Pharaoh: 'I [will] no longer give you straw. You yourselves will go out [and] you will fetch the straw for yourselves from wherever you [might] find [it]. Nevertheless [lit., for], your work will not be lessened at all [lit., a word, a thing].'* " (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 5:10–11 *So the taskmasters of the people and their foremen all went out and spoke to the people, "Thus proclaims Pharaoh: 'I will no longer provide straw for your bricks. From hereon out, you must go out and find your own straw. You will bring this straw back to the job site from wherever you might find it. Nevertheless, your work requirement will not be reduced.'* " (Kukis paraphrase)

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[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

## The Slaves Are Unable to Complete the Required Work

Many translations split these verses up into separate paragraphs, as v. 12 is narrative and v. 13 is a quotation from the Egyptian taskmasters.

And so scatters abroad the people in all a land of Egypt, to gather stubble for the straw. And the taskmasters, they are urging, to say, "Complete your works a word of a day in his day as which in [there] being the straw."

Exodus  
5:12–13

The people, therefore, scatter [themselves] throughout all the land of Egypt to gather up stubble to replace [lit., *for*] the straw. The taskmasters continue urging [them], saying, "Complete your duties, [your assigned] daily tasks [lit., *word, thing, matter*] as in the day when there was straw."

The people went out throughout the land of Egypt in order to find the stubble to replace the straw, now denied them. Their taskmasters pressured them, saying, "You need to finish your work, your daily tasks, exactly as you did previously when you were given straw."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so scatters abroad the people in all a land of Egypt, to gather stubble for the straw. And the taskmasters, they are urging, to say, "Complete your works a word of a day in his day as which in [there] being the straw."
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	And the people were scattered abroad over all the country of Mizraim to gather stubble for straw. And the masters were urgent, saying, Fulfil your work, the matter of a day in a day, as you did when straw was given to you.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And the people were scattered abroad in all the land of Mizraim to gather stubble for the straw. But the officers were pressing, saying, Fulfil your work day by day, as you did when the straw was given you.
Jerusalem targum	.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And the people was scattered through all the land of Egypt to gather straw. And the overseers of the works pressed them, saying: Fulfill your work every day as before you were wont to do when straw was given you.
Latin Vulgate	.
Plain English Aramaic Bible	.
Peshitta (Syriac)	So the people were scattered throughout all the land of Egypt to gather the stubble. And the taskmasters pressed them, saying, Complete your work as you have always done, as when straw was given to you.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	.
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	And the people scattered throughout the land of Egypt to gather and pitch the straw [Lit. Ar. idiomatic expression: "To pitch the pitching of the straw."]. And the authorities [Lit. Ar. id.: also: "Governors.")] pressed them, saying, "Complete your task like always [Lit. Ar. idiomatic figure of speech: "According to every season."], as if you were given the straw."
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	So the people were dispersed through all the land of Egypt to collect stubble instead of straw. And the task masters urged them saying, Compleat the customary daily tasks as when straw was furnished you.
Septuagint (Greek)	So the people were dispersed in all the land of Egypt, to gather stubble for straw. and the taskmasters hastened them, saying, Fulfil your regular daily tasks, even as when straw was given you.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	So the people were sent in all directions through the land of Egypt to get dry grass for stems. And the overseers went on driving them and saying, Do your full day's work as before when there were dry stems for you.
Easy English	So the people went everywhere in the land of Egypt, to get straw from the fields. The slaves' masters made the Israelites work fast. They said: 'Finish your work for each day, as when you had straw.'
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	So the people went everywhere in Egypt looking for straw. The slave masters forced the people to work even harder. They forced the people to make as many bricks as before.
God's Word™	So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble for straw. The slave drivers kept hurrying them. They said, "Finish the same amount of work each day, just as when you had straw."
Good News Bible (TEV) <i>The Message</i>	. The people scattered all over Egypt scabbling for straw. The slave-drivers were merciless, saying, "Complete your daily quota of bricks—the same number as when you were given straw."
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	.
Contemporary English V.	The slaves went all over Egypt, looking for straw. But the slave bosses were hard on them and kept saying, "Each day you have to make as many bricks as you did when you were given straw."
The Living Bible	So the people scattered everywhere to gather straw. The taskmasters were brutal. "Fulfill your daily quota just as before," they kept demanding.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	.
New Life Version	So the people went out through all the land of Egypt to gather what they could use for straw. The men who made them work made them hurry, saying, "Finish your full day's work as you did when there was straw."
New Living Translation	So the people scattered throughout the land of Egypt in search of stubble to use as straw. Meanwhile, the Egyptian slave drivers continued to push hard. "Meet your daily quota of bricks, just as you did when we provided you with straw!"

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So the people were scattered all over the land of Egypt as they gathered stubble for straw. And the taskmasters kept pushing them, saying, 'You aren't meeting the quotas you had when [we were providing] the straw.'
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And the people found themselves scattered all over Egypt gathering straw; and still the overseers were urgent with them: Finish those daily tasks of yours, as you did when the straw was found.
Translation for Translators	So the Israeli people went all over Egypt to find straw. 13 The slave bosses kept telling them insistently, "Finish the work you are required to do each day, <i>making the same amount of bricks as you did before, when we gave you straw!</i> "

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	The people were to disperse on the solid grounds of Egypt, to gather stubble for straw. They driving were to press, to the intent: You were to complete the work, the day's concern, as if there is to be straw.
Conservapedia	So the people went all around Egypt to rake together stubble to use for crushed straw. And their taskmasters rushed them, saying, "Finish your work every day, just as you used to when there was straw."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	So the people were scattered all over the land of the Mitzeraim to seek stubble instead of straw. Yet the drivers ordered them, saying, " Complete your appointed work day by day in the production of bricks."
God's Truth (Tyndale)	Then the people scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt for to gather them stubble to be instead of straw. And the taskmasters hastened them forward saying: fulfil your work day by day, even as when straw was given you.
HCSB	So the people scattered throughout the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. The overseers insisted, "Finish your assigned work each day, just as you did when straw was provided."
Jubilee Bible 2000	Go ye, gather firewood where ye can find it; yet none of your work shall be diminished. So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather brush for firewood.
H. C. Leupold	.
Lexham English Bible	.
NIV, ©2011	.
Urim-Thummim Version	.
Wiki Bible	And the people spread out over the entire land of Egypt, to cut down dried grass for straw. And the bosses were quick to say: "Finish your tasks each day the day's, as when there was straw."

### **Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

Christian Community (1988)	.
The Heritage Bible	And the people were forcibly scattered throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw. And those who drove them pressed them, saying, Finish your works, your day to day word, as when there was straw.
New American Bible (2002)	.
New American Bible (2011)	.
New English Bible	So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble for straw, while the overseers kept urging them on, bidding them complete, day after day, the same quantity as when straw was supplied.
New Jerusalem Bible	So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble for their straw. The taskmasters harassed them. 'You must complete your daily quota,' they said, 'just as when the straw was there.'
New RSV	.
Revised English Bible	So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble for the straw they needed, while the slave-masters kept urging them on, demanding that they should complete, day after day, the same quantity as when straw had been supplied.

### **Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Complete Jewish Bible	So the people were dispersed throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. The slavemasters kept pressing them. "Keep working! Make your daily quota, just as when straw was provided."
The Complete Tanach	So the people scattered throughout the entire land of Egypt, to gather a gleanings for stubble.



**to gather a gleaning for stubble:** Heb. שֶׁקַל שֶׁקַל, to gather a gathering, to collect a collection for the stubble [needed] for the clay.

**a gleaning:** Heb., שֶׁקַל an expression of collecting. Since it is a substance that scatters and requires collecting, it is called שֶׁקַל in other places [also].

And the taskmasters were pressing [them], saying, "Finish your work, the requirement of each day in its day, just as when there was stubble."

**were pressing [them]:** Heb אָצְדוּ, pressing-[from Targumim]

**the requirement of each day in its day:** The quota of each day complete in its [i.e., on the same day, as you did when the stubble was prepared. — [from Onkelos]

exeGesés companion Bible

...- and the people scatter throughout all the land of Misrayim to gather stubble instead of straw. And the exactors hasten them, saying, Finish your works, your day by day words, as when there is straw.

Hebraic Roots Bible

And the people scattered in all the land of Egypt to pick up stubble for straw. And the taskmasters were demanding, saying, Finish your work, the matter of a day in its day, as when there was straw.

JPS (Tanakh—1985)  
Judaica Press Complete T.  
Kaplan Translation

.  
The people spread out all over Egypt to gather grain stalks for straw. The administrators pressured them and said, 'You must complete your daily work quota, just as before when there was straw.'

Orthodox Jewish Bible

So HaAm were scattered abroad throughout kol Eretz Mitzrayim to gather stubble instead of straw. And the nogesim pressed them, saying, Fulfil your ma'asim, your daily tasks, as when there was straw.

*The Scriptures* 1998

And the people were scattered in all the land of Mitsrayim – to gather stubble for straw. And the slave-drivers were hurrying them on, saying, "Complete your work, your daily amount, as when there was straw."

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

*The Amplified Bible*

So the people were scattered throughout the land of Egypt to gather stubble to use for straw. And the taskmasters pressured them, saying, "Finish your work, [fulfill] your daily quotas, just as when there was straw [given to you]."

The Expanded Bible

So the people ·went everywhere in [·scattered throughout] Egypt ·looking for dry stalks [·gathering stubble] to use for straw. The slave masters ·kept forcing the people to work harder [·were urgent]. They said, "You must ·make just as many bricks [·finish your work, the same daily assignment] as you did when you were given straw."

The Geneva Bible  
Kretzmann's Commentary

.  
So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw. They did not even have access to straw-stacks, but were obliged to go out into the harvested fields and collect the stubble. And the taskmasters hastened them, urged them forward vehemently, saying, Fulfil your works, your daily tasks, the amount of labor which had been allotted them day by day, for each day, as when there was straw, when the necessary material for binding the clay was furnished.



NET Bible®	So the people spread out through all the land of Egypt to collect stubble for straw. The slave masters were pressuring [Or “pressed.”] them, saying, “Complete your work for each day, just like when there was straw!”
The Pulpit Commentary Syndein/Thieme	.
The Voice	The people <i>quickly and desperately</i> spread out across the land of Egypt looking for dry stalks of <i>grain</i> to use for straw. The slave drivers pushed them hard. <b>Slave Drivers:</b> <i>Hurry</i> , you must meet your quotas. You must produce the same number of bricks as you did before when we provided you with straw.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and the people scattered abroad in all the land of "Mits'rayim <sup>Two straits</sup> to collect stubble (for) straw, and the pushers were compelling, saying, finish your work, it is a (matter) of the day in his day , <just as> (with) the existence of the straw,...
Concordant Literal Version	Hence the people scattered in all the land of Egypt to rake together straw for crushed straw. And the exactors were rushing, saying: Finish your tasks, a day's tally in its day, just as when there was crushed straw given to you.
Context Group Version	So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. And the taskmasters were urgent saying, Fulfill your (pl) works, [your (pl)] daily tasks, as when there was straw.
Darby Translation <i>Emphasized Bible</i>	.
English Standard Version	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	So the people scattered through all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. The taskmasters pressed them, saying, “Complete your work quota [Lit <i>works</i> ], your daily amount [Lit <i>the matter of a day in its day</i> ], just as when you had [Lit <i>there was</i> ] straw.”
New European Version	.
New King James Version	.
New Standard Bible	So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt, to gather stubble for straw. The taskmasters were urgent, saying, "Complete your work, your daily task, as when there was straw."
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Third Millennium Bible	So the people were scattered abroad throughout all the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw. And the taskmasters hastened them, saying, "Fulfill your works, your daily tasks, as when there was straw."
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	.
Young's Updated LT	And the people are scattered over all the land of Egypt, to gather stubble for straw, and the exactors are making haste, saying, “Complete your works, the matter of a day in its day, as when there is straw.”

### The gist of this passage:

vv. 12-13

## Exodus 5:12

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
pûwts (פוט) [pronounced poots]	<i>to scatter, to send abroad; to agitate [harass] [anyone]; to pour out [used metaphorically of anger]; to spread oneself abroad; to cause [things] to be scattered [dispersed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #6327 BDB #806
The NET Bible: <i>The verb וַיַּפֵּץ (vayyafets) is from the hollow root פָּץ (puts) and means "scatter, spread abroad."</i> <sup>37</sup>			
'am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun; with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
Literally, <i>in all</i> . Although I don't have this in the lexicons, it is rendered by the most literal translations as <i>among all, through all, throughout all, with all</i> .			
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
Mits <sup>e</sup> rayim (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced mits-RAH-yim]	<i>double straights; transliterated Mizraim; also Egypt, Egyptians</i>	masculine singular, proper noun	Strong's #4714 BDB #595
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qâshash (קָשַׁשׁ) [pronounced kaw-SHASH]	<i>to gather [assemble, collect] straw, stubble and/or sticks</i>	Poel infinitive construct	Strong's #7197 BDB #905
qash (קָשׁ) [pronounced kahsh]	<i>stubble, chaff, that which is flammable(?), worthless and harmless</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7179 BDB #905

<sup>37</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

## Exodus 5:12

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
teben (תֵּבֶן) [pronounced TE <sup>B</sup> -ven]	<i>straw, fodder; possibly chaff for building material</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #8401 BDB #1061

**Translation:** The people, therefore, scatter [themselves] throughout all the land of Egypt to gather up stubble to replace [lit., for] the straw.

The Jews were, therefore, required to find anything that they could that would replace the straw which they no longer had access to. Any sort of solid material—here called stubble—was searched out, and used in the brick to both hold it together and to make it stronger.

The Jews organized themselves or their taskmasters organized them, so that some of them spent their days searching out stubble to be used in the brick making.

The gathering of straw was like a second job. These Jews already had a grueling, schedule to maintain. Now they had to gather the straw. Furthermore, the taskmasters informed their foremen, and the foremen informed the Jewish slaves that the quotas must remain the same. This is not unlike a factory which has laid off half of its work force, but demands the same production of those who remain. There are times that there is fat to trim; however, with the Jews, they were already overworked. What was given to them was impossible to accomplish.

Exodus 5:12 The people, therefore, scatter [themselves] throughout all the land of Egypt to gather up stubble to replace [lit., for] the straw. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The people had to go out through the land of Egypt to find anything like straw in order to make the bricks. They needed something to hold the clay together.

There was just no easy substitute; and considerable amount of time would have been given over to finding and collecting such a substitute. An agricultural society which grows grain would have a plethora of straw to offer; but take that away, and there does not remain any easy replacement.

The problem is, in Egypt's agrarian society, there is a lot of straw (waste from growing grains or corn); and that is plentiful and already gathered in great quantities, as being left over from separating out the grain. When there was this cooperation between the Egyptian farmers (or whoever was doing the work) and the Hebrew brick makers, a great many bricks could be produced. But cutting off this source of straw made what Pharaoh demanded an impossible task. This new mandate by Pharaoh actually reduced the number of bricks produced.

As an aside, what Pharaoh now requests reveals just how vindictive and short-sighted his edict is. He acts concerned about the quantity of work of his slaves and how their temporary leaving would be a loss for Egypt—and yet, his edict effectively reduces slave morale and reduces their actual output. It seems to me that any reasonably intelligent man would understand this; but Pharaoh seems to be far more interested in punishing the Hebrew people than increasing (or even maintaining) their work output. From the very beginning, Pharaoh's negative volition against the Hebrew people (and their God) was quite pronounced.

## Exodus 5:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâgas (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-GAS</i> ]	<i>taskmasters, slave drivers; exacters; ruler, tyrant</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #5065 BDB #620
'ûwts (אוֹצֵט) [pronounced <i>oots</i> ]	<i>the ones urging, those pressing, the ones hastening, those hurrying [along] [pressing anyone on], those being pressed, the ones confined [making haste]</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #213 BDB #21
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
kâlâh (כָּלָה) [pronounced <i>kaw-LAWH</i> ]	<i>complete, finish; prepare; come to an end; consume, waste, destroy, annihilate; make pine away</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Piel imperative	Strong's #3615 BDB #477
The NET Bible: כָּלֵךְ ( <i>kallu</i> ) is the Piel imperative; the verb means "to finish, complete" in the sense of filling up the quota. <sup>38</sup>			
ma'āsîym (מַעֲשֵׂימ) [pronounced <i>mah-ġuh-SEEM</i> ]	<i>deeds, works, production, that which is produced or done [crops, property, goods]; profession, occupation</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4639 BDB #795

**Translation:** The taskmasters continue urging [them], saying, "Complete your duties,..."

The taskmasters urged or pressured them, telling them that their duties must be completed.

## Exodus 5:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command; business, occupation; case; something; manner</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1697 BDB #182

<sup>38</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

## Exodus 5:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	day; time; today or this day (with a definite article); possibly immediately	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	day; time; today or this day (with a definite article); possibly immediately	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced k <sup>e</sup> ]	like, as, according to; about, approximately	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	that, which, when, who, whom; where	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, ka'ăsher (כְּאֲשֶׁר) [pronounced kah-uh-SHER] means as which, as one who, as, like as, as just, according as; because; according to what manner, in a manner as, when, about when. Back in 1Sam. 12:8, I rendered this for example. In Gen. 44:1, I have translated this, as much as.			
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
teben (תֵּבֵן) [pronounced TE <sup>B</sup> -ven]	straw, fodder; possibly chaff for building material	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #8401 BDB #1061

**Translation:** ...[your assigned] daily tasks [lit., word, thing, matter] as in the day when there was straw.”

The actual Hebrew here is not difficult, but these words are used in a different way than we normally find them. We have the phrase a word of a day, which appears to be mostly translated [your] daily task.

Exodus 5:13 The taskmasters continue urging [them], saying, “Complete your duties, [your assigned] daily tasks [lit., word, thing, matter] as in the day when there was straw.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Their taskmasters made it clear that their work output had to remain the same, by decree of Pharaoh. However, they had to personally gather a key component ingredient themselves. Before, there apparently was straw provided for them; or there were places that they would go, and there would be bundles of straw waiting there for them. But now, there is no easy substitute to be found. And they certainly do not have the time to collect it. No doubt, already, Pharaoh had been requiring as much out of them as he could get.

What was no doubt frustrating is, once the Pharaoh made an edict, he was not going to back down. Kings did not make laws and then decide, *that does not seem to be working, so let me revise*. Most societies believed their



kings to either be a deity of sorts or have the approval of deities to be in that position (which belief persisted for a long time, as the concept of the divine right of kings was a part of society in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries—although, some of that philosophy came from elsewhere). Yet, if one logically considers what Pharaoh has done—he has guaranteed that there would be a decreased work output and great frustration among his slaves.

Exodus 5:12–13 The people, therefore, scatter [themselves] throughout all the land of Egypt to gather up stubble to replace [lit., *for*] the straw. The taskmasters continue urging [them], saying, “Complete your duties, [your assigned] daily tasks [lit., *word, thing, matter*] as in the day when there was straw.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 5:12–13 The people went out throughout the land of Egypt in order to find the stubble to replace the straw, now denied them. Their taskmasters pressured them, saying, “You need to finish your work, your daily tasks, exactly as you did previously when you were given straw.” (Kukis paraphrase)

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Summary of vv. 1–13: Moses and Aaron have come before Pharaoh and have requested that all Israel be given time to leave Egypt and worship their God, separate and away from Egypt. Not only does Pharaoh refuse, but he increases the workload of his Hebrew slaves by making them find their own straw with which to make bricks. At the same time, they were not to decrease the number of bricks produced—all by order of Pharaoh. So Pharaoh laid an impossible task upon the Hebrew slaves.

Because these requirements could not be met, this was the result of Pharaoh’s edict:

**And so are beaten foremen of sons of Israel whom had set over them taskmasters of Pharaoh, to say, “Why have you [all] not completed your task to make bricks as yesterday three days ago, both yesterday and the day?”**

Exodus  
5:14

**The foremen from the sons of Israel (placed over them by Pharaoh’s taskmasters) were then beaten, saying, “Why have you [all] not completed your task to make bricks as before, today just like yesterday [lit., *both yesterday and today*]?”**

**The Israelite foremen, given authority by Pharaoh’s taskmasters, were then beaten. The taskmasters demanded, “Why have you not completed your task as you did previously? Why are you not making bricks today as you did yesterday?”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so are beaten foremen of sons of Israel whom had set over them taskmasters of Pharaoh, to say, “Why have you [all] not completed your task to make bricks as yesterday three days ago, both yesterday and the day?”
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	And the masters whom Pharaoh set over the sons of Israel smote them, saying, Why do you not fulfil your requirement to cast bricks as heretofore, as yesterday, so also to-day?
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And the exactors whom Pharaoh set over them as officers beat the sons of Israel, saying, Why have not you fulfilled your appointment, to cast (the same number of) bricks as heretofore, to-day as yesterday?
Jerusalem targum	.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And they that were over the works of the children of Israel were scourged by Pharaoh's taskmasters, saying: Why have you not made up the task of bricks both yesterday and to day as before?
Latin Vulgate	.



Plain English Aramaic Bible Peshitta (Syriac)	.	And the scribes of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had appointed over them, were beaten, and demanded, Why have you not completed your quota of bricks both yesterday and today, as heretofore?
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	.	The officers of the B'nai Yisrael, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, and demanded, "Why have you not fulfilled your quota both yesterday and today, in making brick as before?"
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	.	And the scribes of the Children of Israel were chastised, whom the authorities of the Pharaoh had set over them, saying, "Wherefore did you not complete the quota of bricks according to before and as usual, just as you did not today."
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	.	And when they beat the clerks of the nation of the Israelites who were set over them by the officers of Pharaoh and said, Why have you not as heretofore completed your tasks of brick making to day ?
Septuagint (Greek)	.	And the accountants of the race of the children of Israel, who were set over them by the masters of Pharaoh, were scourged, {and questioned,} * men saying, Why have you not fulfilled your rates of brick-work as yesterday and the third day, to-day also?
Brenton's Septuagint	.	.

Significant differences:

#### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	.	And the responsible men of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh's overseers had put over them, were given blows, and they said to them, Why have you not done your regular work, in making bricks as before?
Easy English	.	Pharaoh's slave masters hit the leaders who had authority over the people. They said to them: 'Why have you not made as many bricks today, as you did before?'
Easy-to-Read Version—2006	.	The Egyptian slave masters had chosen the Hebrew foremen and had made them responsible for the work the people did. The Egyptian slave masters beat these foremen and said to them, "Why aren't you making as many bricks as you made in the past? If you could do it then, you can do it now!"
God's Word™	.	Pharaoh's slave drivers had placed Israelite foremen in charge of the people. The slave drivers beat the foremen and said, "You didn't finish all the bricks you were ordered to make yesterday or today. Why didn't you make as many as you used to?"
Good News Bible (TEV) <i>The Message</i>	.	The Israelite foremen whom the slave-drivers had appointed were beaten and badgered. "Why didn't you finish your quota of bricks yesterday or the day before—and now again today?"
Names of God Bible NIRV	.	The slave drivers whipped the Israelite overseers they had appointed. The slave drivers asked, "Why haven't you made the same number of bricks yesterday or today, just as before?"
New Simplified Bible	.	.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	.	.
Contemporary English V.	.	The bosses beat the men in charge of the slaves and said, "Why didn't you force the slaves to make as many bricks yesterday and today as they did before?"
The Living Bible	.	Then they whipped the Israeli work-crew bosses. "Why haven't you fulfilled your quotas either yesterday or today?" they roared.
New Berkeley Version	.	.

New Century Version	.
New Life Version	And the Hebrew men who had been made to rule over the people by Pharaoh's work-leaders were beaten. They were asked, "Why have you not made as many clay blocks yesterday or today as you made before?"
New Living Translation	Meanwhile, the Egyptian slave drivers continued to push hard. "Meet your daily quota of bricks, just as you did when we provided you with straw!" they demanded. Then they whipped the Israelite foremen they had put in charge of the work crews. "Why haven't you met your quotas either yesterday or today?" they demanded.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And then the supervisors who were assigned over the children of Israel by Pharaoh's governors were whipped... and they were asked: 'Why aren't you meeting your brick-making quotas as you did yesterday and three days ago?'
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard Version	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	The foremen, who were Israelites, must undergo a beating, now, from Pharaoh's overseers, who asked them why the full tale of bricks had not been made up these two days past, as it was formerly.
Translation for Translators	<i>When they were not able to do that</i> , the slave bosses had the <i>Israeli</i> supervisors beaten with sticks, and they asked them, "Why have <i>all the men you are supervising</i> not been able to make the same number of bricks today/now as <i>they did</i> before [RHQ]?"

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	They being officials, over the sons of Israel, of Pharaoh, they that are to have been set as they driving, were beating them, to the intent: You are to have finished that prescribed, in that to make white bricks, formerly as today, even three days ago, formerly.
Bible in Modern English Conservapedia	. The superintendents [The word translates as "superintendents," not "officers" or even "leaders."] of the Sons of Israel, which Pharaoh's taskmasters had appointed, were beaten, and asked, "Why haven't you finished your quotas in making bricks today and yesterday, as you did before?"
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	And the overseers who were set over the children of Israel were flogged by the drivers of Pharaoh, who demanded ; " Why have you not completed the stipulated number of bricks as formerly was done, before this ? "
God's Truth (Tyndale)	.
HCSB	.
Jubilee Bible 2000	.
H. C. Leupold	.
Lexham English Bible	.
NIV, ©2011	.
Tree of Life Version	Moreover the foremen of <i>Bnei-Yisrael</i> , whom Pharaoh's slave masters had set over them, were beaten and asked, "Why haven't you met your quota of bricks, both yesterday and today like before?"
Unlocked Literal Bible	Pharaoh's taskmasters beat the Israelite foremen, those same men whom they had put in charge of the workers. The taskmasters kept asking them, "Why have you not produced all the bricks required of you, either yesterday and today, as you used to do in the past?"
Urim-Thummim Version	.

WikiBible And the officers struck the sons of Israel, that the bosses of Pharaoh were placed over, saying "Why did you not fill your part of bricks, as yesterday and the day before? As yesterday, so today."

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) The taskmasters beat the Israelite foremen they had placed over the people saying, "Why haven't your people completed the same amount of work as before?"

The Heritage Bible And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's drivers had put over them, were struck, saying, Why have you not finished your enactment in making brick both yesterday and today as in past days?

New American Bible (2002) .

New American Bible (2011) .

New English Bible .

New Jerusalem Bible .

New RSV .

Revised English Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible The foremen of the people of Isra'el, whom Pharaoh's slavemasters had appointed to be over them, were flogged and asked, "Why haven't you fulfilled your quota of bricks yesterday and today, as you did formerly?"

The Complete Tanach And the officers of the children of Israel whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had appointed over them were beaten, saying, "Why have you not completed your quota to make bricks like the day before yesterday, neither yesterday nor today?"

**And the officers of the children of Israel... were beaten:** The officers were Israelites, and they had pity on their fellows, [and did] not press them. They would turn the bricks over to the taskmasters, who were Egyptians, and when something was missing from the [required] amount, they [the Egyptians] would flog them [the officers] because they did not press the workers. Therefore those officers merited to become the Sanhedrin, and some of the spirit that was upon Moses was taken and placed upon them, as it is said: "Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel" (Num. 11:16), of those about whom you know the good that they did in Egypt, "that they are the elders of the people and its officers" (ibid.). — [from Tanchuma, Beha'alothecha 13 and Sifrei, Beha'alothecha 92]

**And the officers of the children of Israel... were beaten:** [I. e.,] those whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had appointed as officers over them-saying, "Why, etc." Why were they beaten? Because they [the Egyptian taskmasters] said to them [the officers], "Why have you not completed either yesterday or today the fixed quota set upon you to make bricks, as [you did] the 'third yesterday'?" This is the day before yesterday, which was when they had been given stubble.

**were beaten:** Heb. וַיִּכּוּ. They were the object of an action. [The word is in the "hoph'al" conjugation, the recipient of the "hiph'il." ] They were beaten by others; the taskmasters beat them.

exeGeses companion Bible And the officers of the sons of Yisra El, whom the exactors of Paroh set over them, are smitten, saying, Why finish you not your statute of brickmaking both yesterday and today, as three yesters ago?

Hebraic Roots Bible .

JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And the foremen of the Israelites, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten. "Why," they were asked, "did you not complete the prescribed amount of bricks, either yesterday or today, as you did before?"
Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation Orthodox Jewish Bible	. . And the foremen of the Bnei Yisroel, which Pharaoh's nogesim had set over them, were beaten, and were asked, Why have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and today, as heretofore?
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i> The Expanded Bible	. The king's [ <sup>L</sup> Pharaoh's] slave masters had made the Israelite foremen [supervisors] responsible for the work the people did. The Egyptian slave masters beat these men and asked them, "Why aren't you making as many bricks as you made in the past [ <sup>L</sup> did you not complete the number of bricks yesterday and today, as you did before]?"
The Geneva Bible Kretzmann's Commentary	. And the officers of the children of Israel which Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, as their own subordinates, were beaten, and demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and today, as heretofore? When the number of bricks allotted to any company of the Israelites was not forthcoming, because it was a physical impossibility both to provide the straw and to make the bricks, the Jewish officers were held responsible and were punished.
NET Bible®	The Israelite foremen whom Pharaoh's slave masters had set over them were beaten and were asked, "Why did you not complete your requirement for brickmaking as in the past – both yesterday and today?"
The Pulpit Commentary Syndein/Thieme The Voice	. . Plus they beat and interrogated the supervisors of the Israelites, the Hebrews whom the slave drivers had appointed over the workers. <b>Slave Drivers:</b> <i>Why are you lagging behind? Why haven't you met your quotas of bricks yesterday or today as you did before?</i>

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and the dominators of the sons of "Yisra'el <sup>He turns El asider</sup> , which the pushers of "Paroh <sup>Great house</sup> placed upon them, were hit, saying, why did you not finish your custom to make bricks, (both) yesterday (and) <today> like <previously>?
Concordant Literal Version	Then the superintendents of the sons of Israel were being smitten, whom Pharaoh's exactors had placed over them, saying: For what reason did you not finish your statutory number of bricks both yesterday and today as you did heretofore?
Context Group Version	And the officers of the sons of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, and demanded, Why have you (pl) not fulfilled your (pl) task both yesterday and today, in making bricks as before?
Darby Translation <i>Emphasized Bible</i> English Standard Version	. . And the foremen of the people of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten and were asked, "Why have you not done all your task of making bricks today and yesterday, as in the past?"
Green's Literal Translation	And the overseers of the sons of Israel were beaten, those whom the taskmasters of Pharaoh had put over them, saying, Why have you not finished your appointed task, to make bricks as a day ago <i>and</i> the day before, both yesterday and today?

Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	.
New European Version	The officers of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten, and demanded questioned, Why haven't you fulfilled your quota both yesterday and today, in making brick as before?
New King James Version	Also the officers of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten and were asked, "Why have you not fulfilled your task in making brick both yesterday and today, as before?"
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	.
Young's Literal Translation	.
Young's Updated LT	And the authorities of the sons of Israel, whom the exactors of Pharaoh have placed over them, are beaten, saying, "Why have you [all] not completed your portion in making brick as before, both yesterday and today?"

**The gist of this passage:**

<b>Exodus 5:14a</b>			
<b>Hebrew/Pronunciation</b>	<b>Common English Meanings</b>	<b>Notes/Morphology</b>	<b>BDB and Strong's Numbers</b>
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i> ]	<i>to receive a blow, to be beaten, to be [fatally] wounded [killed, slain]; to be attacked and captured, to be struck with a disease [man or animal]; to be blighted [plant]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Hophal imperfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
shôṭêr (שׁוֹטֵר) [pronounced <i>show-TARE</i> ]	<i>official, commissioned officer, officer; this word refers to an official or an officer who is not the highest in command, but holds a subordinate position</i>	masculine plural noun (this is actually a masculine plural, Qal active participle); construct form	Strong's #7860 BDB #1009
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

## Exodus 5:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yis <sup>e</sup> râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom; where</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
sîym (שִׁימ) [pronounced <i>seem</i> ]; also spelled sūwm (שׁוּמ) [pronounced <i>soom</i> ]	<i>to put, to place, to set; to make; to appoint</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah!</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
nâgas (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-GAS</i> ]	<i>taskmasters, slave drivers; exacters; ruler, tyrant</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle; construct form	Strong's #5065 BDB #620
par <sup>e</sup> ôh (פַּרְעֹה) [pronounced <i>pahr<sup>e</sup>-GOH</i> ]	<i>great house; possibly hair head (indicating one of great age and therefore with wisdom and authority); transliterated pharaoh</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6547 BDB #829

**Translation:** The foremen from the sons of Israel (placed over them by Pharaoh's taskmasters) were then beaten,...

The foremen apparently as Israelites, who were given authority over the slaves. They would be, more or less, go-between of the taskmasters and the slaves. They had authority, they probably worked less, but they had to get their brothers to produce. These men were beaten. They had privilege; but then they had responsibilities as well.

Exodus 5:14a Also the officers of the children of Israel, whom Pharaoh's taskmasters had set over them, were beaten...

The system of authority worked like this. Over all was Pharaoh; under him were the taskmasters, Egyptians who oversaw whatever was being built. Under them were the Hebrew officers, who oversaw their own people and were able to communicate work orders when necessary. Apparently, when the workers were unable to do what was required, the Hebrew foremen (officers) were beaten. Here, they were beaten when the bricks were not produced in the same quantities (which was an impossible task).

This was actually quite clever on the part of Pharaoh. Obviously, if the entire Hebrew population was beaten, it would have taken a very long time, reduced production, and possibly would have caused a full-scale rebellion. Here, a representative few could be beaten, everyone would see it; and these are their brothers, so what happened could not be ignored.

Those in charge of production quotas were slaves also, as we see here; and when the production quotas were not being met, they were beaten. In today's business climate, a bonus might be withheld. At first, these



supervisory positions might have seemed to be the cushier jobs, but they took on the responsibility for the crews that they managed and for the quality and quantity of their production. When production was substandard or down, they were beaten.

<b>Exodus 5:14b</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
The NET Bible: <i>The quotation is introduced with the common word לַמֹּר (le'mor, "saying") and no mention of who said the question.</i> <sup>39</sup>			
maddu'a (מַדּוּעַ) [pronounced <i>mah-DOO-ahg'</i> ]	<i>why, wherefore, on what account; how come, and it is probably a contraction of a word which means what being known</i>	adverb	Strong's #4069 BDB #396
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
kâlâh (כָּלָה) [pronounced <i>kaw-LAWH</i> ]	<i>to complete, to finish; to prepare; to come to an end; to consume, to waste, to destroy, to annihilate; to make pine away</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #3615 BDB #477
chôq (חֹק) [pronounced <i>khoke</i> ]	<i>decree, that which is decreed; statute; boundary, defined limit; an appointed portion of labor, a task</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #2706 BDB #349
The key concept here is the setting of a boundary or a limit. In Gen. 47:22, this is translated <i>a fixed allowance</i> , given the context.			

**Translation:** ...saying, "Why have you [all] not completed your task..."

The foremen were beaten because they did not complete making the quota of bricks, which had not changed.

We may reasonably assume that a quota was always in effect—something which would have been a necessity when work could be measured—and that it was realistic in the past. It could be achieved. However, this new quota could not be achieved.

<sup>39</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

## Exodus 5:14c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâbab (לָבַב) [pronounced <i>law-BAHN</i> ]	<i>to make bricks</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #3835 BDB #526 & #527
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k</i> <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
t <sup>e</sup> môwl (לִּמְחָל) [pronounced <i>t<sup>e</sup>MOHL</i> ]	<i>yesterday; and is used figuratively for recently, formerly</i>	adverb	Strong's #8543 (and #865) BDB #1069
shil <sup>e</sup> shôwm (שְׁלֹשָׁיִם) [pronounced <i>shil-SHOHM</i> ]	<i>three days ago, the day before yesterday</i>	adverb	Strong's #8032 BDB #1026
Together, this preposition and two adverbs mean <i>as before, previously, formerly, heretofore</i> .			
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
t <sup>e</sup> môwl (לִּמְחָל) [pronounced <i>t<sup>e</sup>MOHL</i> ]	<i>yesterday; and is used figuratively for recently, formerly</i>	adverb	Strong's #8543 (and #865) BDB #1069
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day; time; today or this day (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

This is variously translated (in Ex. 5:14): *both yesterday and today* (ARV 2005, CGV, ISV); *formerly as today* (ASB); *as yesterday, so today* (WikiBible).

The NET Bible: *The idioms for time here are found also in 3:10 and 5:7-8. This question no doubt represents many accusations shouted at Israelites during the period when it was becoming obvious that, despite all their efforts, they were unable to meet their quotas as before.*<sup>40</sup>

**Translation:** ...to make bricks as before, today just like yesterday [lit., both yesterday and today]?"

Their task is described here as making bricks, just as they made them before. They are asked, *why can't you produce them today as you did previously?* Obviously, they cannot produce the same number of bricks if they are charged with getting the straw as well.

<sup>40</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 8, 2017.

Exodus 5:14 The foremen from the sons of Israel (placed over them by Pharaoh’s taskmasters) were then beaten, saying, “Why have you [all] not completed your task to make bricks as before, today just like yesterday [lit., *both yesterday and today*]?” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

They were given an impossible task to complete; and then beaten for being unable to complete it. No doubt Pharaoh knew that he was assigning an impossible task. He may have been short-sighted, but he was not a stupid man.

There was likely an intersection of men who were elders and officers. So, some of the men who went along with Moses and Aaron and now being beaten because of this requirement of Pharaoh.

Exodus 5:14 The Israelite foremen, given authority by Pharaoh’s taskmasters, were then beaten. The taskmasters demanded, “Why have you not completed your task as you did previously? Why are you not making bricks today as you did yesterday?” (Kukis paraphrase)

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Hebrew Foremen Unsuccessfully Appeal to Pharaoh

The NET Bible: *The last section of this event tells the effect of the oppression on Israel, first on the people (15-19) and then on Moses and Aaron (20-21). The immediate reaction of Israel was to cry to Pharaoh – something they would learn should be directed to God. When Pharaoh rebuffed them harshly, they turned bitterly against their leaders.*<sup>41</sup>

**And so come foremen of sons of Israel and so they cry unto Pharaoh, to say, “Why do you do thus to your servants? Straw—none is given to your servants and bricks, they are saying to us, ‘Make;’ and behold, your servants are beaten and she has sinned [against] your people [or, *your people have sinned*; possibly, *you sin against your own people*].”**

Exodus  
5:15–16

**The foremen from the sons of Israel come and cry unto Pharaoh, saying, “Why do you do this to your servants? [There is] no straw given to your servants and they are saying to us, ‘Make bricks!’ But listen, your servants are being beaten [yet it is] your people have sinned [or, *you sin against your people*; or *one has sinned against your people*].”**

**The foremen of the sons of Israel came before Pharaoh and cried for mercy, saying, “Why have you done this to your servants? You order us to make bricks, but there is no straw and we are then beaten. It is not we who have sinned!”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so come foremen of sons of Israel and so they cry unto Pharaoh, to say, “Why do you do thus to your servants? Straw—none is given to your servants and bricks, they are saying to us, ‘Make;’ and behold, your servants are beaten and she has sinned [against] your people [or, *your people have sinned*; possibly, *you sin against your own people*].”

Dead Sea Scrolls

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<sup>41</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.

Targum of Onkelos	And the overseers of the sons of Israel came and complained before Pharaoh, saying, Why hast thou done thus with thy servants? Thou hast not given thy servants straw, yet they say to us, Make bricks; and, behold, thy servants are beaten, and thy people sin against us.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And the foremen came, and cried before Pharaoh, saying, Why hast thou dealt thus with thy ser-vents ? Thou hast not given thy servants the straw, and (yet) say they to us, Make the bricks; and, behold, they beat thy servants, and the guilty treatment of thy people is strong: but it goeth up!
Jerusalem targum	.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And the officers of the children of Israel came, and cried out to Pharaoh, saying: Why deal you so with your servants? Straw is not given us, and bricks are required of us as before: behold we your servants are beaten with whips, and your people is unjustly dealt withal.
Latin Vulgate	.
Plain English Aramaic Bible	.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then the scribes of the children of Israel came and complained to Pharaoh, saying, Why are your servants treated in this manner? There is no straw given to your servants, and yet they say to us, Make bricks: and, behold, your servants are beaten; and you sin against your people.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	Then the officers of the B'nai Yisrael came and cried to Pharaoh, saying, "Why do you deal this way with your servants? No straw is given to your servants, and they tell us, 'Make brick!' and behold, your servants are beaten; but the fault is in your own people."
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	The scribes of the Children of Israel approached the Pharaoh and said, "Wherefore is this being done to your servants? The straw is being withheld from your servants and they tell us to cast bricks and, behold, your servants are being blamed; you are sinning against your nation."
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	The clerks of the children of Israel went and cried to Pharaoh saying, Why will you deal thus with your servants ? There is no straw giver* to your servants, yet they say to us, Make bricks. And lo! your servants are beaten. Will you then deal unjustly with your people?
Septuagint (Greek)	And the accountants of the children of Israel went in and cried to Pharaoh, saying, Why do you act thus to your servants? Straw is not given to your servants, and they tell us to make brick; and behold your servants have been scourged: you will therefore injure your people.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Then the responsible men of the children of Israel came to Pharaoh, protesting and saying, Why are you acting in this way to your servants? They give us no dry stems and they say to us, Make bricks: and they give your servants blows; but it is your people who are in the wrong.
Easy English	Then the Israelite leaders went to Pharaoh. They asked him: 'Why do you do these things to us, your servants? Our masters do not give us any straw. But they say "Make bricks!" Then they hit us. But it is your people that are doing wrong things.'
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	Then the Hebrew foremen went to Pharaoh. They complained and said, "We are your servants. Why are you treating us like this? You give us no straw, but you tell us to make as many bricks as before. And now our masters are beating us. Your people are wrong for doing this."
God's Word™	.

Good News Bible (TEV)	Then the foremen went to the king and complained, "Why do you do this to us, Your Majesty? We are given no straw, but we are still ordered to make bricks! And now we are being beaten. It is your people that are at fault."
<i>The Message</i>	The Israelite foremen came to Pharaoh and cried out for relief: "Why are you treating your servants like this? Nobody gives us any straw and they tell us, 'Make bricks!' Look at us—we're being beaten. And it's not our fault."
Names of God Bible NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	Finally, the men in charge of the slaves went to the king and asked: »Why are you treating us like this? »No one brings us any straw. Yet we are still ordered to make the same number of bricks. We are beaten with whips, and your own people are to blame.«

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Then the Israelite supervisors came and pleaded to Pharaoh, "Why do you treat your servants like this? No straw is supplied to your servants, yet they say to us, 'Make bricks!' Look at how your servants are being beaten! Your own people are to blame!"
Contemporary English V.	Finally, the men in charge of the slaves went to the king and said, "Why are you treating us like this? No one brings us any straw, but we are still ordered to make the same number of bricks. We are beaten with whips, and your own people are to blame."
The Living Bible	These foremen went to Pharaoh and pleaded with him. "Don't treat us like this," they begged. "We are given no straw and told to make as many bricks as before, and we are beaten for something that isn't our fault—it is the fault of your taskmasters for making such unreasonable demands."
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	.
New Life Version	Then the Hebrew men who made the people work went to Pharaoh and cried, "Why do you act this way toward your servants? There is no straw given to your servants. Yet they still say to us, 'Make clay blocks!' See, your servants are being beaten. But your own people are to blame."
New Living Translation	So the Israelite foremen went to Pharaoh and pleaded with him. "Please don't treat your servants like this," they begged. "We are given no straw, but the slave drivers still demand, 'Make bricks!' We are being beaten, but it isn't our fault! Your own people are to blame!"

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	As the result, the children of IsraEl's supervisors went to see Pharaoh, and asked him: 'Why are you treating your servants this way? You don't give us any straw, but you tell us to make bricks anyhow. And now {Look!} your servants have been whipped! Are you going to allow your people to be injured?'
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	<b><i>The Israelis' Appeal Rejected by Pharaoh</i></b> The Israeli supervisors came and cried out to Pharaoh, "Why are you doing this to us [Lit. <i>your servants</i> ; and so throughout the book]? No straw is being given to us, yet they're saying to us, 'Make bricks!' Look, we are being beaten. It's wrong how you are treating your people!"
New Advent (Knox) Bible	So the Israelite foremen went and complained to Pharaoh; Master, they cried, why dost thou treat us so? The straw is not being found for us any longer, and never a brick less demanded of us. Here are we, thy servants, beaten for it; there is no justice for this people of thine. The last clause in this verse means, according to the



Latin, 'wrong is being done to this people of thine', meaning Israel. The Hebrew text probably means, 'The fault lies with thy own people', meaning the Egyptians.

Translation for Translators

**The king refused to pay attention to the complaints of the Israelis**

Then the Israeli supervisors went to the king and complained, saying " *Your Majesty, why are you treating us this way? Now they are not giving us any straw for making bricks, but they keep commanding us to make bricks. And now sometimes they beat us. But it is the fault of your own slave bosses that we cannot make as many bricks as before!*"

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Awful Scroll Bible

They being officials, over the sons of Isra-el, were to come in and were to cry out to Pharaoh, to the intent: Was you to prepare this to your servants? - Is there straw being given to your servants? - They are to say: Be making bricks! -- even your servants are being beaten. The people are to have been made cleared.

Bible in Modern English  
Conservapedia

.  
Then the superintendents of the Sons of Israel came and cried out to Pharaoh [Going over someone's head is a risky proposition in any organization--and in the Egyptian slave system, in that particular crisis, that went double.], saying, "Why are you doing this to your servants? You give no crushed straw to us, your slaves, and tell us, 'Make bricks,' but then beat us - but the fault lies with your people, not ours!" [An even more risky thing to say.]

Ferrar-Fenton Bible

Then the overseers of the children of Israel appealed to Pharaoh, asking; " Why have you done this to your slaves? No straw is given to your slaves, yet they say to us, ' Make the bricks,' and your slaves are beaten, and your people injured."

God's Truth (Tyndale)

Then went the officers of the children of Israel and complained unto Pharaoh saying: wherefore deal you thus with your servants? there is no straw given unto your servants, and yet they say unto us: make brick. And lo, your servants are beaten, and your people is foul entreated.

HCSB  
Jubilee Bible 2000  
H. C. Leupold  
Lexham English Bible

**The Foremen Complain to Pharaoh and Moses, and Moses Complains to Yahweh**

And the foremen of the {Israelites} came and cried out to Pharaoh, saying, "Why do you treat your servants like this? Straw [is] not being given to your servants, but [they are] saying to us, 'Make bricks!' and, look, your servants [are] being beaten, but it is the fault of your people."

NIV, ©2011  
Tree of Life Version  
Urim-Thummim Version

.  
Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh saying, why have you dealt with your slaves this way? There is no straw given to your slaves and they say to us, make brick and then your slaves are beaten, you do therefore wrong your people.

WikiBible

**Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

Christian Community (1988)  
The Heritage Bible

.  
And the officers of the children of Israel came, and cried to Pharaoh, saying, Why have you done thus with your servants? There is no straw given to your servants, and they say to us, Make brick; and behold, your servants are struck; and the sin is in your own people.

New American Bible (2002)



New American Bible (2011)	<p><i>Complaint of the Foremen.</i></p> <p>Then the Israelite foremen came and cried out to Pharaoh: “Why do you treat your servants in this manner?”</p> <p><b>Cried out to Pharaoh:</b> the Hebrew verb translated “cry out” and its related noun are normally used of appeals to God by Moses (8:8; 14:15; 15:25; 17:4), the people (3:7, 9; 14:10), or an oppressed individual (22:22, 26). Here, by implication, these minor Israelite officials appeal to Pharaoh as if he were their God. See v. 10.</p> <p>No straw is supplied to your servants, and still we are told, ‘Make bricks!’ Look how your servants are beaten! It is you who are at fault.”</p>
New English Bible New Jerusalem Bible	<p>The Israelites' foremen went and appealed to Pharaoh. 'Why do you treat your servants like this?' they said. 'No straw is provided for your servants, yet still the cry is, "Make bricks!" And now your servants are being flogged! . . .'</p>
New RSV	<p>No straw is given to your servants, yet they say to us, “Make bricks!” Look how your servants are beaten! You are unjust to your own people [Gk Compare Syr Vg: Heb beaten, and the sin of your people].’</p>
Revised English Bible	<p>The foremen came and appealed to Pharaoh: “Why does your majesty treat us like this?” they said. “We are given no straw, yet they keep telling us to make bricks. Here are we being flogged, but the fault lies with your people.”</p>

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	<p>Then the foremen of the people of Isra’el came and complained to Pharaoh: “Why are you treating your servants this way? No straw is given to your servants, yet they keep telling us to make bricks. And now your servants are being flogged, but the fault lies with your own people.”</p>
The Complete Tanach	<p>So the officers of the children of Israel came and cried out to Pharaoh, saying, "Why do you do this to your servants? Stubble is not given to your servants, but they tell us, 'Make bricks,' and behold, your servants are beaten, and your people are sinning."</p>

**but they tell us, ‘Make bricks’:** The taskmasters [tell us]: “Make bricks, as many as the original number.”

**and your people are sinning:** Heb. מַעֲטָתָם, If it were vowelized with a “pattach” (תַּאֲטָת), I would say that it is connected, [i.e., in the construct state, and so it means:] and this thing is the sin of your people. However, since it is [vowelized with] a “kamatz” (תַּאֲטָת), it is a noun [in the absolute state], and this is its meaning: and this thing brings sin upon your people, as if it were written: מַעֲטָתָם, like “when they came to Beth-lehem (בֵּית לֶחֶם)” (Ruth 1:19), which is the equivalent of בֵּית לֶחֶם, and similarly with many [others].

exeGesés companion Bible	<p>Then the officers of the sons of Yisra El come and cry to Paroh, saying, Why work you thus with your servants? They give no straw to your servants and they say to us, Work brick! And behold, your servants are smitten; but the sin is in your own people.</p>
Hebraic Roots Bible JPS (Tanakh—1985)	<p>Then the foremen of the Israelites came to Pharaoh and cried: “Why do you deal thus with your servants? No straw is issued to your servants, yet they demand of us: Make bricks! Thus your servants are being beaten, when the fault is with your own people.”</p>
Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation	<p>The Israelite foremen came and protested to Pharaoh. 'Why are you doing this to us?' they said. 'We are no longer given straw, but we are told to make bricks. We</p>

are the ones being flogged, but it is your people's fault [Or, 'and it is a sin for your people' (Targum Yonathan; Rashi; Rashbam).].'

Orthodox Jewish Bible Then the foremen of the Bnei Yisroel came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying, Why dealest thou thus with thy vadam?  
There is no straw given unto thy avadim, and they say to us, Make brick. And, hinei, thy avadim are beaten; but the fault is in thine own people.

The Scriptures 1998 .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible .

The Expanded Bible

Then the Israelite foremen [supervisors] went to the king [<sup>l</sup>Pharaoh] and complained [protested], "Why are you treating us, your servants, this way? You give us [<sup>l</sup>your servants] no straw, but we are commanded to make bricks. Our slave masters beat us, but it is your own people's fault [offense; sin]."

The Geneva Bible .

Kretzmann's Commentary

Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants? It was an attempt to protest against the tyrannical injustice of the measure. There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick; and, behold, thy servants are beaten; but the fault is in thine own people, the sin is that of thy people. Their cry was an indirect complaint against the king himself, whom they did not dare to reproach outright.

NET Bible®

The Israelite foremen went and cried out to Pharaoh, "Why are you treating your servants this way? No straw is given to your servants, but we are told [*Heb* "[they] are saying to us," the line can be rendered as a passive since there is no expressed subject for the participle.], 'Make bricks!' Your servants are even being beaten, but the fault is with your people."

The Pulpit Commentary .

Syndein/Thieme .

The Voice

The supervisors of the Israelites *were unable to meet the demands and so they appealed to Pharaoh.*

**Supervisors (pleading with Pharaoh):** Why are you treating your servants this way? No more straw is being provided to your servants, yet the slave drivers keep yelling at us, "Make bricks!" And then your servants are beaten; it is your people who are at fault here, *not us.*

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans. ...and the dominators of the sons of "Yisra'el <sup>He turns El aside"</sup> came and they cried out to "Paroh <sup>Great house"</sup> saying, <why> will you do this to your servants in this way? (no) straw is being given to your servants, and they are saying to us, (make) bricks, and look, your servants are being hit, and it is an error of your people,...

Concordant Literal Version

Then the superintendents of the sons of Israel entered and cried to Pharaoh, saying: Why are you doing thus to your servants? Crushed straw is not being given to your servants. And of bricks, they are saying to us, Make them. And behold, your servants are being smitten, and your people are at fault.

Context Group Version

Then the officers of the sons of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, saying, Why do you deal thus with your slaves? There is no straw given to your slaves, and they say to us, Make bricks: and, look, your slaves are beaten; and your people will be wicked.

Darby Translation .

Emphasized Bible .

English Standard Version .

Green's Literal Translation .

Jack Ballinger's translation Modern English Version	.	Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, saying, "Why do you deal this way with your servants? There is no straw being given to your servants, and they say to us, 'Make brick.' And indeed, your servants are beaten, but the fault is in your own people."
Modern KJV NASB	.	Then the foremen of the sons of Israel came and cried out to Pharaoh, saying, "Why do you deal this way with your servants? There is no straw given to your servants, yet they keep saying to us, 'Make bricks!' And behold, your servants are being beaten; but it is the fault of your own people."
New European Version	.	
New King James Version	.	
Owen's Translation	.	
Ron Snider's Translation	.	
Stuart Wolf	.	
Third Millennium Bible	.	Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying, "Why dealest thou thus with thy servants? There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, 'Make brick!' And behold, thy servants are beaten, but the fault is in thine own people."
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.	Then the officers of the sons of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, saying, Why do you deal thus with your slaves? There is no straw given to your slaves, and they say to us, Make bricks: and, look, your slaves are beaten; and your people will be guilty.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.	
Webster's Bible Translation	.	
World English Bible	.	
Young's Literal Translation	.	
Young's Updated LT	.	And the authorities of the sons of Israel come in and cry unto Pharaoh, saying, "Why will you thus to your servants? Straw is not given to your servants, and they are saying to us, Make bricks, and lo, your servants are smitten—and your people has sinned."

**The gist of this passage:**

vv. 15-16

**Exodus 5:15a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance; to attain</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
shôṭêr (שׁוֹטֵר) [pronounced <i>show-TARE</i> ]	<i>official, commissioned officer, officer; this word refers to an official or an officer who is not the highest in command, but holds a subordinate position</i>	masculine plural noun (this is actually a masculine plural, Qal active participle); construct form	Strong's #7860 BDB #1009
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

## Exodus 5:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yis <sup>e</sup> râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i> ]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

**Translation:** [The foremen from the sons of Israel come...](#)

The foremen are those who are Hebrews, but they are over their own people. They have been beaten because the people have not made enough bricks; and the people did not make enough bricks, as they lacked straw.

## Exodus 5:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
tsâ'âq (צָעַק) [pronounced <i>tsaw-GAHK</i> ]	<i>to cry, to cry out [for help; when in distress], to call, to summon; to make an outcry</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6817 BDB #858
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
par <sup>e</sup> ôh (פַּרְעֹה) [pronounced <i>pahr<sup>e</sup>-GOH</i> ]	<i>great house; possibly hair head (indicating one of great age and therefore with wisdom and authority); transliterated pharaoh</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6547 BDB #829

**Translation:** [...and cry unto Pharaoh,...](#)

These foremen have been beaten and they have been asked to do the impossible, to make bricks as before, but this time, without the straw provided before.

## Exodus 5:15c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

## Exodus 5:15c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'āmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
māh (מַה) [pronounced maw]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
'āsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture; accomplish</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
The NET Bible: <i>The imperfect tense should be classified here with the progressive imperfect nuance, because the harsh treatment was a present reality.</i> <sup>42</sup>			
kôh (כֹּה) [pronounced koh]	<i>so, thus, here, hence; now; in the meantime</i>	adverb	Strong's #3541 BDB #462
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
<sup>e</sup> bâdîym (עַבְדֵימ) [pronounced ġe <sup>b</sup> -vaw-DEEM]	<i>slaves, servants; workers; underlings; subjects; slavery, bondage, servitude; this can mean military men, soldiers in the plural</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
In today's world, these people would be understood to be <i>workers, employees, hires</i> .			

**Translation:** ...saying, "Why do you do this to your servants?"

They ask Pharaoh, *why have you done this to your servants?* They have not yet specified what *this* is; but Pharaoh was likely expecting this and he is ready with an answer.

Exodus 5:15 **The foremen from the sons of Israel come and cry unto Pharaoh, saying, "Why do you do this to your servants?"** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The officers come to Pharaoh and they complain about the new policies. Although they more or less gave consent to Moses and what he did, they did not expect this kind of response from the Pharaoh.

These leaders of the slaves were able to get an audience with Pharaoh, to complain. Perhaps this was the moment that Pharaoh had been waiting for. This would give him the opportunity to separate the Hebrew people from Moses and Aaron.

<sup>42</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.

## Exodus 5:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
teben (תֵּבֶן) [pronounced <i>TE<sup>B</sup>-ven</i> ]	<i>straw, fodder; possibly chaff for building material</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8401 BDB #1061
'êyn (אֵין) [pronounced <i>ān</i> ]	<i>nothing, not, [is] not; not present, not ready; expresses non-existence, absence or non-possession; [there is] no [none, not one, no one, not]</i>	particle of negation; substantive of negation	Strong's #369 BDB #34
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>is given, being delivered, is given forth [as law]; being made</i>	Niphal participle	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
<sup>e</sup> bâdîym (עֲבָדִים) [pronounced <i>ġe<sup>b</sup>-vaw-DEEM</i> ]	<i>slaves, servants; workers; underlings; subjects; slavery, bondage, servitude; this can mean military men, soldiers in the plural</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

In today's world, these people would be understood to be *workers, employees, hires*.

**Translation:** [There is] no straw given to your servants...

There was no way that they could complete the task asked of them, because they had no straw.

## Exodus 5:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
l <sup>e</sup> bênâh (לֵבְנַיִם) [pronounced <i>leb-ay-NAW</i> ]	<i>a brick, a tile, a pavement</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #3843 BDB #527
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>the ones saying, those speaking, the persons saying [to oneself], those who are thinking</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510



## Exodus 5:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘āsâh (אָסַח) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>do, make, construct, produce, fashion, form, prepare, manufacture</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

**Translation:** ...and they are saying to us, 'Make bricks!'

They were told to make bricks, but without straw.

I took some liberties with the translation here, which more accurately reads: ...and bricks, they are saying to us, 'Make;'...

## Exodus 5:16c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i> ]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, exclamatory particle, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243

Literally, these two words mean *and behold*. An argument could be made that this wâw conjunction plus the demonstrative could be translated *and suddenly...*; or, *and he saw that...*, or, *he observed [that]...*, or, *he realized [that]...* In Gen. 40:16, Owens translates this, *there were*.

The NET Bible: הִנֵּה (*hinneh*) draws attention to the action reflected in the passive participle מִכִּיּוֹם (*mukkim*): "look, your servants are being beaten."<sup>43</sup>

‘ēbādîym (עֲבָדִים) [pronounced <i>gē<sup>b</sup>-vaw-DEEM</i> ]	<i>slaves, servants; workers; underlings; subjects; slavery, bondage, servitude; this can mean military men, soldiers in the plural</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
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In today's world, these people would be understood to be *workers, employees, hires*.

nākâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i> ]	<i>are beaten; those receiving blows, the ones who are [fatally] wounded [killed, slain]; being attacked and captured, being struck with a disease [man or animal]; blighted [plants]</i>	masculine plural, Hophal participle	Strong #5221 BDB #645
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**Translation:** But listen, your servants are being beaten...

<sup>43</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.

“You have given us an impossible task,” they complain, “and then you beat us when we cannot perform it.”

These Hebrew supervisors or foremen come to Pharaoh, which is a dangerous move in itself, and complain. Apparently, they did the math and figured, *a few more beatings, and we will all be dead*. Therefore, appealing directly to Pharaoh, although a risk, was no more of a risk than doing nothing and being beat to death for being assigned a task which could not be done.

### Exodus 5:16d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
châṭâ' (חָטָא) [pronounced <i>khaw-TAW</i> ]	<i>to sin, to miss, to miss the mark, to violate the law, to err; to do wrong, to commit a transgression</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2398 BDB #306
Owens lists this as a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular; and BHSEk as a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person.			
The NET Bible: <i>The word rendered “fault” is the basic OT verb for “sin” – חָטָא (vṿkhata't). The problem is that it is pointed as a perfect tense, feminine singular verb. Some other form of the verb would be expected, or a noun. But the basic word-group means “to err, sin, miss the mark, way, goal.” The word in this context seems to indicate that the people of Pharaoh – the slave masters – have failed to provide the straw. Hence: “fault” or “they failed.” But, as indicated, the line has difficult grammar, for it would literally translate: “and you [fem.] sin your people.” Many commentators (so GKC 206 §74.g) wish to emend the text to read with the Greek and the Syriac, thus: “you sin against your own people” (meaning the Israelites are his loyal subjects).<sup>44</sup></i>			
Perhaps the idea is, they are saying that they are saying the Pharaoh is at fault, but without saying that. If, to the Pharaoh, they used the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, that might mean instant execution. I am only speculating here.			
‘am (אָם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

**Translation:** ...[yet it is] **your people have sinned** [or, *you sin against your people; or one has sinned against your people*].”

This is a very difficult passage to translate because it is not clear at all what the subject really is. Owens says that this is a 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular verb and another source told me 2<sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular verb. In any case, there is no feminine singular words anywhere to which this could refer. What is perhaps the idea is, the foremen are complaining that this is the fault of Pharaoh, but they have a very difficult time accusing him directly, as he might not appreciate that. So, perhaps the idea is, they do not want to seem as if they are directly accusing him. In v. 15, they use the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular when speaking to Pharaoh—so changing over to the 2<sup>nd</sup> person feminine singular here may be a way of indirectly accusing Pharaoh of sinning.

According to another source, add another letter, and this reads, “You have sinned against your [own] people.”

<sup>44</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.

The last phrase of v. 16 is a bit difficult to unravel. The NASB renders it as, "...but it is the fault of your own people." *The Emphasized Bible*, which tends to be fairly literal, says: "thou dost, therefore, wrong thy people." Owen wrote: "But the fault is in (are wrong) your own people." The difference in meaning is one rendering, *The Emphasized Bible*, the Pharaoh is doing wrong to his people, and, in the others, the fact that the Jews cannot produce the amount of bricks required is the fault of the Egyptian taskmasters. It is merely a conjunction, a verb and a noun. The verb is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal perfect of *châṭâ'* (נָחַ) [pronounced *khaw-TAW*] and it means *to miss the mark, to sin, to do wrong, to go wrong*. The problem here is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular. There is no relative noun to which this can refer. The Septuagint and the Syriac text indicate that this is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular, which is a pretty strong thing to say. Even though there is no emphasis here on the word *you*, it takes a lot of courage to go and tell the Pharaoh that he is wrong. The last word is the word for *people* with a 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix, meaning *your people*. Usually, in the ancient world, in polite society, the word for *servant* or *slave* would have been used here, even if the person speaking were not a slave (see Gen. 42:10 44:16). The word used is 'am (אָם) [pronounced *am*] and it means *people, tribe, company*. They have already called themselves slaves, but they present the Jews in general as the people of Pharaoh and Pharaoh is doing wrong to his own people.

The foremen (or, overseers), even though they were Jews, were given certain privileges. One of these was an audience with the Pharaoh. Even though this is a inhumane practice and it was daily becoming more so, the Egyptian Pharaoh still would hear his slaves out.

The foremen were a go between the Jews as a whole and the taskmasters. They were almost like labor union representatives, except that there was no striking and no collective bargaining. What Pharaoh said was the law. However, this had gotten to a point at which the impossible was expected from the Jewish slaves. This group of foremen has come to tell the Pharaoh that the task set before them has reached the point at which it is impossible to perform.

Exodus 5:16 [There is] no straw given to your servants and they are saying to us, 'Make bricks!' But listen, your servants are being beaten [yet it is] your people have sinned [or, you sin against your people; or one has sinned against your people]." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The Hebrew supervisors continue with their pleas. They complain that these new policies are not their fault. Pharaoh has laid too much on them. Pharaoh knows that they have always done their work before; but now, he has placed more work upon them than they are able to do.

Note that these men who have come before Pharaoh do not blame Pharaoh—even though this is completely his fault. They blame their taskmasters who tell them what must be produced and how—that this is an impossible task to complete.

This complaint gives Pharaoh the opportunity to explain why their work output requirements have been changed. No doubt, he has been anticipating this moment, as he has a ready answer for them.

Exodus 5:15–16 The foremen from the sons of Israel come and cry unto Pharaoh, saying, "Why do you do this to your servants? [There is] no straw given to your servants and they are saying to us, 'Make bricks!' But listen, your servants are being beaten [yet it is] your people have sinned [or, you sin against your people; or one has sinned against your people]." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 5:15–16 The foremen of the sons of Israel came before Pharaoh and cried for mercy, saying, "Why have you done this to your servants? You order us to make bricks, but there is no straw and we are then beaten. It is not we who have sinned!" (Kukis paraphrase)

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And so he says, “Being idle, you [all], being idle. Upon so, you [all] are saying, ‘Let us go; let us sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.’ And now, go, work; and straw will not be given to you. And a number of bricks you will give.”

Exodus  
5:17–18

He answered, “You have too much time on your hands [lit., *being idle, you (all), being idle*]! Therefore, you keep saying, ‘Let us go [and] sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.’ But now, go [and] work; and you will not be given straw. Furthermore, you will give [the same] number of bricks [previously required by me].”

He answered, “You sons of Israel have far too much time on your hands. As a result, you keep requesting, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to Jehovah, our God.’ Instead, you must leave now and go do your work. You will not be given anymore straw. Furthermore, the requirements for brick production will remain unchanged.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he says, “Being idle, you [all], being idle. Upon so, you [all] are saying, ‘Let us go; let us sacrifice to Y <sup>e</sup> howah.’ And now, go, work; and straw will not be given to you. And a number of bricks you will give.”
Dead Sea Scrolls Targum of Onkelos	. But he said, You are idle: therefore you say, We will go and sacrifice before the Lord. And now go, work: but straw I will not give you; yet the number of bricks you shall render.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	But he said, You are idle, idle: therefore you are saying, Let us go and over the sacrifice of a festival before our God. And now, go, work; but the straw shall not be given you, yet the number of the bricks you shall produce.
Jerusalem targum Revised Douay-Rheims	. And he said: You are idle, and therefore you say: Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord. Go therefore, and work: straw shall not be given you, and you shall deliver the accustomed number of brick.
Latin Vulgate Plain English Aramaic Bible Peshitta (Syriac)	. But Pharaoh said to them, You are surely idle; therefore you say, Let us go and sacrifice to the LORD. Go therefore now and work; and straw shall not be given you, yet you shall deliver the number of bricks.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	But he said, "You are idle! You are idle! Therefore you say, 'Let us go and sacrifice to Mar-Yah.' Go therefore now, and work, for no straw shall be given to you, yet you shall deliver the same number of bricks!"
V. Alexander’s Aramaic T.	And the Pharaoh said to them, "You are truly idlers [Lit. Ar. idiomatic figure of speech: "And idlingly you are idlers."], that is why you say 'Let us go and make sacrifices to the Lord.' Now go and serve and no straw shall be given to you, but you must meet the same quota of bricks [Lit. Ar. idiomatic construction: "And the accounting of bricks you will give."]."
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	But he said to them, You are idle: You are idlers. Therefore you say, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Go therefore now and work; for there shall be no straw given you, yet you shall deliver the task of bricks.
Septuagint (Greek)	And he said to them, Ye are idle, you are idlers: therefore you say, Let us go and do sacrifice to our God. Now then go and work, for straw shall not be given to you, yet you shall return the rate of bricks.
Brenton’s Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

Bible in Basic English	But he said, You have no love for work: that is why you say, Let us go and make an offering to the Lord. Go now, get back to your work; no dry stems will be given to you, but you are to make the full number of bricks.
Easy English	But Pharaoh said: 'You are lazy! You are only lazy! That is why you say: "Let us go. Let us take gifts to the Lord." Now go and do your work. Nobody will give you any straw. But you must make the same number of bricks.'
Easy-to-Read Version—2006	Pharaoh answered, "You are lazy, and you don't want to work! That is why you ask me to let you go. And that is why you want to leave here and make sacrifices to the LORD. Now, go back to work! We will not give you any straw. And you must still make as many bricks as you did before."
God's Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
The Message	But Pharaoh said, "Lazy! That's what you are! Lazy! That's why you whine, 'Let us go so we can worship GOD.' Well then, go—go back to work. Nobody's going to give you straw, and at the end of the day you better bring in your full quota of bricks."
Names of God Bible	"You're lazy! Just plain lazy!" Pharaoh answered. "That's why you keep saying, 'Let us go offer sacrifices to <b>Yahweh</b> .' Now get back to work! You won't be given any straw, but you must still make the same number of bricks."
NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	The king replied: »You are lazy. You are just lazy! That is why you keep asking me to let you go and sacrifice to Jehovah. 18 »Get back to work! You will not be given straw, but you must still make the same number of bricks.«

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	Pharaoh replied, "You are lazy bums, nothing but lazy bums. That's why you say, 'Let us go and offer sacrifices to the Lord.' Go and get back to work! No straw will be given to you, but you still need to make the same number of bricks."
Contemporary English V.	The king replied, "You are lazy--nothing but lazy! That's why you keep asking me to let you go and sacrifice to your LORD. Get back to work! You won't be given straw, but you must still make the same number of bricks."
The Living Bible	But Pharaoh replied, "You don't have enough work, or else you wouldn't be saying, 'Let us go and sacrifice to Jehovah.' Get back to work. No straw will be given you, and you must deliver the regular quota of bricks."
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	.
New Life Version	But Pharaoh said, "You are lazy, very lazy. So you say, 'Let us go and give a gift on an altar in worship to the Lord.' Go now and work. You will be given no straw. Yet you must make the same number of clay blocks."
New Living Translation	.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	And he said to them: 'You're lazy and you're slackers! For you said, <i>Let us go and offer sacrifices to our God</i> . Now, go to work instead, because you won't be given any straw... yet, you must meet the same quota of bricks.'
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	You are idlers, said he, idlers all, or you would not be asking leave to go and sacrifice to this Lord of yours. Off with you to your work; no straw shall you have; and as for the bricks, you must make up the same tale as before.



Translation for Translators But the king said, "You are lazy and do not *want to work!* That is why you keep saying, 'Allow us to go *to the desert* and offer sacrifices to Yahweh.' So go and get back to work! We are not going to give you any straw, but you must keep making the same number of bricks!"

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible He was to say: You are slacking a slacking, in saying: We were to go and were to sacrifice to Jehovah. Be going and working - was there straw to be given? - Even were you to ascribe the tally of bricks.

Bible in Modern English Conservapedia .  
But he said, "You are lazy. Lazy! That's why you ask for leave, saying, 'Let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord. Now get to work - we won't give you any straw, but you shall meet your regular number of bricks.'"

Ferrar-Fenton Bible He, however, replied, " You are idle ! you are idle ! Therefore you say, ' Let us go and sacrifice to the Ever-living.' So now be off, you slaves, for straw shall not be given to you, but you shall make the number of your bricks ! "

God's Truth (Tyndale) HCSB .  
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Jubilee Bible 2000 And he replied, Ye are idle, ye are idle, therefore ye say, Let us go and sacrifice unto the LORD. Go therefore now and work, for no firewood shall be given you, yet ye shall deliver the tally of bricks.

H. C. Leupold Lexham English Bible NIV, ©2011 Tree of Life Version Urim-Thummim Version WikiBible .  
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### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988) .  
The Heritage Bible And he said, You are slack! You are slack! Therefore you say, Let us walk to sacrifice to Jehovah. And now, walk! Work, and there shall no straw be given you, and you shall give the fixed amount of bricks.

New American Bible (2002) .  
New American Bible (2011) .  
New English Bible .  
New Jerusalem Bible .  
New RSV .  
Revised English Bible The king replied, "You are lazy, bone lazy! That is why you keep on about going to offer sacrifice to the LORD. Now get on with your work. You will not be given straw, but you must produce the full tally of bricks."

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible "Lazy!" he retorted, "You're just lazy! That's why you say, 'Let us go and sacrifice to Adonai.' Get going now, and get back to work! No straw will be given to you, and you will still deliver the full amount of bricks."

The Complete Tanach But he said, "You are lax, just lax. Therefore, you say, 'Let us go, let us sacrifice to the Lord.' And now, go and work, but you will not be given stubble. Nevertheless, the [same] number of bricks you must give."

**Nevertheless the [same] number of bricks:** Heb. מִיִּנְבֵּל וְכֶתוּ, the count of the bricks, and similarly, " וְכֶתוּמָה הַסֵּכָה, the counted money" (II Kings 12:12), as is



stated in that section, “and packed and counted the money” (II Kings 12:11). —  
[from Onkelos]

exeGesés companion Bible	And he says, Lazy, lazy: so you say, Let us go and sacrifice to Yah Veh. And now, go; serve: and no straw is given you: yet you give the gauge of bricks.
Hebraic Roots Bible	And he said, You are lazy and idle. So you are saying, Let us go, let us sacrifice to YAHWEH. Therefore, go now and work. And straw will not be given to you; and a certain number of bricks you shall deliver.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	He replied, “You are shirkers, shirkers! That is why you say, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to the Lord.’ Be off now to your work! No straw shall be issued to you, but you must produce your quota of bricks!”
Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation	. 'You are lazy!' retorted Pharaoh. 'Lazy! That's why you are saying that you want to sacrifice to God. Now go! Get to work! You will not be given any straw, but you must deliver your quota of bricks.'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	But he said, Ye are idle, ye are idle: therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice to Hashem. Go therefore now, and work; for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tokhen (full measure) of bricks.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	But he said, “You are idle! You are idle! That is why you say, ‘Let us go and slaughter to יהוה.’ “So now go, work. And straw is not given to you, but deliver the amount of bricks.”

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	.
The Expanded Bible	. The king [ <sup>L</sup> He] answered, “You are lazy! ·You don’t want to work [ <sup>L</sup> Lazy]! ·That is why you ask to leave here [ <sup>L</sup> Therefore you say, “Let us go...”] and make sacrifices to the LORD. Now, go back to work! We will not give you any straw, but you must make just as many bricks as you did before.”
The Geneva Bible	.
Kretzmann’s Commentary	But he said, Ye are idle, ye are idle; therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice to the Lord. He emphatically repeated his baseless charge, v. 8. Go, therefore, now, and work; for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks. The unjust order was not only not remanded, but repeated by Pharaoh's own mouth, So that there could be no mistake about it.
NET Bible®	But Pharaoh replied [ <i>Heb</i> “And he said.”], “You are slackers! Slackers [Or “loafers.”]! That is why you are saying, ‘Let us go sacrifice to the Lord.’ So now, get back to work! You will not be given straw, but you must still produce your quota of bricks!”
The Pulpit Commentary	.
Syndein/Thieme	.
The Voice	<b>Pharaoh:</b> <i>No. It is you. You are lazy! You are all so very lazy! You try to escape your work by making up excuses, saying, “Please release us so that we may go sacrifice to the Eternal.” Leave me now, and get back to work, you indolent whiners! You will not be provided any straw, and you must make the same number of bricks as before.</i>

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	..and he said, you are :very: [lazy], <therefore> , you are saying, we will walk, we will sacrifice to "YHWH <sup>He ls</sup> ", and now, walk, serve, and straw will not be given to you, and you will give the measured amount of bricks,....
Concordant Literal Version	.
Context Group Version	But he said, You (pl) are idle, you (pl) are idle: therefore you (pl) say, Let us go and sacrifice to YHWH. Go therefore now, and work; for there shall no straw be given you (pl), yet you (pl) shall deliver the number of bricks.
Darby Translation	Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried to Pharaoh, saying, Why dost thou deal thus with thy bondmen? There is no straw given to thy bondmen, and they say to us, Make brick; and behold, thy bondmen are beaten, but it is the fault of thy people.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	But he said: Idle, ye are—idle, on this account, are, ye, saying, We must take our journey, we must sacrifice to Yahweh. Now, therefore, go labour, but, straw, shall not be given you,—yet the tale of bricks, shall ye render.
English Standard Version	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	But he said, "You are slackers! Slackers! Therefore you say, 'Let us go and do sacrifice to the LORD.' Go therefore now and work, for there shall no straw be given you, yet shall you deliver the quota of bricks."
Modern KJV	.
NASB	But he said, "You are lazy, very lazy; therefore you say, 'Let us go and sacrifice to the LORD.' So go now and work; for you will be given no straw, yet you must deliver the quota of bricks."
New European Version	.
New King James Version	But he said, "You are idle! Idle! Therefore you say, 'Let us go and sacrifice to the LORD.' Therefore go now and work; for no straw shall be given you, yet you shall deliver the quota of bricks."
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	But he said, You + are idle, you + are idle: therefore you + say, Let us go and sacrifice to Yahweh. Go therefore now, and work; for there will no straw be given you +, yet you + will deliver the number of bricks.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	.
Young's Updated LT	And he says, "Remiss—you [all] are remiss, therefore you [all] are saying, Let us go, let us sacrifice to Jehovah; and now, go, serve; and straw is not given to you, and the measure of bricks you [all] do give."

**The gist of this passage:**

vv. 17-18

**Exodus 5:17a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (I) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## Exodus 5:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'amar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
râphâh (רָפָה) [pronounced raw-FAW]	<i>slackers, idle ones; they are being idle [or slacking off]; being idle, slacking off</i>	masculine plural, Niphal participle	Strong's #7503 BDB #951
The NET Bible: <i>The form מִיִּפְרוּג (nirpim) is derived from the verb רָפָה (rafah), meaning "to be weak, to let oneself go."</i> <sup>45</sup>			
'attem (אַתֶּם) [pronounced aht-TEM]	<i>you all, you guys, you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
râphâh (רָפָה) [pronounced raw-FAW]	<i>slackers, idle ones; they are being idle [or slacking off]; being idle, slacking off</i>	masculine plural, Niphal participle	Strong's #7503 BDB #951

**Translation:** He answered, "You have too much time on your hands [lit., *being idle, you (all), being idle*]!"

Throughout this chapter, I find myself wanting to rephrase and paraphrase the text as written. This is one of the many times I found it necessary to do so. "Being idle, you all are being idle;" communicates what Pharaoh is saying, but it is somewhat anachronistic.

## Exodus 5:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'al (אֲלֵ) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced kane]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
Together, 'al kên (אֲלֵ כֵּן) mean <i>so, upon the ground of such conditions, therefore, consequently, on this account, on account, for this reason</i> . Literally, these words would be translated <i>upon so, upon therefore, upon then</i> .			
'attem (אַתֶּם) [pronounced aht-TEM]	<i>you all, you guys, you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
'amar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>the ones saying, those speaking, the persons saying [to oneself], those who are thinking</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle	Strong's #559 BDB #55

<sup>45</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.

## Exodus 5:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect; with the cohortative hê	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
The cohortative expresses volition. In the English, we often render this with <i>let</i> or <i>may</i> ; in the plural, this can be <i>let us</i> . The cohortative is designed for the 1 <sup>st</sup> person, it can express a wish or a desire or purpose or an intent. It is found in conditional statements. Generally there is the hê suffix to indicate this.			
zâbach (זָבַח) [pronounced zaw <sup>b</sup> -VAHKH]	<i>to slaughter [usually an animal for sacrifice]; to sacrifice [an animal]; to slay, to immolate [an animal sacrifice]</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect; with the cohortative hê	Strong's #2076 BDB #256
The cohortative expresses volition. In the English, we often render this with <i>let</i> or <i>may</i> ; in the plural, this can be <i>let us</i> . The cohortative is designed for the 1 <sup>st</sup> person, it can express a wish or a desire or purpose or an intent. It is found in conditional statements. Generally there is the hê suffix to indicate this.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** Therefore, you keep saying, 'Let us go [and] sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.'

Pharaoh asserts that, because they have all of this additional time, they are able to make the request to go out and to sacrifice to their God.

Exodus 5:17 He answered, "You have too much time on your hands [lit., *being idle, you (all), being idle*]! (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Pharaoh says that these new work requirements came about because the Hebrew slaves are too idle; because they are thinking about sacrificing to Y<sup>e</sup>howah. He is not going to allow this and there will be a price to pay. Pharaoh is going to work them to a point where, there is no time to even think about going out to sacrifice to their God.

One flaw in Pharaoh's thinking is, he seems to believe that all of this came from the people. The people wanted some time off; of the people want to worship their God. So, Pharaoh punishes *them*.

Now, bear in mind that this request actually came from God and was delivered through Moses and Aaron. The people themselves had not made this request. Even their officers did not make this request (although they ratified it).

This is exactly what Pharaoh wanted. Pharaoh, by this approach, is separating the people from Moses and Aaron. The pain will be on the people, because of Moses and Aaron. Furthermore, Moses and Aaron, in Pharaoh's estimation, will also feel guilty for what they have caused (this is logical speculation). In any case, the whole idea is to make the Hebrew people—including the elders—resent Moses and Aaron.

Then Pharaoh emphasizes that this was not simply a warning; this is their new reality:

## Exodus 5:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘attâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced <i>gáht-TAWH</i> ]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, w <sup>e</sup> + the adverb ‘attâh mean <i>and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore, now then, in conclusion</i> . Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.			
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>go, come, depart, walk; advance</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
‘âbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>gaw<sup>b</sup>-VAHD</i> ]	<i>work, serve, labor; be a slave to</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperative	Strong's #5647 BDB #712

The NET Bible: *The text has two imperatives: "go, work." They may be used together to convey one complex idea (so a use of hendiadys): "go back to work."*<sup>46</sup>

**Translation:** But now, go [and] work;...

There is a contrast Pharaoh gives here. "You have asked to go and sacrifice? But I am telling you, go and do your work!"

Much of this will be expressed in terms of what an employer expects from his workers. "You obviously have too much free time; you need to spend this time working," Pharaoh asserts.

## Exodus 5:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
teben (תֵּבֵן) [pronounced <i>TE<sup>B</sup>-ven</i> ]	<i>straw, fodder; possibly chaff for building material</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8401 BDB #1061
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to be give, to be delivered, to be given forth [as law]; to be made</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678

<sup>46</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.

## Exodus 5:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

**Translation:** ...and you will not be given straw.

“Furthermore,” Pharaoh tells them, “you are not getting any straw.” The idea is, these Hebrews need to reject their God, reject this idea of going out to worship Him, and then he might consider providing the straw that they need.

## Exodus 5:18c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mathkôneth/mathkûneth (תְּנֹכַתַּם/תְּנֹכַתָּם) [pronounced math-KO-neth/math-KOO-neth]	<i>number, tally; measurement, tale, proportion</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #4971 BDB #1067

The NET Bible: *B. Jacob is amazed at the wealth of this tyrant's vocabulary in describing the work of others. Here, תְּנֹכַת (tokhen) is another word for “quota” of bricks, the fifth word used to describe their duty (Exodus, 137).*<sup>47</sup>

l <sup>e</sup> bênâh (הַבְּנֵי) [pronounced leb-ay-NAW]	<i>a brick, a tile, a pavement</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #3843 BDB #527
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678

The NET Bible: *The imperfect נָתַן (tittennu) is here taken as an obligatory imperfect: “you must give” or “you must produce.”*<sup>48</sup> I was confused, wondering, *is that nâthan?* Apparently it is.

**Translation:** Furthermore, you will give [the same] number of bricks [previously required by me].”

This appears to be an abbreviated version of what is meant. I have inserted enough text to convey the overall meaning.

They will not just be deprived of straw, but they will still have to produce the same amount of bricks as before.

Although this Pharaoh would allow an audience from the foremen of the Jews, he was not at all reasonable. God knew this and told Moses that Pharaoh would not capitulate easily. It is in this narrative that we see how unbending this Pharaoh is.

<sup>47</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.

<sup>48</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.



Exodus 5:18 Therefore, you keep saying, ‘Let us go [and] sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.’ But now, go [and] work; and you will not be given straw. Furthermore, you will give [the same] number of bricks [previously required by me].” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Pharaoh repeats his order to them. He is not going back on his orders (something that was very rare for a sovereign of any nation to do). Insofar as the people knew, this would be their lives from thereon forward. They were placed in an impossible position.

Pharaoh intends to break them of this whole God thing. Even though he never states it outright, Pharaoh associates the lack of straw with their desire to go out and worship their God. The implication is, *back off on this whole worship thing and maybe I might back off on my requirements*. The reason we might reasonably assume this is, in the same breath, he speaks of their desire to go and worship their God and the removal of straw from their brick-making.

Exodus 5:17–18 He answered, “You have too much time on your hands [lit., *being idle, you (all), being idle*]! Therefore, you keep saying, ‘Let us go [and] sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah.’ But now, go [and] work; and you will not be given straw. Furthermore, you will give [the same] number of bricks [previously required by me].” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 5:17–18 He answered, “You sons of Israel have far too much time on your hands. As a result, you keep requesting, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to Jehovah, our God.’ Instead, you must leave now and go do your work. You will not be given anymore straw. Furthermore, the requirements for brick production will remain unchanged.” (Kukis paraphrase)

Whereas, the Israelites should perhaps plead with their God over this situation, they instead, plead with Pharaoh. True mercy comes from God, not from man.

**And so see foremen of sons of Israel them in evil in to say, “You [all] will not reduce from your bricks a word of a day in his day.”**

Exodus  
5:19

**The foremen of the sons of Israel recognize the evil in saying, “You [all] will not reduce from your bricks [your assigned] daily amount [lit., *word, thing, matter*] [as] in its day.”**

**The foremen of the sons of Israel recognized that this was evil, when the king told them, “You must continue to produce that same number of bricks now as you did previously.”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so see foremen of sons of Israel them in evil in to say, “You [all] will not reduce from your bricks a word of a day in his day.”
Dead Sea Scrolls	.
Targum of Onkelos	And the overseers of the sons of Israel perceived that they were in evil: for they said to them, You shall not diminish from your bricks the matter of a day, in a day.
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And the fore-men of the sons of Israel saw that they were in evil, (in his) saying, Ye are not to withhold the assignment of your bricks from day to day.
Jerusalem targum	.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And the officers of the children of Israel saw that they were in evil case, because it was said to them: There shall not a whit be diminished of the bricks for every day.
Latin Vulgate	.

Plain English Aramaic Bible	The officers of the B'nai Yisrael saw that they were in trouble, when it was said, "You shall not diminish anything from your daily quota of bricks!"
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the scribes of the children of Israel saw that they were in a bad situation, for it was said to them, You must not reduce the number of your bricks, of your daily task.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	.
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	And those scribes saw that the Children of Israel were regarded in a bad light [Lit. Ar. id.: "Evilly.'], and they said to them, "Do not reduce the number of bricks that you lay, except make them like always [Lit. Ar. id.: "Like everyday.']."
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	So the clerks of the children of Israel saw themselves in a miserable situation, when they said, You shall be allowed no abatement from the customary daily task of brick making.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the accountants of the children of Israel saw themselves in an evil light, men saying, Ye shall not fail to deliver the daily rate of the brick-making.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	Then the responsible men of the children of Israel saw that they were purposing evil when they said, The number of bricks which you have to make every day will be no less than before.
Easy English	The Israelite leaders heard Pharaoh say: 'You must make the same number of bricks as you made before.' Then they knew that they were in bad trouble.
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	.
<i>God's Word</i> <sup>™</sup>	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
<i>The Message</i>	The Israelite foremen saw that they were in a bad way, having to go back and tell their workers, "Not one brick short in your daily quota."
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	.
New Simplified Bible	The Israelite foremen realized they were in trouble when they were told: »Do not make fewer bricks each day than you are supposed to.«

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The Israelite supervisors saw how impossible their situation was when they were commanded, "Don't reduce your daily quota of bricks."
Contemporary English V.	The men knew they were in deep trouble when they were ordered to make the same number of bricks each day.
The Living Bible	Then the foremen saw that they were indeed in a bad situation.
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	.
New Life Version	The Hebrew men who made the people work knew that they were in trouble because they were told, "You must make the same number of clay blocks each day."
New Living Translation	.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Well, the children of IsraEl's supervisors realized that they were in a tight situation, since they'd been told that they still had to deliver the same daily quota of bricks.
Beck's American Translation	.
International Standard V	.

New Advent (Knox) Bible	When they heard that the same tale of bricks was to be demanded each day, the Israelite foremen saw that it would go hard with them; and meeting Moses and Aaron face to face, as they came away from Pharaoh's audience, they said to them, The Lord take note of it, and be your judge; you have made our name stink in the nostrils of Pharaoh and his court, put a weapon in his hand that will be our doom. Vv. 20–21 are included for context.
Translation for Translators	The Israeli supervisors realized that they were in a difficult situation, because they had been told, "We are not going to decrease the number of bricks <i>you must make</i> each day."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	They being officials, over the sons of Isra-el, were perceiving the misery, to the intent: Were yous to diminish the bricks in the day's concern?
Bible in Modern English Conservapedia	. And the superintendents of the Sons of Israel saw that they were in dire straits, once it was said, "You may not make any fewer bricks than you did before."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	.
God's Truth (Tyndale)	When the officers of the children of Israel saw themselves in shrewd case (in that he said you shall minish nothing of your daily making of brick) then they met Moses and Aaron standing in their way as they came out from Pharaoh, and said unto them: The Lord look unto you and judge, for you have made the savour of us stink in the sight of Pharaoh and of his servants, and have put a sword into their hands to slay us. Vv. 20–21 are included for context.
HCSB	.
Jubilee Bible 2000	Then the officers of the sons of Israel saw that they were afflicted after it was said, Ye shall not diminish any from the bricks of your daily quota.
H. C. Leupold	.
Lexham English Bible	And the foremen of the {Israelites} saw they were in trouble {with the saying}, "You will not reduce from your bricks {for each day} on its day."
NIV, ©2011	.
Tree of Life Version	.
Urim-Thummim Version	After this the officers of the children of Israel saw that they were in great trouble after hearing, you are not to reduce the quantity of bricks required of you daily in your work.
WikiBible	The the officers of the sons of Israel saw them in bad faith to say: "you will not subtract from your bricks, that said from day to day."

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	The Israelite foremen felt they were in great trouble.
The Heritage Bible	And the officers of the children of Israel saw that they were in an evil <i>situation</i> , after it was said, You shall not scrape off from your bricks the day to day word.
New American Bible (2002)	.
New American Bible (2011)	.
New English Bible	.
New Jerusalem Bible	The Israelites' foremen saw they were in a difficult position on being told, 'You will not reduce your daily production of bricks.'
New RSV	.
Revised English Bible	When they were told that they must not let the daily number of bricks fall short, the Israelite foremen realized the trouble they were in.

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	When they said, "You are not to reduce your daily production quota of bricks," the foremen of the people of Isra'el could see that they were in deep trouble.
The Complete Tanach	The officers of the children of Israel saw them in distress, saying, "Do not reduce [the number] of your bricks, the requirement of each day in its day."
	<b>The officers of the children of Israel saw:</b> their fellows who were driven by them.
	<b>in distress:</b> They saw them in the distress and trouble that befell them when they had to make the work heavy upon them, saying, "Do not reduce, etc."
exeGesés companion Bible	And the officers of the sons of Yisra El see that they are in evil, saying, Diminish not bricks of your day by day word.
Hebraic Roots Bible JPS (Tanakh—1985)	. Now the foremen of the Israelites found themselves in trouble because of the order, "You must not reduce your daily quantity of bricks."
Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation	. The Israelite foremen realized that they were in serious trouble. They had been clearly told that they could not reduce their daily brick quota.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the foremen of the Bnei Yisroel did see that they were in rah (trouble), after it was said, Ye shall not reduce ought from your bricks of your daily task.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	The Hebrew foremen saw that they were in a bad situation because they were told, "You must not reduce [in the least] your daily quota of bricks."
The Expanded Bible	The Israelite foremen [supervisors] knew they were in trouble, because the king had told them [they were told], "You must make just as many bricks each day as you did before."
The Geneva Bible Kretzmann's Commentary	. And the officers of the children of Israel did see that they were in evil case, literally, they were in bad, their position was now worse than it was before, after it was said, Ye shall not minish aught from your bricks of your daily task. The fact that the oppression of the children of Israel was increased in this manner was a last severe trial for them. God wanted to test their faith in the certainty of His promise regarding the deliverance which was near.
NET Bible®	The Israelite foremen saw that they were in trouble when they were told, "You must not reduce the daily quota of your bricks."
The Pulpit Commentary Syndein/Thieme	.
The Voice	The supervisors of the Israelites knew they were in <i>deep</i> trouble when they were told, "You are not to lessen the workload. You must still make the same number of bricks every day as you did before."

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and the dominators of the sons of "Yisra'el <sup>He turns El asiden</sup> saw them in dysfunction, saying, you will not take away from your bricks, it is a (matter) of the day in his day,...
Concordant Literal Version	Hence the superintendents of the sons of Israel saw themselves in an evil plight, having to say: You shall not subtract from your bricks a day's tally in its day.
Context Group Version	And the officers of the sons of Israel saw that they were in trouble, when it was said, You (pl) shall not diminish anything from your (pl) bricks, [your (pl)] daily tasks.

Darby Translation	And the officers of the children of Israel saw [that] it stood ill with them, because it was said, Ye shall not diminish anything from your bricks, the daily work.
Emphasized Bible	.
English Standard Version	The foremen of the people of Israel saw that they were in trouble when they said, "You shall by no means reduce your number of bricks, your daily task each day."
Green's Literal Translation	And the overseers of the sons of Israel saw themselves in affliction, saying, You shall not diminish from your bricks, the matter of a day in its day.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	.
Modern KJV	.
NASB	The foremen of the sons of Israel saw that they were in trouble because they were told [Lit saying], "You must not reduce your daily amount [Lit from your bricks the matter of a day in its day] of bricks."
New European Version	.
New King James Version	.
Owen's Translation	.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Third Millennium Bible	And the officers of the children of Israel saw that they were in evil straits after it was said, "Ye shall not diminish any from your bricks of your daily task."
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	And the officers of the children of Israel saw <i>that</i> they were in evil case, after it was said, Ye shall not diminish <i>auht</i> from your bricks of your daily task.
World English Bible	.
Young's Literal Translation	.
Young's Updated LT	And the authorities of the sons of Israel see them in affliction, saying, "You [all] do not diminish from your bricks; the matter of a day in its day."

**The gist of this passage:**

Exodus 5:19a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906

The NET Bible: *The common Hebrew verb translated "saw," like the common English verb for seeing, is also used to refer to mental perception and understanding, as in the question "See what I mean?" The foremen understood how difficult things would be under this ruling.*<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.

## Exodus 5:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shôṭēr (שׁוֹטֵר) [pronounced show-TARE]	<i>official, commissioned officer, officer</i> ; this word refers to an official or an officer who is not the highest in command, but holds a subordinate position	masculine plural noun (this is actually a masculine plural, Qal active participle); construct form	Strong's #7860 BDB #1009
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people</i> ; sometimes rendered <i>men; young men, youths</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Yis <sup>e</sup> râ'êl (יִסְרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God</i> ; transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun; God-given name to Jacob; and national name for the Jewish people	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>them</i> ; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to <i>them, toward them</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ra' (רָע) [pronounced rahó]	<i>evil, bad, wicked; evil in appearance, deformed; misery, distress, injury; that which is displeasing [disagreeable, unhappy, unfortunate, sad]</i>	masculine singular adjective/noun	Strong's #7451 BDB #948

The NET Bible: *The text has the sign of the accusative with a suffix and then a prepositional phrase: עָרַב מָתָא ('otam býra'), meaning something like "[they saw] them in trouble" or "themselves in trouble." Gesenius shows a few examples where the accusative of the reflexive pronoun is represented by the sign of the accusative with a suffix, and these with marked emphasis (GKC 439 §135.k).*<sup>50</sup>

**Translation:** The foremen of the sons of Israel recognize the evil...

What the Pharaoh required was evil. The foremen understood this. He was requiring them to do the impossible and there was no way to change that, unless they clearly rejected their God and rejected Moses.

Many translations understand this to mean, *the foremen knew that they were in trouble, when...*

<sup>50</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.



## Exodus 5:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
The NET Bible: <i>The clause "when they were told" translates רָמַל (le'mor), which usually simply means "saying." The thing that was said was clearly the decree that was given to them.</i> <sup>51</sup>			
lô' (אֵל אוֹל) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
gâra' (עָרַג) [pronounced <i>gaw-RAHG</i> ]	<i>to diminish, to restrain, to withdraw, to reduce, to lessen</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1639 BDB #175
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
l <sup>e</sup> bênâh (הַבְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>leb-ay-NAW</i> ]	<i>a brick, a tile, a pavement</i>	feminine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3843 BDB #527
dâbâr (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw<sup>b</sup>-VAWR</i> ]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command; business, occupation; case; something; manner</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day; time; today or this day (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced <i>yohm</i> ]	<i>day; time; today or this day (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

These words are being repeated.

**Translation:** ...in saying, "You [all] will not reduce from your bricks [your assigned] daily amount [lit., word, thing, matter] [as] in its day."

<sup>51</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.

This was a bit difficult to translate here; I am assuming that the evil being spoken of is having to make more bricks than are possible to make; which places them to choose between slavery or their God.

Exodus 5:19 The foremen of the sons of Israel recognize the evil in saying, “You [all] will not reduce from your bricks [your assigned] daily amount [lit., word, thing, matter] [as] in its day.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

This was very troubling to the sons of Israel; and particularly to their officers, who would be beaten for the reduced production. The people knew that they could not keep up to their former level production; and their Hebrew supervisors knew this as well. Could they now expect to be beaten each and every day?

This is not what the overseers wanted to hear. It was not their idea to go into the desert and worship God. And although things were not great in Egypt, because of Moses and Aaron (and ultimately, because of God), things had become even more intolerable. Very possibly they thought that they could reason with Pharaoh; explain that it was literally impossible for them to do what was expected of them. However, Pharaoh puts it back on them. They are unable to reason with him.

Pharaoh has, essentially, put the blame back on Moses and Aaron. The Pharaoh seems to have assumed that the Jews themselves came up with this idea of going out into the desert and worshipping God. Certainly, he did not realize that this demand came directly from Y<sup>e</sup>howah, Israel’s God. The God of Israel spoke to Moses and Aaron and they took God’s Word to the elders of Israel and then to the Pharaoh. Even God works through levels of authority.

We continue to see this first meeting between Pharaoh and Moses and Aaron through human viewpoint thinking. How are the people of God to understand this turn of events? Do they focus in on their hardship and suffering? Or do they recognize that God has come to their rescue. Let me suggest that is was the former for most sons of Israel. This might help you to understand why, when God brought to plagues on Egypt, they at first affected Israeli as well.

**Application:** When dealing with your day-to-day life, do you see this as one difficulty and disaster after another? Or do you see God’s hand in your life? Do you look around to find someone to blame for your situation? Or do you sit back on occasion to see what God will do?

**Application:** It does not matter who you are, or what you do in life, you will run into difficult situations—sometimes unsolvable problems. What do you do when that happens?

Exodus 5:19 The foremen of the sons of Israel recognized that this was evil, when the king told them, “You must continue to produce that same number of bricks now as you did previously.” (Kukis paraphrase)

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### The Hebrew Foremen Complain to Moses and Moses Complains to God

And so meet Moses and Aaron those standing to meet them in their coming out from with Pharaoh. And so they say unto them, “Let look Y<sup>e</sup>howah upon you [all] and so He will judge, when you [all] have made odious our odor in eyes of Pharaoh and in eyes of his servants, to give a sword in their hand to kill us.”

Exodus  
5:20–21

Moses and Aaron then met those waiting to meet them when they came out from [being] with Pharaoh. They said to Moses and Aaron [lit., them], “Let Y<sup>e</sup>howah look upon you [both] and judge, as you have made our odor repulsive in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, to give a sword in their hands to kill us.”

**Moses and Aaron then met with the Israeli foremen, after they came out from being with Pharaoh. They said to Moses and Aaron, “Let Jehovah look upon what you have done and judge, because you have made us repulsive to Pharaoh and his servants. You have given them a sword to use to kill us.”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so meet Moses and Aaron those standing to meet them in their coming out from with Pharaoh. And so they say unto them, “Let look Y <sup>e</sup> howah upon you [all] and so He will judge, when you [all] have made odious our odor in eyes of Pharaoh and in eyes of his servants, to give a sword in their hand to kill us.”
Dead Sea Scrolls Targum of Onkelos	. And they met Mosheh and Aharon standing before them in their coming out from being with Pharaoh. And they said to them, May the Lord manifest Himself to you and adjudge [Sam. Vers., “interpret.”]; because you have made our savour evil in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, and have put a sword into their hands to kill us!
Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And they met Mosheh and Aharon, who stood before them when they came out from the presence of Pharaoh, and they said to them, Our affliction is manifest before the Lord, but our punishment is from you who have made our smell offensive before Pharaoh and his servants; for you have occasioned a sword to be put into their hand to kill us.
Jerusalem targum Revised Douay-Rheims	. And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood over against them as they came out from Pharaoh: And they said to them: The Lord see and judge, because you have made our savour to stink before Pharaoh and his servants, and you have given him a sword to kill us.
Latin Vulgate Plain English Aramaic Bible Peshitta (Syriac)	. And they met Moses and Aaron standing opposite them, as they came out from the presence of Pharaoh; And they said to them, May the LORD look upon you and judge; because you have made us to be in disfavor in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hands to kill us.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	They met Mosha and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh: and they said to them, "May Mar-Yah look at you, and judge, because you have made us a stench to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us."
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	And they addressed Moses and Aaron, as they stood before them, when they came out from the presence of the Pharaoh. And they said to them, "The Lord sees you and shall judge you, as you have besmirched our reputation [Lit. Ar. id.: "Spirit."] in the eyes of the Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants; they will put us to the sword, the sword that you put in their hands."
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	So the clerks of the children of Israel saw themselves in a miserable situation, when they said, You shall be allowed no abatement from the customary daily task of brick making. And upon meeting Moses and Aaron who had come to meet them as they came out from Pharaoh they said to them, God look upon you and judge. For you have made the smell of us horrible before Pharaoh and before his servants to put a sword in his hand to kill us.
Septuagint (Greek)	And they met Moses and Aaron coming forth to meet them, as they came forth from Pharaoh. And they said to them, The Lord look upon you and judge you, for you have made our savour abominable before Pharaoh, and before his servants, to put a sword into his hands to slay us.

Brenton's Septuagint .

Significant differences:

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

Bible in Basic English	And they came face to face with Moses and Aaron, who were in their way when they came out from Pharaoh: And they said to them, May the Lord take note of you and be your judge; for you have given Pharaoh and his servants a bad opinion of us, putting a sword in their hands for our destruction.
Easy English	Then the Israelite leaders met with Moses and Aaron. Moses and Aaron were waiting for them to return from Pharaoh. And the leaders spoke to Moses and Aaron. They said: 'We hope that the Lord will look at you. We hope that the Lord will judge you! You have made us like a bad smell to Pharaoh and to his servants. You have given them a reason to kill us.'
Easy-to-Read Version—2006	When they were leaving the meeting with Pharaoh, they passed Moses and Aaron. Moses and Aaron were waiting for them. So they said to Moses and Aaron, "May the LORD judge and punish you for what you did! You made Pharaoh and his rulers hate us. You have given them an excuse to kill us."
God's Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	.
<i>The Message</i>	As they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them. The foremen said to them, "May GOD see what you've done and judge you—you've made us stink before Pharaoh and his servants! You've put a weapon in his hand that's going to kill us!"
Names of God Bible	.
NIRV	When they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them. They said to Moses and Aaron, "We want the LORD to look at what you have done! We want him to judge you for it! We are like a very bad smell to Pharaoh and his officials. You have given them an excuse to kill us with their swords."
New Simplified Bible	Leaving the Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting for them. They said: »May Jehovah see what you have done and judge you! You have made Pharaoh and his officials hate us. You have given them an excuse to kill us.«

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	When they left Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron, who were waiting for them. The supervisors said to them, "Let the LORD see and judge what you've done! You've made us stink in the opinion of Pharaoh and his servants. You've given them a reason to kill us."
Contemporary English V.	After they left the king, they went to see Moses and Aaron, who had been waiting for them. Then the men said, "We hope the LORD will punish both of you for making the king and his officials hate us. Now they even have an excuse to kill us."
The Living Bible	When they met Moses and Aaron waiting for them outside the palace, as they came out from their meeting with Pharaoh, they swore at them. "May God judge you for making us stink before Pharaoh and his people," they said, "and for giving them an excuse to kill us."
New Berkeley Version	.
New Century Version	.
New Life Version	.
New Living Translation	As they left Pharaoh's court, they confronted Moses and Aaron, who were waiting outside for them. The foremen said to them, "May the Lord judge and punish you for making us stink before Pharaoh and his officials. You have put a sword into their hands, an excuse to kill us!"

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	So when they saw Moses and Aaron coming to meet them (just after they'd left Pharaoh), they said: 'May God look down on you and judge you, because you've made us so hated by Pharaoh and his servants that you've put the sword into their hands to kill us!'
Beck's American Translation International Standard V	<b><i>The Israelis Blame Moses and Moses Complains to God</i></b> As they left Pharaoh's presence [Lit. <i>from with</i> ], they met Moses and Aaron standing there [The Heb. lacks <i>there</i> ]. The supervisors [Lit. <i>they</i> ] told them, "May the LORD look on you and judge you [The Heb. lacks <i>you</i> ]! You have made us repulsive to [Lit. <i>made our odor stink in the eyes of</i> ] Pharaoh and his servants. You have put [Lit. <i>servants to give</i> ] a sword in their hands to kill us."
New Advent (Knox) Bible Translation for Translators	. As they left the king's <i>palace</i> , they met Aaron and Moses/me, who were waiting for them <i>there</i> . They said to Aaron and Moses/me, "Yahweh has seen <i>what</i> you two <i>have done</i> He will punish you [MTY], because you have caused the king and his officials to despise us! You have given them an excuse [MTY] to kill us!"

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Awful Scroll Bible	They were to meet with Moses and Aaron, they are to be standing to meet them, as they are to come from Pharaoh. They were to say: Jehovah was to perceive and judge. Our odor is to have been odious in the eye of Pharaoh, and in the eye of his servants, to give a sword in their hands to slay us.
Bible in Modern English Conservapedia	. They met with Moses and Aaron as they left Pharaoh, for they were waiting outside. They said to them, "May the LORD look at you and judge you, because you have made us stink to Pharaoh and his servants, to give them an excuse to kill us [The phrase "give sword in their hand to kill us" is probably idiomatic]."
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Consequently the overseers of the children of Israel saw they were in a bad position, when he said, " You shall not diminish from the number of bricks day by day ; " so they assailed Moses and Aaron for inciting them to go to present themselves to Pharaoh, and said to them; " May the EVER-LIVING look upon you, and decide how you have made our breath stink in the opinion of Pharaoh, and in the opinion of his ministers, and have put a sword into their hands to slay us ! " V. 19 is included for context.
HCSB	When they left Pharaoh, they confronted Moses and Aaron, who stood waiting to meet them. "May the LORD take note of you and judge," they said to them, "because you have made us reek in front of Pharaoh and his officials—putting a sword in their hand to kill us!"
Jubilee Bible 2000 H. C. Leupold Lexham English Bible NIV, ©2011	. . . When they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them, and they said, "May the LORD look on you and judge you! You have made us obnoxious to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us."
Tree of Life Version	Then they met Moses and Aaron, who were waiting for them as they came from Pharaoh. So they said to them, "May <i>ADONAI</i> look on you and judge, because you have made us a stench in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants—putting a sword in their hand to kill us!"
Urim-Thummim Version	.



WikiBible .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):

Christian Community (1988)	They met Moses and Aaron who were waiting for them and said to them, “May Yahweh look upon you and judge you, because you have made us hate ful to Pharaoh and his ministers, and placed in his hand a sword to kill us.”
The Heritage Bible	And they impinged upon Moses and Aaron, who were stationed to meet them, as they came out from Pharaoh; And they said to them, Jehovah look upon you, and judge, because you have made our odor to stink in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants to give a sword in their hand to strike us fatally.
New American Bible (2002)	.
New American Bible (2011)	So when they left Pharaoh they assailed Moses and Aaron, who were waiting to meet them, and said to them, “The LORD look upon you and judge! You have made us offensive to Pharaoh and his servants, putting a sword into their hands to kill us.”
New English Bible	.
New Jerusalem Bible	As they left Pharaoh's presence, they met Moses and Aaron who were standing in their way. 'May Yahweh look down at you and judge!' they said to them. 'You have brought us into bad odour with Pharaoh and his officials; you have put a sword into their hand to kill us.'
New RSV	.
Revised English Bible	As they came from Pharaoh's presence they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them, and said, “May this bring the LORD's judgement down on you! You have made us stink in the nostrils of Pharaoh and his subjects; you have put a sword in their hands to slay us.”

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	As they were leaving Pharaoh, they encountered Moshe and Aharon standing by the road; and they said to them, “May Adonai look at you and judge accordingly, because you have made us utterly abhorrent in the view of Pharaoh and his servants, and you have put a sword in their hands to kill us!”
The Complete Tanach	They met Moses and Aaron standing before them when they came out from Pharaoh's presence.

**They met:** Men of Israel [met] Moses and Aaron, etc. Our Rabbis expounded: Every [instance of] מִיִּצְנָן, quarreling, and מִיִּבְצָנָן, standing, is a reference to Dathan and Abiram, about whom it is said: “came out and stood upright” (Num. 16:27). — [from Ned. 64b]

exeGeses companion Bible	And they said to them, "May the Lord look upon you and judge, for you have brought us into foul odor in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, to place a sword into their hand[s] to kill us." And they encounter Mosheh and Aharon who station themselves to confront them as they come from Paroh: and they say to them, Yah Veh see you and judge! Because you stink our scent in the eyes of Paroh and in the eyes of his servants to give a sword in their hand to slaughter us.
Hebraic Roots Bible JPS (Tanakh—1985)	. As they left Pharaoh's presence, they came upon Moses and Aaron standing in their path, and they said to them, “May the Lord look upon you and punish you for making us loathsome to Pharaoh and his courtiers—putting a sword in their hands to slay us.”



Judaica Press Complete T. Kaplan Translation	. When they were leaving Pharaoh, [the foremen] encountered Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them. 'Let God look at you and be your Judge,' they said. 'You have destroyed our reputation [Literally, 'making our aroma stink in the eyes of Pharaoh.' See Genesis 34:30.] with Pharaoh and his advisors. You have placed a sword to kill us in their hands.'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And they went to meet Moshe and Aharon, who stood waiting to meet them, as they came forth from Pharaoh: And they said unto them, Hashem look upon you, and judge; because ye have made us stench to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his avadim, to put a cherev in their yad to slay us.
The Scriptures 1998	.

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible	When they left Pharaoh's presence, the foremen met Moses and Aaron, who were waiting for them. And the foremen said to them, "May the Lord look upon you and judge you, because you have made us odious (something hated) in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and you have put a sword in their hand to kill us."
The Expanded Bible	As they were leaving the meeting with the king [Pharaoh], they met Moses and Aaron, who were waiting for them. So they said to Moses and Aaron, "May the Lord punish you [look on you and judge]. You caused the king and his officers to hate us [have made us a bad odor in the eyes of Pharaoh and his servants]. You have given them an excuse [placed a sword in their hands] to kill us."
The Geneva Bible Kretzmann's Commentary	. <b>Verses 20-23</b> The Officers Reproach Moses and Aaron And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way as they came forth from Pharaoh, anxious to hear the result of the meeting with the king. And they said unto them, The Lord look upon you and judge, because ye have made our savor to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants to put a sword in their hand to slay us. It was a reproach of bitterness and despair: Ye have made us to stink, ye have brought us into ill repute. The king and his servants now had nothing but ill will and abhorrence for them, and this feeling was bound to find its outlet in acts of cruelty, in punishment and bloodshed.
NET Bible®	When they went out from Pharaoh, they encountered Moses and Aaron standing there to meet them, <sup>51</sup> and they said to them, "May the Lord look on you and judge, <sup>52</sup> because you have made us stink [ <i>Heb</i> "you have made our aroma stink."] in the opinion of [ <i>Heb</i> "in the eyes of."] Pharaoh and his servants [ <i>Heb</i> "in the eyes of his servants." This phrase is not repeated in the translation for stylistic reasons.], so that you have given them an excuse to kill us [ <i>Heb</i> "to put a sword in their hand to kill us."]"
The Pulpit Commentary Syngein/Thieme The Voice	. . After the supervisors left Pharaoh, they went directly to Moses and Aaron who were already waiting for them. <b>Supervisors</b> (to Moses and Aaron): May the Eternal see and judge what you have done. Now because of you Pharaoh and all who serve him look on us as if we were some kind of disgusting odor. You <i>might as well</i> have put the sword in their hands <i>they will use</i> to kill us.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and they reached "Mosheh <sup>Plucked out</sup> " and "Aharon <sup>Light bringer</sup> " standing to meet them in their going out from "Paroh <sup>Great house</sup> ", and they said to them, "YHWH <sup>He is</sup> " will (look) upon you, and he will decide, (because) you made our aroma stink in the eyes of "Paroh <sup>Great house</sup> " and in the eyes of his servants, to give a sword in their hand to kill us,...
Concordant Literal Version	.
Context Group Version	And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came out from Pharaoh: and they said to them, YHWH look at you (pl), and judge: because you (pl) have made our aroma to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his slaves, to put a sword in their hand to kill us.
Darby Translation	And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood there to meet them, as they came out from Pharaoh. And they said to them, Jehovah look upon you and judge, that ye have made our odour to stink in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his bondmen, putting a sword into their hand to kill us!
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	.
English Standard Version	.
Green's Literal Translation	.
Jack Ballinger's translation	.
Modern English Version	Then they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh. And they said to them, "May the LORD look on you and judge, because you have made our scent stink in the estimation of Pharaoh and in the estimation of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us."
Modern KJV	.
NASB	When they left Pharaoh's presence, they met Moses and Aaron as they were waiting [Lit <i>standing to meet</i> ] for them. They said to them, "May the LORD look upon you and judge you, for you have made us odious [Lit <i>our savor to stink</i> ] in Pharaoh's sight and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us."
New European Version	<b>Israelite Anger with Moses and Aaron</b> They met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came out from Pharaoh: and they said to them, May Yahweh look at you, and judge, because you have made us a stench to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us.
New King James Version	Then, as they came out from Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron who stood there to meet them. And they said to them, "Let the LORD look on you and judge, because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us."
New Standard Bible	They met Moses and Aaron, who were waiting for them, as they came forth from Pharaoh; and they said to them, "Yahweh look upon you and judge, because you have made us offensive in the sight of Pharaoh and his servants, and have put a sword in their hand to kill us."
Owen's Translation	.
Restored Holy Bible 6.0	And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood against them, as they came forth from Pharaoh. And they said to them, The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made our savour to be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hands to slay us.
Ron Snider's Translation	.
Stuart Wolf	.
Third Millennium Bible	.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	.
A Voice in the Wilderness	.
Webster's Bible Translation	.
World English Bible	.

Young's Literal Translation  
Young's Updated LT

And they meet Moses and Aaron standing to meet them, in their coming out from Pharaoh, and say unto them, "Jehovah look upon you, and judge, because you [all] have caused our fragrance to stink in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants—to give a sword into their hand to slay us."

**The gist of this passage:**

vv. 20-21

Exodus 5:20			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
pâga <sup>c</sup> (פגַע) [pronounced <i>paw-GAHĠ</i> ]	<i>to fall upon, to meet, to encounter, to reach; to entreat [by request], to assail [with a petition], to urge; to strike, to kill, to slay; to touch out of boundary; to reach [to anyone]; to strike a covenant [with someone], to make peace</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6293 BDB #803
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced <i>moh-SHEH</i> ]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'Ahârôn (אַהֲרֹן) [pronounced <i>ah-huh-ROHN</i> ]	transliterated <i>Aaron</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #175 BDB #14
nâtsab (נִצְבִּים) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAH<sup>EV</sup></i> ]	<i>those stationed, the ones left standing, stationing themselves, who are taking a stand; those standing [at the ready]; deputies, prefects; officers; guards; those who are waiting</i>	masculine plural, Niphal participle	Strong's #5324 BDB #662
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qârâ' (אָרַךְ) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to encounter, to befall, to meet; to assemble [for the purpose of encountering God or exegeting His Word]; to come, to assemble</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #7122 & #7125 BDB #896

## Exodus 5:20

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
The NET Bible: <i>Moses and Aaron would not have made the appeal to Pharaoh that these Hebrew foremen did, but they were concerned to see what might happen, and so they waited to meet the foremen when they came out.</i> <sup>52</sup>			
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against ;by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	<i>to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered <i>when [such and such happens]</i> . It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb.			
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object)	Strong's #854 BDB #85
Together, min 'êth mean <i>from proximity with, from with, from close proximity to, to proceed from someone</i> . A good up-to-date rendering might be <i>directly from</i> . The idea is, the person that these prepositions refer to is supposed to directly be involved in the action or in whatever is being requested.			
par <sup>e</sup> ôh (פַּרְעֹה) [pronounced pah <sup>e</sup> -G <sup>O</sup> H]	<i>great house; possibly hair head (indicating one of great age and therefore with wisdom and authority); transliterated pharaoh</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6547 BDB #829

**Translation:** Moses and Aaron then met those waiting to meet them when they came out from [being] with Pharaoh.

The foremen from the Israelites had just met with Pharaoh, and now they would meet with Moses and Aaron, to speak with them about the events which have transpired.

The way that I read this is, Moses and Aaron are waiting for the foremen, after their visit with Pharaoh. The natural discussion to follow is what Pharaoh has said to them.

Moses and Aaron themselves had already gone to Pharaoh, a day or two earlier, and expressed the need of this people to go and worship the LORD out in the desert-wilderness. There were no immediate threats made to Pharaoh; just a general threat. **Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."** (Ex. 5:3; ESV; capitalized) As discussed earlier, this is an odd *consequence* to present. It sounds as if God would bring pestilence and the sword against Moses, Aaron and the people of God, just as much as against Pharaoh and the people of Egypt.

<sup>52</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.

The translations sound quite different for v. 20. NASB reads: *When they left Pharaoh's presence, they met Moses and Aaron as they were waiting for them.* *The Emphasized Bible* reads: *So they fell upon Moses and upon Aaron, stationing themselves to meet them,—as they came forth from Pharaoh;* The verb used, *pāga'* (פָּגַעַ) [pronounced *paw-GAW*] means *to meet, to encounter* and it can imply friendly terms, an accidental encounter, or meeting with hostility. *They* refers to the foremen, as Moses and Aaron are direct objects here. They are described by the Niphal participle of *nātsab* (נָצַבַ) [pronounced *naw-TSAB*] which means *to take a stand, to station oneself.* The participle is used as an adjectival noun, describing Moses and Aaron; the Niphal is usually the passive of the Qal, but it can be used to describe an action which is in progress or development. Moses and Aaron are to be speaking to Pharaoh; not these foremen. Moses and Aaron are just standing by waiting to hear what Pharaoh said.

This is followed by the Qal infinitive construct of *qîr'ah* (קָרְאָה) [pronounced *keer-AWH*] and it means *to meet.* The 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine plural suffix allows us to add the word *them.* So, instead of going right back to Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron appear to be taking a secondary role, standing off to the side, and hoping that the foremen will be able to straighten things out. They are waiting for foremen to come out to find out how things went.

Exodus 5:20 *Moses and Aaron then met those waiting to meet them when they came out from [being] with Pharaoh.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

These officers just spoke to Pharaoh, and now they came out, and there is Moses and Aaron, waiting for them. Everything that Moses and Aaron were doing was brand new to them as well. God made it clear that Pharaoh would not respond positively towards their first coming to him; however, God did not indicate what the exact response of Pharaoh was going to be.

I have no doubt that the foremen could hardly wait to run into Moses and Aaron and give them an earful. They are extremely angry at Moses and Aaron because they have taken an intolerable situation and have made it even more intolerable. No one stops to think that God has chosen these things to occur (remember, we are viewing this meeting through man's eyes). These Hebrew officers have no solutions that they can offer. They are simply looking to place blame.

No doubt, Moses and Aaron have little to offer them by way of consolation.

The ESV; capitalized will be used below.

### Exodus 5 is the human viewpoint approach to the first meeting

1. Everything about this chapter on the first meeting between Moses (and Aaron) and Pharaoh is seen from human viewpoint.
2. In v. 2, Pharaoh says, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD."
3. When Aaron tells Pharaoh what they would like, Pharaoh says, "Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people away from their work? Get back to your burdens."
4. Pharaoh eventually decides to let Moses and Aaron meander about in freedom; but he has the Hebrew overseers beaten—this would drive a wedge between the Hebrew elders (many of whom are probably overseers) and Moses and Aaron. On a manipulative, human level, this is brilliant. But it won't stand before God.
5. Pharaoh then gives the order that the Hebrew slaves must forage for their own straw—that it will not be provided for them anymore. Exodus 5:6–8
6. Pharaoh calls the demands of Moses and Aaron *lying words* in v. 9.
7. The taskmasters tell the slaves to produce the same number of bricks and look for straw themselves. Exodus 5:10–13
8. It is fascinating to me that the decree of Pharaoh will result in his slaves producing fewer bricks—exactly the thing that worried him when Moses and Aaron asked for time off for the Hebrew people to worship their God.



## Exodus 5 is the human viewpoint approach to the first meeting

9. The foremen of the Hebrew people (who are also Hebrews) are beaten. V. 14.
10. The foremen come before Pharaoh to plead their case, and Pharaoh reiterates his decree. Exodus 5:15–19
11. These men will complain to Moses and Aaron. Vv. 20–21.
12. Moses will complain to God. Vv. 22–23.

As you see, this chapter is given over almost exclusively to seeing this first meeting between Moses and Pharaoh through the eyes of various men.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

So far in this chapter, Moses and Aaron have gone before Pharaoh and have requested that the Hebrew people be given time to go and worship their God. Pharaoh has not only refused this request, but he requires that the Hebrew slaves to now gather their own straw, and yet continue to produce the same number of bricks—an impossible requirement. When they cannot produce, Pharaoh has their Hebrew foremen beaten.

Exodus 5:20 **Then, as they** [the Hebrew foremen] **came out from Pharaoh, they met Moses and Aaron who stood there to meet them.**

There is probably some overlap between the Hebrew foremen and the elders of Israel. They might even be the same sets of people. In any case, they have been beaten for not being able to get their people to perform an impossible task, so they appealed to Pharaoh and their appeal was shut down.

Moses and Aaron are right there, ready to meet these foremen, as they come out from speaking to Pharaoh, wanting to know what happened in their meeting. I mentioned in the previous lesson that this chapter is all about human viewpoint. Moses and Aaron see this second meeting as being important, and they want to know what happened. Maybe they tell these foremen, “We are so sorry, guys, for you being beaten and for our people being assigned more work.” This is the natural reaction of someone thinking with human viewpoint.

### Exodus 5:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39



## Exodus 5:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; apocopated jussive	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shâphaṭ (שָׁפַט) [pronounced shaw-FAHT]	<i>to judge, to condemn, to punish; to defend [especially the poor and oppressed], to defend [one's cause] and deliver him from his enemies; to rule, to govern</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8199 BDB #1047

The NET Bible: *The foremen vented their anger on Moses and Aaron. The two jussives express their desire that the evil these two have caused be dealt with. "May Yahweh look on you and may he judge" could mean only that God should decide if Moses and Aaron are at fault, but given the rest of the comments it is clear the foremen want more. The second jussive could be subordinated to the first – "so that he may judge [you]."*<sup>53</sup>

**Translation:** They said to Moses and Aaron [lit., them], "Let Y<sup>e</sup>howah look upon you [both] and judge,..."

These are the foremen speaking to Moses and Aaron. They tell them to let their God look over what has happened and judge for Himself how things are going.

Exodus 5:21a *And they said to them, "Let the Lord look on you and judge,..."* (NKJV)

The Hebrew officers are speaking to Moses and Aaron. "God sees what is going on," they say, "Let Him see what you two have done and judge the situation." Just what you would expect—a human viewpoint, self-righteous response.

In other words, "Since you two showed up and started asking for Pharaoh to let us go to worship our God, all hell has broken loose. Our lives are a mess and we have been beaten and we have to go out there and do this all over again. Thanks for nothing!"

Exodus 5:21a *And they said to them, "Let the Lord look on [both of] you and judge,..."* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

The elders are speaking to Moses and Aaron. They want God to evaluate what has just happened and to treat Moses and Aaron accordingly.

<sup>53</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.

This is exactly what Pharaoh wanted. He wanted the elders of Israel to turn against Moses and Aaron. If I were to make an educated guess, it is that Pharaoh recognized Moses and Aaron as natural leaders. Therefore, rather than make martyrs of them and kill or imprison them, Pharaoh acts to drive a wedge between the people and them.

Exodus 5:21b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, so that, in that; for that, since; which; when, at what time; who, whom; where, wherever; the fact that = how; because that, because; as, like as; yea, even, yea even; until that; then, so [in an apodosis]</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb to be is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
'āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER] is actually used in a number of different ways; it can mean <i>that, so that, in that; for that, since; which; when, at what time; who; where, wherever; the fact that = how; in order that, because that, because; as, like as; yea, even, yea even; until that; then, so [in an apodosis]</i> .			
bā'ash (שָׂאָה) [pronounced baw-AHSH]	<i>to make fetid; to become hateful [or, odious]; to stink, to emit [or, produce] a stench; to act wickedly and cause oneself shame, to make oneself odious</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine plural, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #887 BDB #92
'êth (תָּא) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
rêyach (רִיחַ) [pronounced RAY-akh]	<i>scent, odor, pleasant smell</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #7381 BDB #926
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'êynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced ġay-nah-YIM]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
Together, the bēyth preposition and the construct form 'êynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced ġay-nah-YIM], literally mean <i>in the eyes of</i> ; it can be understood to mean <i>in the opinion of, in the thinking of, in the estimation of, in the view of; as _____ sees things to be, in the sight of</i> .			
par <sup>e</sup> ôh (פָּרֹה) [pronounced pah <sup>e</sup> -ŶOH]	<i>great house; possibly hair head (indicating one of great age and therefore with wisdom and authority); transliterated pharaoh</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6547 BDB #829

**Translation:** ...as you have made our odor repulsive in the eyes of Pharaoh...

I would think that only a portion of their conversation is recorded, and that Moses and Aaron were made aware of exactly what Pharaoh has said and done. However, we already know that, so it does not have to be repeated here. What we read, instead, is how this is characterized by the foremen. “Now, you have made us stink before Pharaoh,” they say.

This is put in a fascinating way, that their odor or scent has become odious in the *sight* of Pharaoh.

Exodus 5:21a-b [And they said to them, “Let the Lord look on you and judge, because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh...”](#) (NKJV)

Both instances of *you* are plural. The elders are speaking to Moses and Aaron. It is unlikely that they fully appreciate, at this point, that God has put Moses in charge.

The officers of Israel complain to Moses and Aaron that they have made the Hebrew people abhorrent to Pharaoh; and they call for God to look on them and judge Moses and Aaron for what they have done.

I believe that this encounter between the Hebrew supervisors and Moses and Aaron went pretty much as Pharaoh expected it to go. I believe that this is an intentional setup by Pharaoh. He wants the elders of the Hebrew people to turn against Moses and Aaron, and that is exactly what has happened.

Exodus 5:21c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced <i>gay-nah-YIM</i> ]	<i>eyes, two eyes, literal eye(s), spiritual eyes; face, appearance, form; surface</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #5869 (and #5871) BDB #744
Together, the bêt̄h preposition and the construct form ʿêynayim (עֵינַיִם) [pronounced <i>gay-nah-YIM</i> ], literally mean <i>in the eyes of</i> ; it can be understood to mean <i>in the opinion of, in the thinking of, in the estimation of, in the view of; as _____ sees things to be, in the sight of</i> .			
ʿebādîym (עֲבָדָיִם) [pronounced <i>ge<sup>b</sup>-vaw-DEEM</i> ]	<i>slaves, servants; workers; underlings; subjects; slavery, bondage, servitude; this can mean military men, soldiers in the plural</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

In today's world, these people would be understood to be *workers, employees, hires*.

**Translation:** ...and in the eyes of his servants,...

The people of Israel are also odious in the *sight* of Pharaoh's servants.

Exodus 5:21b-c [...because you have made us abhorrent in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants,...](#)

When this phrase is translated literally, it is a somewhat humorous phrase: “You have made us to stink in the eyes of Pharaoh and his servants.”

Very noticeable here is the incongruity of their smell being offensive to Pharaoh's eyes. This is called catachresis [pronounced *CAT-a-chree-sis*] or an incongruity. One word is changed for another and this is contrary to the ordinary usage and meaning of it. It draws attention to the strength of the statement. On the other hand, these men could have been so upset that they just blurted this out, barely able to think of what they were saying.

This is a shadow of things to come. Moses and Aaron would face an uphill battle with the Hebrew people for the next forty years. The Hebrews under slavery never did quite grasp the full impact of what was occurring; nor did they fully appreciate what God was doing on their behalf. They did not fully understand the importance of their freedom. This is why Moses had so much trouble with them in the desert and why God made them wander the desert until He killed off the first generation. These foolish overseers don't see the Pharaoh as being the one out of line, but Moses and Aaron. They are short-sighted and are only able to see things from their own point of view.

Interestingly enough, we are going to go back and see this first meeting again—but, this next time, it will be from God's point of view. The use of the double narrative is quite fascinating. Right now, we are looking at the first meeting between Moses and Aaron and Pharaoh; and what happened as a result—all of it very much from the viewpoint of the Hebrew people. They will almost pull Moses and Aaron to their side, to their way of thinking (which is human viewpoint).

With chapter 7, we are going to look at this entire experience again—the first meeting between Moses and Aaron and Pharaoh—but this next time, we will see it from God's point of view. It may appear that Moses and Aaron are getting a do-over before Pharaoh, but that is not what is happening. We are going to go back and see this same meeting, but from God's viewpoint. Is there a problem which occurs here? Yes, but it is nothing. It is barely a hiccup. From human viewpoint, what is happening seems quite serious; but from God's viewpoint, it is nothing. This whole thing about no straw seems like a very big deal to those thinking from their own human standards; to God, this is nothing. It is not an obstacle or a problem.

### Exodus 5:21d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> <sup>h</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i> ]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
chereb (כֶּרֶב) [pronounced <i>khe-RE<sup>B</sup>V</i> ]	<i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #2719 BDB #352
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i> ]	<i>hand; figuratively for strength, power, control; responsibility</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> <sup>h</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

## Exodus 5:21d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hârag (הָרַג) [pronounced haw-RAHG]	<i>to kill, to slay, to execute; to destroy, to ruin</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural suffix	Strong's #2026 BDB #246

The NET Bible: *The infinitive construct with the lamed (תָּתַל, latet) signifies the result ("so that") of making the people stink. Their reputation is now so bad that Pharaoh might gladly put them to death. The next infinitive could also be understood as expressing result: "put a sword in their hand so that they can kill us."*<sup>54</sup>

**Translation:** ...to give a sword in their hands to kill us."

"What you have done," the foremen tell Moses and Aaron, "is you have put the sword in Pharaoh's hand to kill us."

We are not given any real back and forth between Moses and Aaron and the foremen. We simply get their dramatized complaint, which Moses and Aaron will take to God.

Exodus 5:21c ...to put a sword in their hand to kill us." (NKJV)

The elders of Israel are telling Moses and Aaron, "You have put a sword in the hand of Pharaoh so that he might kill us." The last phrase is better understood as *you might as well have given them a sword to kill us with*.

Now, if this thing was of Moses, then their evaluation of the situation is spot on; but if this thing is of God, then these people need to get their minds right. They need to stop seeing this from a human standpoint.

*The sword in the hand* of the Egyptians is a metaphor. They would be killed by the amount of work laid upon them. The officers would be beaten possibly to death, as the people were unable to achieve the unreasonable quotas—and all of this goes back to Moses and Aaron. They are responsible for this, in the eyes of the Hebrew foremen. One man, Pharaoh, has manipulated them to think in this way and to turn on each other.

Exodus 5:21 They said to Moses and Aaron [lit., *them*], "Let Y<sup>e</sup>howah look upon you [both] and judge, as you have made our odor repulsive in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, to give a sword in their hands to kill us." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

I cannot overemphasize this fact: what we are reading and studying here is viewing these events from human viewpoint. In Exodus 7, we will return to this very same meeting—Moses and Aaron will walk in front of Pharaoh for the first time once again. But, at that point we will see this through God's eyes. The difference will be so striking that, you won't even realize that you are witnessing the same event.

Exodus 5:20–21 Moses and Aaron then met those waiting to meet them when they came out from [being] with Pharaoh. They said to Moses and Aaron [lit., *them*], "Let Y<sup>e</sup>howah look upon you [both] and judge, as you have made our odor repulsive in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, to give a sword in their hands to kill us." (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 5:20–21 Moses and Aaron then met with the Israeli foremen, after they came out from being with Pharaoh. They said to Moses and Aaron, "Let Jehovah look upon what you have done and judge, because you have made us repulsive to Pharaoh and his servants. You have given them a sword to use to kill us." (Kukis paraphrase)

<sup>54</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 9, 2017.



## Israel's Deliverance Assured

The officers of Israel have come to Moses and Aaron and they have given them an earful. "Let God look at what you two have done and judge, because you have put the sword in Pharaoh's hand to kill us!" is their complaint.

We are not told how Moses and Aaron responded. Moses goes to God and speaks to Him. Perhaps they muttered something, and wandered off, somewhat taken aback themselves. It will be obvious, by what Moses says to God, that he did not expect this particular turn of events. Moses is disheartened by what has happened.

*The NET Bible: In view of the apparent failure of the mission, Moses seeks Yahweh for assurance. The answer from Yahweh not only assures him that all is well, but that there will be a great deliverance. The passage can be divided into three parts: the complaint of Moses (5:22-23), the promise of Yahweh (6:1-9), and the instructions for Moses (6:10-13). Moses complains because God has not delivered his people as he had said he would, and God answers that he will because he is the sovereign covenant God who keeps his word. Therefore, Moses must keep his commission to speak God's word. See further, E. A. Martens, "Tackling Old Testament Theology," JETS 20 (1977): 123-32. The message is very similar to that found in the NT, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Pet 3:4). The complaint of Moses (5:22-23) can be worded with Peter's "Where is the promise of his coming?" theme; the assurance from Yahweh (6:1-9) can be worded with Peter's "The Lord is not slack in keeping his promises" (2 Pet 3:9); and the third part, the instructions for Moses (6:10-13) can be worded with Peter's "Prepare for the day of God and speed its coming" (2 Pet 3:12). The people who speak for God must do so in the sure confidence of the coming deliverance – Moses with the deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, and Christians with the deliverance from this sinful world.<sup>55</sup>*

**And so turns Moses unto Y<sup>e</sup>howah and so he says, "Adonai, for why have You done evil to the people the this? For why this have You sent me? And from then I have come unto Pharaoh to speak in Your name; he has done evil to the people the this; and delivering You have not delivered Your people."**

Exodus  
5:22–23

**Moses then turned to Y<sup>e</sup>howah and said, "Adonai, why have You done evil to this people? Why now have You sent me? Since I have come into Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people. You certainly have not delivered Your people."**

**Moses turned to Jehovah and said, "My Lord, why have You done evil to this people? For what reason did you send me? Ever since I have come to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; and clearly, You have not delivered Your people."**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so turns Moses unto Y<sup>e</sup>howah and so he says, "Adonai, for why have You done evil to the people the this? For why this have You sent me? And from then I have come unto Pharaoh to speak in Your name; he has done evil to the people the this; and delivering You have not delivered Your people."

Dead Sea Scrolls  
Targum of Onkelos

And Mosheh returned before the Lord and said, O Lord, why hast Thou done evil unto this people, and wherefore didst Thou send me? and from the time that I went in to Pharaoh to speak in Thy name he hath done evil to this people, but liberating Thou hast not liberated Thy people.

<sup>55</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 10, 2017.



Targum (Pseudo-Jonathan)	And Mosheh returned before the Lord, and said, O Lord, why hast Thou done evil to this people, and wherefore hast Thou sent me? From the hour that I went in unto Pharaoh to speak in Thy name, this people hath suffered evil, and delivering Thou hast not delivered them.
Jerusalem targum	.
Revised Douay-Rheims	And Moses returned to the Lord, and said: Lord, why have you afflicted this people? wherefore have you sent me? For since the time that I went in to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has afflicted your people: and you have not delivered them.
Latin Vulgate	.
Plain English Aramaic Bible	.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Moses returned to the LORD and said, O my LORD, Why hast thou caused this people to be ill-treated? And why didst thou send me here? For since the hour I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he has ill-treated this people; and thou hast not delivered thy people at all.
Aramaic ESV of Peshitta	Mosha returned to Mar-Yah, and said, "Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? Why is it that you have sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble on this people; neither have you delivered your people at all."
V. Alexander's Aramaic T.	So Moses returned to the Lord and said, "My Lord, wherefore have you forsaken this nation, and wherefore did you send me? "That from the hour that I came to the Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has maligned this nation, and as for saving you have not saved your people."
C. Thompson LXX (updated)	Thereupon Moses turned to the Lord and said, O Lord, why have you afflicted this people ? And why have you sent me ? For since I went to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has ill treated this people and you have not delivered thy. people.
Septuagint (Greek)	Moses complains to God. Ex.5.22-6.1 And Moses turned to the Lord, and said, I pray, Lord, why have you afflicted this people? and why have you sent me? For from the time that I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has afflicted this people, and you have not delivered your people.
Brenton's Septuagint	.

Significant differences:

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

Bible in Basic English	And Moses went back to the Lord and said, Lord, why have you done evil to this people? why have you sent me? 23 For from the time when I came to Pharaoh to put your words before him, he has done evil to this people, and you have given them no help.
Easy English	Then Moses returned to the Lord. He said: 'Oh Master, why have you done bad things to this people? Why did you send me to them? I came to speak in your name. But since I spoke to Pharaoh, he has done only bad things to the people. And you have done nothing to save your people.'
Easy-to-Read Version–2006	.
God's Word™	.
Good News Bible (TEV)	<b>Moses Complains to the LORD</b> Then Moses turned to the Lord again and said, "LORD, why do you mistreat your people? Why did you send me here? Ever since I went to the king to speak for you, he has treated them cruelly. And you have done nothing to help them!"
<i>The Message</i>	Moses went back to GOD and said, "My Master, why are you treating this people so badly? And why did you ever send me? From the moment I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, things have only gotten worse for this people. And rescue? Does this look like rescue to you?"

Names of God Bible  
NIRV

### The LORD Promises to Save the Israelites

Moses returned to talk to the LORD. He said to him, "Why, Lord? Why have you brought trouble on these people? Is this why you sent me? I went to Pharaoh to speak to him in your name. Ever since then, he has brought nothing but trouble on these people. And you haven't saved your people at all."

New Simplified Bible

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible

Then Moses turned to the LORD and said, "My Lord, why have you abused this people? Why did you send me for this? Ever since I first came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has abused this people. And you've done absolutely nothing to rescue your people."

Contemporary English V.

Moses left them and prayed, "Our LORD, why have you brought so much trouble on your people? Is that why you sent me here? Ever since you told me to speak to the king, he has caused nothing but trouble for these people. And you haven't done a thing to help."

The Living Bible  
New Berkeley Version  
New Century Version

### Moses Complains to God

Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, "Lord, why have you brought this trouble on your people? Is this why you sent me here? I went to the king and said what you told me to say, but ever since that time he has made the people suffer. And you have done nothing to save them."

New Life Version

### God's Promise to Israel

Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, "O Lord, why have You hurt these people? Why did you ever send me? For since I went to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has hurt these people. You have not set Your people free at all."

New Living Translation

Then Moses went back to the LORD and protested, "Why have you brought all this trouble on your own people, Lord? Why did you send me? Ever since I came to Pharaoh as your spokesman, he has been even more brutal to your people. And you have done nothing to rescue them!"

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible

Then Moses turned to Jehovah, and said: 'I beg You, O Lord; Why have You caused trouble for these people, and why did You send me? For from the time that I went to Pharaoh to speak in Your Name, he's made things harder for these people... and You still haven't taken Your people away.'

Beck's American Translation  
International Standard V  
New Advent (Knox) Bible

So that Moses had recourse to the Lord again, and asked him, Lord, why dost thou treat thy people so cruelly? Why didst thou ever send me on such an errand? I gained audience with Pharaoh, and spoke to him in thy name; and since then he does nothing but ill-use thy people; is this the deliverance thou hast sent them?

Translation for Translators

Moses/I left them and prayed to Yahweh again, saying, "O Yahweh, why have you caused all these evil things to happen to your people [RHQ]? And why did you send me here [RHQ]? Ever since I went to the king and told him what you told me to say [MTY], he has treated your people very cruelly, and you have not done anything to help/rescue them!"

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Awful Scroll Bible	Moses was to turn back to Jehovah, and was to say: Lord, is you to have shattered your people? - are they to have been let loose? - I am to have come in to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, even is he to have shattered your people - is you to have rescued, a rescuing of your people?
Bible in Modern English Conservapedia	. So Moses went back to the LORD and said, "My Lord, why have you treated your people so poorly? Why have you sent me? Ever since I've come here to Pharaoh, to speak for you, he has just done cruel things to these people, and you haven't rescued your people at all." Moses should have remembered that God briefed him against this very event. How often we forget our Divine "briefings" even today!
Ferrar-Fenton Bible	Then Moses turned to the EVER-LIVING and said ; " Almighty ! why have You caused suffering to this People, and why have You sent me thus ? And why have You sent me to Pharaoh saying ' I will take this People from their suffering ? ' when You have not delivered them ? "
God's Truth (Tyndale)	Moses returned unto the Lord and said: Lord wherefore deal you cruelly with this people: and wherefore have you sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has fared foul with this folk, and yet you have not delivered your people at all, Then the Lord said unto Moses. Now shall you see what I will do unto Pharaoh, for with a mighty hand shall he let them go, and with a mighty hand shall he drive them out of his land.
HCSB Jubilee Bible 2000	. Then Moses returned unto the LORD and said, Lord, why hast thou so afflicted this people? Why is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he has afflicted this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.
H. C. Leupold Lexham English Bible NIV, ©2011	. . <b>God Promises Deliverance</b> Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Why, Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? Is this why you sent me? Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble on this people, and you have not rescued your people at all."
Tree of Life Version Unlocked Literal Bible	. Moses went back to Yahweh and said, "Lord, why have you caused trouble for this people? Why did you send me in the first place? Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak to him in your name, he has caused trouble for this people, and you have not set your people free at all."
Urim-Thummim Version WikiBible	. .

### **Catholic Bibles (those having the imprimatur):**

Christian Community (1988) The Heritage Bible	. And Moses returned to Jehovah, and said, Lord, why have you done evil to this people? Why this? You sent me! And since the time I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name he has done evil to this people; and not snatching out, you have not snatched your people out.
New American Bible (2002) New American Bible (2011)	. <i>Renewal of God's Promise.</i> Then Moses again had recourse to the LORD and said, "LORD, why have you treated this people badly? And why did you send me? From the time I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has treated this people badly, and you have done nothing to rescue your people."
New English Bible	<b><i>Moses complains to God.</i></b>

Moses went back to the LORD, and said, 'Why, O Lord, hast thou brought misfortune on this people? And why didst thou ever send me? Since I first went to Pharaoh to speak in thy name he has heaped misfortune on thy people, and thou hast done nothing at all to rescue them.'

New Jerusalem Bible

Moses went back to Yahweh and said, 'Lord, why do you treat this people so harshly? Why did you send me? Ever since I came to Pharaoh and spoke to him in your name, he has ill-treated this people, and you have done nothing at all about rescuing your people.'

New RSV

Revised English Bible

Moses went back to the LORD and said, "Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? And why did you ever send me? Since I first went to Pharaoh to speak in your name he has treated your people cruelly, and you have done nothing at all to rescue them."

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible

**(Maftir)** Moshe returned to Adonai and said, "Adonai, why have you treated this people so terribly? What has been the value of sending me? For ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has dealt terribly with this people! And you haven't rescued your people at all!"

The Complete Tanach

So Moses returned to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Why have You harmed this people? Why have You sent me?"

**Why have You harmed this people?:** And if You ask, "What is it to you?" [I answer,] "I am complaining that You have sent me." -[from Tanchuma, Va'era 6]

Since I have come to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has harmed this people, and You have not saved Your people."

**he has harmed this people:** Heb. עָרָה, a causative expression. He brought much harm upon them, and the targum renders: שָׂאָבָא

exeGesés companion Bible

And Mosheh returns to Yah Veh and says,  
Adonay, Why vilify you this people?  
Why send you me?  
For since I come to Paroh to word in your name,  
he vilifies this people;  
in rescuing, you rescue not your people.

Hebraic Roots Bible

JPS (Tanakh—1985)

Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, "O Lord, why did You bring harm upon this people? Why did You send me? Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has dealt worse with this people; and still You have not delivered Your people."

Israeli Authorized Version

And Moshe returned unto YY , and said, YY , wherefore hast thou so evil entreated this people? why is it that thou hast sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.

Kaplan Translation

Moses returned to God and said, 'O Lord, why do You mistreat Your people? Why did You send me? As soon as I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he made things worse for these people. You have done nothing to help Your people.'

Orthodox Jewish Bible

And Moshe returned unto Hashem, and said, Adonoi, why hast Thou brought evil upon this people? why is it that Thou hast sent me?  
For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Thy Shem, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast Thou delivered Thy people at all.

The Scriptures 1998

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

The Amplified Bible	Then Moses turned again to the Lord and said, "O Lord, why have You brought harm and oppression to this people? Why did You ever send me? [I cannot understand Your purpose!] Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has harmed and oppressed this people, and You have done nothing at all to rescue Your people."
The Expanded Bible	Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Lord, why have you brought this trouble [evil; harm] on your people? Is this why you sent me here? I went to the king [Pharaoh] and said what you told me to say [to speak in your name], but ever since that time he has made the people suffer [harmed/mistreated this people]. And you have done nothing to save them [rescue/deliver your people]."
The Geneva Bible Kretzmann's Commentary	And Moses returned unto the Lord, turned to Jehovah with a cry of distress, and said, Lord, wherefore hast Thou so evil entreated this people? Why is it that Thou hast sent me? It is an appeal coming from the depths of humility and despair, but also a prayer of faith which clings to the Lord in spite of all adversities. For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast Thou delivered Thy people at all; the Lord had apparently taken no steps to bring about the deliverance of His people from the house of bondage. Thus the Christians will often be inclined to be vexed and impatient in the midst of the trials and tribulations of this world. But God is merciful and patient and does not withdraw His almighty hand.
NET Bible®	<i>The Assurance of Deliverance</i> Moses returned [ <i>Heb</i> "and Moses returned."] to the Lord, and said, "Lord, <sup>59</sup> why have you caused trouble for this people? <sup>60</sup> Why did you ever <sup>61</sup> send me? From the time I went to speak to Pharaoh in your name, he has caused trouble <sup>62</sup> for this people, and you have certainly not rescued <sup>63</sup> them [ <i>Heb</i> "your people." The pronoun ("them") has been used in the translation for stylistic reasons here, to avoid redundancy.]"
The Pulpit Commentary Syndein/Thieme The Voice	. . Moses went back to <i>meet with</i> the Eternal One. <b>Moses:</b> Eternal, these are Your people. Why have You brought so much trouble on them? And why have You sent me here? Ever since I approached Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done more harm to them than ever before. And You have done absolutely nothing to rescue Your people.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Brenner's Mechanical Trans.	...and "Mosheh <sup>Plucked out</sup> turned back to "YHWH <sup>He Is</sup> and he said, "Adonai <sup>My lords</sup> , <why> did you make it dysfunctional (for) this people? <what is the reason> you sent me? and from that time, I came to "Paroh <sup>Great house</sup> to speak in your title, he made it dysfunctional to this people and you :never: delivered your people,...
Concordant Literal Version Context Group Version	. And Moses returned to YHWH, and said, Lord, why have you dealt ill with this people? Why is it that you have sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has dealt ill with this people; neither have you delivered your people at all.
Darby Translation Emphasized Bible English Standard Version Green's Literal Translation Jack Ballinger's translation Modern English Version	. . . . . . God Promises Deliverance



Moses returned to the LORD, and said, "LORD, why have You caused trouble for this people? Why is it that You have sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; neither have You delivered Your people at all."

Modern KJV .

NASB .

New European Version

Moses returned to Yahweh and said, Lord, why have You brought evil on this people? Why is it that You have sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has brought trouble on this people; neither have You delivered Your people at all.

New King James Version

### Israel's Deliverance Assured

So Moses returned to the LORD and said, "LORD, why have You brought trouble on this people? Why is it You have sent me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; neither have You delivered Your people at all."

New Standard Bible

### Moses complains to God.

Then Moses turned again to Yahweh and said, " O Yahweh, why have you done evil to this people? Why did you ever send me? For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people, and you have not delivered your people at all."

Owen's Translation .

Ron Snider's Translation .

Stuart Wolf .

Third Millennium Bible .

Updated Bible Version 2.11 .

A Voice in the Wilderness .

Webster's Bible Translation .

World English Bible .

Young's Literal Translation .

Young's Updated LT

And Moses turns back unto Jehovah, and says, "Lord, why have You done evil to this people? why is this? —You have sent me! And since I have come unto Pharaoh, to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people, and You have not at all delivered Your people."

### The gist of this passage:

vv. 22-23

## Exodus 5:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo'v</i> ]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
Mosheh (מֹשֶׁה) [pronounced <i>moh-SHEH</i> ]	<i>to draw out [of the water] and is transliterated Moses</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #4872 BDB #602



## Exodus 5:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'el (אֵל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

**Translation:** Moses then turned to Y<sup>e</sup>howah...

This simply means that Moses returned to God. We do not know, at this point, exactly how Moses and God are communicating. Is there a place where Moses goes in particular? If I were to guess, that would be my guess.

## Exodus 5:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend; to decide; to answer</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'ădônâi (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]	<i>Lord (s), Master (s), my Lord (s), Sovereign; my lord [master]; can refer to the Trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai, adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #113 & #136 BDB #10

There are actually 3 forms of this word: 'ădônâi (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]; 'ădônay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]; and 'ădônîy (אֲדֹנֵי) [pronounced uh-doh-NEE].

This is a form of Strong's #113, where there are three explanations given for the yodh ending: (1) this is a shortened form of the plural ending, usually written -îym (יָיִם) [pronounced eem], an older form of the *pluralis excellentiæ* (the plural of excellence), where God's sovereignty and lordship are emphasized by the use of the plural; (2) this is the actual, but ancient, plural of the noun, which refers to the Trinity; or (3) this is the addition of the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular suffix, hence, *my Lord* (the long vowel point at the end would distinguish this from *my lords*).

The NET Bible: *The designation in Moses' address is "Lord" (אֲדֹנַי, 'adonay) – the term for "lord" or "master" but pointed as it would be when it represents the tetragrammaton.*<sup>56</sup>

<sup>56</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 10, 2017.

## Exodus 5:22b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i> ]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Lâmed + mâh together literally mean <i>for why</i> . They can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence. BDB also offers the rendering <i>lest</i> . Gesenius, perhaps for this passage alone (1Chron. 15:13), offers the rendering <i>on account of [that] which, because that</i> .			
râ'a' (עָרָא) [pronounced <i>raw-GAHG</i> ]	<i>to make evil, to do evil, to do ill, to cause to do evil, to cause something injurious to be done, to do harm</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7489 BDB #949
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
The NET Bible: <i>The verb is הִתְעַרָה (hare'otah), the Hiphil perfect of עָרָא (ra'a'). The word itself means "to do evil," and in this stem "to cause evil" – but evil in the sense of pain, calamity, trouble, or affliction, and not always in the sense of sin. Certainly not here. That God had allowed Pharaoh to oppose them had brought greater pain to the Israelites.</i>			
The NET Bible continues: <i>Moses' question is rhetorical; the point is more of a complaint or accusation to God, although there is in it the desire to know why. B. Jacob (Exodus, 139) comments that such frank words were a sign of the man's closeness to God. God never has objected to such bold complaints by the devout. He then notes how God was angered by his defenders in the book of Job rather than by Job's heated accusations.</i> <sup>57</sup>			
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i> ]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

**Translation:** ...and said, "Adonai, why have You done evil to this people?"

Moses accuses God of not doing the right thing by His people. "You have not made things any better," Moses complains, "You have done evil to them."

<sup>57</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 10, 2017.

## Exodus 5:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>o</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מַה) [pronounced maw]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Lâmed + mâh together literally mean <i>for why</i> . They can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence. BDB also offers the rendering <i>lest</i> . Gesenius, perhaps for this passage alone (1Chron. 15:13), offers the rendering <i>on account of [that] which, because that</i> .			
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
All BDB definitions for zeh (זֶה) or zô`th (זֶהָ): 1) <i>this, this one, here, which, this...that, the one...the other, another, such</i> ; 1a) <i>(alone)</i> ; 1a1) <i>this one</i> ; 1a2) <i>this...that, the one...the other, another</i> ; 1b) <i>(appos to subst)</i> ; 1b1) <i>this</i> ; 1c) <i>(as predicate)</i> ; 1c1) <i>this, such</i> ; 1d) <i>(enclitically)</i> ; 1d1) <i>then</i> ; 1d2) <i>who, whom</i> ; 1d3) <i>how now, what now</i> ; 1d4) <i>what now</i> ; 1d5) <i>wherefore now</i> ; 1d6) <i>behold here</i> ; 1d7) <i>just now</i> ; 1d8) <i>now, now already</i> ; 1e) <i>(poetry)</i> ; 1e1) <i>wherein, which, those who</i> ; 1f) <i>(with prefixes)</i> ; 1f1) <i>in this (place) here, then</i> ; 1f2) <i>on these conditions, herewith, thus provided, by, through this, for this cause, in this matter</i> ; 1f3) <i>thus and thus</i> ; 1f4) <i>as follows, things such as these, accordingly, to that effect, in like manner, thus and thus</i> ; 1f5) <i>from here, hence, on one side...on the other side</i> ; 1f6) <i>on this account</i> ; 1f7) <i>in spite of this, which, whence, how</i> .			
The NET Bible: <i>The demonstrative pronoun serves for emphasis in the question (see R. J. Williams, Hebrew Syntax, 24, §118). This second question continues Moses' bold approach to God, more chiding than praying. He is implying that if this was the result of the call, then God had no purpose calling him (compare Jeremiah's similar complaint in Jer 20).</i> <sup>58</sup>			
These 3 particles together probably mean something. I will include what various translators have thought at a later date.			
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced shaw-LAKH]	<i>to send, to send for [forth, away], to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth, to stretch out, to direct, to extend; to reach out</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine Qal singular, imperfect; what is sent ( <i>messengers, a message</i> ) is implied; with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018

**Translation:** *Why now have You sent me?* Moses plaintively asks, “*Just why have You sent me, God?*”

Exodus 5:22 So Moses returned to the Lord and said, “Lord, why have You brought trouble on this people? Why is it You have sent me?”

Moses goes to God and offers up the same complaint. He recognizes that he has brought misery upon the people of Israel. *Is this why You sent me*, he asks. In other words, Moses is saying, “Did you send me to bring misery to Your people, Lord?”

<sup>58</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 10, 2017.

Moses is seeing this from the human viewpoint position. He is unable to see this series of events in any other way. God has even told him that Pharaoh would resist him; but this? How could he have known that? Moses knows what he said; and he knows what Pharaoh has done. He cannot seem to see beyond this.

I want you to think back 40 years (in the life of Moses). Moses is out among his people for the first time, and he sees an Egyptian slave-driver beat an Israelite. Moses is so infuriated that he kills the slave driver. And now, because of what he said, probably thousands of Hebrew men were beaten. Do you see how upsetting this would be to Moses?

Here is what Moses does not see: (1) this edict of Pharaoh is going to be quite temporary, because a number of events will completely overshadow Pharaoh's expectations of his slaves. (2) These things that Pharaoh does will further separate the people of Israel from the control of Pharaoh. When God calls upon Israel to walk out of Egypt, there will not be a contingent of Hebrew families who say, "Look, we can't leave Egypt. This is our home. We may be slaves, but we have it pretty good here." No one will be able to make an argument like that. God will say, "March that way, out of Egypt," and the people will move out as a whole. Not a single Hebrew will remain behind.

Exodus 5:22 [Moses then turned to Y<sup>e</sup>howah and said, "Adonai, why have You done evil to this people? Why now have You sent me?"](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Moses continues to complain to God:

Exodus 5:23a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i> ]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'âz (אָז) [pronounced <i>awz</i> ]	<i>then, after that, at that time, in that case (when following an if or though), now, as things are; that being so, therefore, because of that</i>	a temporal/resultant adverb	Strong's #227 BDB #23
Min and 'âz together mean <i>from that time, from of old, formerly, long since; from [any] time, from when, since.</i>			
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance; to attain</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
par <sup>e</sup> ôh (פַּרְעֹה) [pronounced <i>pahr<sup>e</sup>-GOH</i> ]	<i>great house; possibly hair head (indicating one of great age and therefore with wisdom and authority); transliterated pharaoh</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6547 BDB #829
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

## Exodus 5:23a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shêm (שָׁמָּה) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
râ'a <sup>c</sup> (עָרָה) [pronounced raw-GAHG]	<i>to make evil, to do evil, to do ill, to cause to do evil, to cause something injurious to be done, to do harm</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7489 BDB #949
The NET Bible: Now the verb (עָרָה, <i>hera'</i> ) has a different subject – Pharaoh. The ultimate cause of the trouble was God, but the immediate cause was Pharaoh and the way he increased the work. Meanwhile, the Israelite foremen have pinned most of the blame on Moses and Aaron. Moses knows all about the sovereignty of God, and as he speaks in God's name, he sees the effect it has on pagans like Pharaoh. So the rhetorical questions are designed to prod God to act differently. <sup>59</sup>			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'am (עַם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

**Translation:** Since I have come into Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people.

Exodus 5:23a For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people. (NKJV)

Moses questions God and God's plan. "Ever since You sent me to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people." In other words, Moses appears to be telling God, "It does not appear to me that Your plan is working. You have made the lives of these people more miserable."

<sup>59</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 10, 2017.



Moses is unable to see this from God's point of view.

Despite Moses' complaints, God will allow things to get so much worse that the people of Israel will follow Moses out of Egypt. If things were just bad, but not too bad, some of them may have petitioned to remain. God has to bring *every Hebrew* out of Egypt. Every person descended from Jacob went from Canaan into Egypt; and now, every person descended from Jacob must come out of Egypt and return to Canaan.

The way that Moses views everything that has taken place is quite short-sighted. He sees the meeting, he sees the immediate results, but he does not really see God's hand in it. He does not realize that all Israel must choose to leave Egypt. There cannot be a handful of families who think, "Should I stay or should I go?" Every son of Jacob has to want to leave Egypt.

**We need to think as God thinks; we need to see things from God's view:** As believers in Jesus Christ, we can see things from His viewpoint or from our own. *"My thoughts are not your thoughts, and My ways are not your ways," declares the LORD* (Isa. 55:8). We want to think with God's thoughts. We want to perceive the world as God, its Creator, sees it. In fact, that is what God wants for us.

Many times, Paul urges the believer to think with **divine viewpoint**. Therefore, all who are mature should think **this way** [as Paul has been teaching]. **And if you think differently about anything, God will reveal this to you also** [through the continued teaching of Bible doctrine] (Philip. 3:15). **Keep thinking objectively about things above** [divine viewpoint] **and not about things on the earth** [human viewpoint] (Col. 3:2).

There is only one way that we can see things from God's viewpoint and that is for us to learn and understand and believe God's view of things. *If only we knew someone who has the mind of Christ. But the unregenerate man of the highest intellectual attainments is not given access to the things of the Spirit of God, for to him they are folly, and he is not able to come to know them because they are understood in a spiritual realm. But the spiritual man investigates indeed all things, but he himself is not being probed by anyone. For who has come to know experientially the Lord's mind, he who will instruct Him? But as for us, we have the mind of Christ* (1Cor. 2:12–13). You see? We know someone who knows the mind of Christ. Having the mind of Christ is divine viewpoint, and the apostles were able to teach divine viewpoint. We look to the epistles of Paul (and others), for in them is the mind of Christ.

Paul did not teach worldly wisdom; he did not teach some form of human viewpoint. He taught God's way of thinking. *My language and the message I preached were not adorned with pleasing words of worldly wisdom, but they were attended with proof and power given by the Spirit, so that your faith might not be in men's wisdom, but in God's power* (1Cor. 2:4–5).

To be clear, this is an order from God. God does not simply tell us, "You know, it'd be a nice idea for you to make your mind conformed to Mine." God orders us to do that: **Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renovation of your thinking, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God. For I say through the grace which has been given to me to every one who is among you, stop thinking of yourself in terms of arrogance beyond what you ought to think, but think in terms of sanity for the purpose of being rational without illusion as God has assigned to each one of us a standard of thinking from [Bible] doctrine.** (Rom. 12:2–3).

None of this happens overnight. It comes from consistent exposure to the word of God, where you choose to believe in His Words.

Moses is not there yet. However, surprisingly enough, Moses will move in that direction in a relatively short period of time.

## Exodus 5:23b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâtsal (נָצַל) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAHL</i> ]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve, to recover</i>	Hiphil infinitive absolute	Strong's #5337 BDB #664
The <b>infinitive absolute</b> has four uses: ❶ when found alone, it sometimes acts as an English gerund, so that we may add <i>ing</i> to the end of the verb; ❷ When found directly before its verbal cognate, it serves to intensify or strengthen the action or the meaning of the verb which follows; ❸ When it follows its cognate verb, it emphasizes the duration or the continuation of the verbal idea; and, ❹ it is sometimes used as a substitute for a finite verb form. <sup>60</sup>			
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
nâtsal (נָצַל) [pronounced <i>naw-TSAHL</i> ]	<i>to snatch away, to deliver, to rescue, to snatch out of danger, to preserve, to recover</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5337 BDB #664
The NET Bible: <i>The Hebrew construction is emphatic: תִּלְצֶה-אֶל לְצַהּוּ; (vÿhatsel lo'-hitsalta). The verb לָצַח (natsal) means "to deliver, rescue" in the sense of plucking out, even plundering. The infinitive absolute strengthens both the idea of the verb and the negative. God had not delivered this people at all.</i> <sup>61</sup>			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

**Translation:** ...You certainly have not delivered Your people."

Moses is expecting God to take care of all of this right away, or awhile ago. "Clearly," he says, "You have not delivered Your people."

When a verb is used twice in the same breath, it places great emphasis upon the assertion or the expression. In terms of verbs, it is a superlative with respect to magnitude and gravity of the action involved. Moses did not listen carefully to God and now he claims that in God's deliverance of the Jews, he did not deliver them. This is a scathing indictment levied by Moses.

Pharaoh blames the foremen and the Jewish people; the foremen and the Jewish people blame Moses and Aaron. We don't hear from *spokesman* Aaron, but he certainly blamed Moses, if silently. Now Moses blames God.

<sup>60</sup> *Biblical Hebrew*; Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 184–185.

<sup>61</sup> From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?exo5.htm> (footnote); accessed July 10, 2017.

It is quite fascinating how Moses said that he is not a public speaker, that he just could not stand his ground speaking before Pharaoh; and yet, notice what he is saying to God right here. Moses is strong and powerful here, despite the fact that his message is wrong.

It ought not be difficult to recognize that pharaoh, if compared to God, is nothing.

Also, this is a very odd place to end this chapter—God is about to answer Moses. However, that will wait for chapter 6.

God's answers are found in Exodus 6. There are many bad divisions in the book of Exodus. Here, Moses voices his complaint to God as to what has transpired, and has leveled some reasonable questions. It would have been logical for God to address his complain in this chapter (or to move the final two verses of this chapter to Exodus 6).

Exodus 5:23 *Since I have come into Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people. You certainly have not delivered Your people.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

“Look, God,” Moses is saying, “You talked about delivering this people, but all that has happened is, more work has been put upon them and they are not delivered even slightly.”

Surely, Moses should have realized that, without sufficient pressure from God, Pharaoh was not just going to give in and grant Moses' request. I think what confused Moses was, Pharaoh did not just say *no*, but then he issued a decree.

Now, bear in mind that God has already told Moses that Pharaoh was not going to suddenly capitulate to his demands. It is clear that this would be a process, not an overnight thing.

There will be 10 plagues brought upon the Egyptian people. This allows for everyone to make a clear and conscious choice—either for or against the God of the Hebrews. When we get to that point, every Hebrew person will follow Moses out of Egypt (and thus, follow their God).

Interestingly enough, this conversation between God and Moses is continued into the next chapter—something which has already happened in the book of Exodus. You may ask, *why start a new chapter mid-conversation?* This is because Exodus 5 is all about human viewpoint. As soon as God speaks, we are hearing divine viewpoint.

Exodus 5:22–23 *Moses then turned to Y<sup>e</sup>howah and said, “Adonai, why have You done evil to this people? Why now have You sent me? Since I have come into Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people. You certainly have not delivered Your people.”* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Exodus 5:22–23 *Moses turned to Jehovah and said, “My Lord, why have You done evil to this people? For what reason did you send me? Ever since I have come to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; and clearly, You have not delivered Your people.”* (Kukis paraphrase)

<b>Chapter Outline</b>		<b>Charts, Graphics, Short Doctrines</b>
<b>Beginning of Document</b>	<b>Doctrines Covered or Alluded to</b>	<b>Chapters of the Bible Alluded to</b>
<b>Definition of Terms</b>	<b>Introduction and Text</b>	<b>Addendum</b>
<a href="http://www.kukis.org">www.kukis.org</a>		<b>Exegetical Studies in Genesis</b>

The idea here is, there are things which we find in this chapter which are extremely important.

### Why Exodus 5 is in the Word of God

1. T
- 2.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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These are things which we learn while studying this particular chapter.

### What We Learn from Exodus 5

1. T
- 2.

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Many chapters of the Bible look forward to Jesus Christ in some way or another. A person or situation might foreshadow the Lord or His work on the cross (or His reign over Israel in the Millennium). The chapter may contain a prophecy about the Lord or it may, in some way, lead us toward the Lord (for instance, by means of genealogy).

### Jesus Christ in Exodus 5

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Shmoop tends to be rather flippant.

### Shmoop Summarizes Exodus 5

#### Regional Grain Dispute Politics

- Moses and Aaron ask Pharaoh to let the Israelites go into the wilderness and worship for a few days. Heads up: they do not ask for complete freedom. This isn't a revolution yet.
- Pharaoh says he's never heard of God... so no.
- He also tells the Israelites that they must now deliver the same number of bricks per day, but that from this point on, the Egyptians will no longer provide straw. In today's terms, this would be like receiving a government contract to build a building, and then having the government illegalize the sale of steel and concrete to your company.
- The Israelite supervisors go and talk with Pharaoh, but he tells them to get lost. Think of this as a kind of regional trade dispute. Even though the Bible makes it seem like the Israelites were slaves, these negotiation scenes suggest a kind of work relationship. Nobody negotiates with their master, right?
- Moses is berated by the Israelite supervisors, and he asks God why he was sent here if God is doing nothing to help.

From <http://www.shmoop.com/exodus/chapter-5-summary.html> accessed July 10, 2017.

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Alfred Edersheim wrote a book called *The Bible History, Old Testament*, which is very similar to Josephus, where he simply rewrites much of what is in the Bible, and adds in notes and comments as he deems to be relevant.

This comes from Chapter 6, entitled *Moses And Aaron Deliver Their Message To Pharaoh - Increased Oppression Of Israel - Discouragement Of Moses - Aaron Shows A Sign - General View And Analysis Of Each Of The Ten "Strokes," Or Plagues* Exodus 5-12:30.

### Edersheim Summarizes Exodus 5

After the first interview, in which Moses and Aaron had simply delivered the Divine command, Pharaoh, who had pleaded ignorance of Jehovah (that is, of His Deity and claims), professed to regard the demand of Moses as a mere pretense to procure a series of holidays for the people. They were "vain words" (5:9) "to let the people from their works" (ver. 4). As "the people of the land" - that is, the Israelites, the laboring class - were "many," to "make them rest from their burdens" (ver. 5) would inflict great damage upon the king. To prevent their having either time or inclination to listen to such suggestions, the king ordered that, while the old amount of work should continue to be exacted, the straw needful for making the sun-dried bricks (such as we find on the monuments of Egypt) should no longer be supplied. The time requisite for gathering "stubble instead of straw" prevented, of course, their fulfilling their "daily tasks."

The punishment then fell upon the Israelitish "officers," or rather "scribes," whom the Egyptian "taskmasters" had set over the work and held responsible for it. An appeal to Pharaoh only explained the cause of his increased severity, and the "officers" of a people which but lately had acknowledged that God had visited them, not seeing that visitation, but rather seemingly the opposite, ventured in their unbelief to appeal to Jehovah against Moses and Aaron! So rapidly do the results of a faith which cometh only by the hearing of the ear give way before discouragements.

As for Moses, the hour of his severest trial had now come. With the words of Israel's complaint he went straight to the Lord, yet, as St. Augustine remarks, not in the language of contumacy or of anger, but of inquiry and prayer. To his question, "Lord, wherefore hast Thou so evil entreated this people?" (5:22) - as so often to our inquiries into God's "Wherefore" - no reply of any kind was made. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." To us, indeed, the "need be" of making the yoke of Egypt as galling as possible seems now evident, as we remember how the heart of the people clung to the flesh-pots of Egypt, even after they had tasted the heavenly manna; (Numbers 11) and the yet higher "need be for it," since the lower Israel's condition and the more tyrannical Pharaoh's oppression, the more glorious the triumph of Jehovah, and the more complete the manifestation of His enemy's impotence. But in Moses it only raised once more, at this season of depression, the question of his fitness for the work which he had undertaken. For when Satan cannot otherwise oppose, he calls forth in us unbelieving doubts as to our aptitude or call for a work. The direction which Moses now received from God applies, in principle, to all similar cases. It conveyed a fresh assurance that God would certainly accomplish His purpose; it gave a fuller revelation of His character as Jehovah, with the special promises which this implied (6:2-8); and it renewed the commission to Moses to undertake the work, accompanied by encouragements and assurances suitable in the circumstances.

From [www.biblestudytools.com/history/edersheim-old-testament/volume-2/chapter-6.html](http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/edersheim-old-testament/volume-2/chapter-6.html) accessed .

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## Addendum

The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

### Josephus' History of this Time Period

#### Antiquities of the Jews - Book II CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY YEARS. FROM THE DEATH OF ISAAC TO THE EXODUS OUT OF EGYPT.

#### CHAPTER 13. HOW MOSES AND AARON RETURNED INTO EGYPT TO PHARAOH.

1. SO Moses, when he understood that the Pharaoh, in whose reign he fled away, was dead, asked leave of Raguel to go to Egypt, for the benefit of his own people. And he took with him Zipporah, the daughter of Raguel, whom he had married, and the children he had by her, Gersom and Eleazer, and made haste into Egypt. Now the former of those names, Gersom, in the Hebrew tongue, signifies that he was in a strange land; and Eleazer, that, by the assistance of the God of his fathers, he had escaped from the Egyptians. Now when they were near the borders, Aaron his brother, by the command of God, met him, to whom he declared what had befallen him at the mountain, and the commands that God had given him. But as they were going forward, the chief men among the Hebrews, having learned that they were coming, met them: to whom Moses declared the signs he had seen; and while they could not believe them, he made them see them, So they took courage at these surprising and unexpected sights, and hoped well of their entire deliverance, as believing now that God took care of their preservation.

2. Since then Moses found that the Hebrews would be obedient to whatsoever he should direct, as they promised to be, and were in love with liberty, he came to the king, who had indeed but lately received the government, and told him how much he had done for the good of the Egyptians, when they were despised by the Ethiopians, and their country laid waste by them; and how he had been the commander of their forces, and had labored for them, as if they had been his own people and he informed him in what danger he had been during that expedition, without having any proper returns made him as he had deserved. He also informed him distinctly what things happened to him at Mount Sinai; and what God said to him; and the signs that were done by God, in order to assure him of the authority of those commands which he had given him. He also exhorted him not to disbelieve what he told him, nor to oppose the will of God.

3. But when the king derided Moses; he made him in earnest see the signs that were done at Mount Sinai. Yet was the king very angry with him and called him an ill man, who had formerly run away from his Egyptian slavery, and came now back with deceitful tricks, and wonders, and magical arts, to astonish him. And when he had said this, he commanded the priests to let him see the same wonderful sights; as knowing that the Egyptians were skillful in this kind of learning, and that he was not the only person who knew them, and pretended them to be divine; as also he told him, that when he brought such wonderful sights before him, he would only be believed by the unlearned. Now when the priests threw down their rods, they became serpents. But Moses was not daunted at it; and said, "O king, I do not myself despise the wisdom of the Egyptians, but I say that what I do is so much superior to what these do by magic arts and tricks, as Divine power exceeds the power of man: but I will demonstrate that what I do is not done by craft, or counterfeiting what is not really true, but that they appear by the providence and power of God." And when he had said this, he cast his rod down upon the ground, and commanded it to turn itself into a serpent. It obeyed him, and went all round, and devoured the rods of the Egyptians, which seemed to be dragons, until it had consumed them all. It then

## Josephus' History of this Time Period

returned to its own form, and Moses took it into his hand again.

4. However, the king was no more moved when was done than before; and being very angry, he said that he should gain nothing by this his cunning and shrewdness against the Egyptians; - and he commanded him that was the chief taskmaster over the Hebrews, to give them no relaxation from their labors, but to compel them to submit to greater oppressions than before; and though he allowed them chaff before for making their bricks, he would allow it them no longer, but he made them to work hard at brick-making in the day-time, and to gather chaff in the night. Now when their labor was thus doubled upon them, they laid the blame upon Moses, because their labor and their misery were on his account become more severe to them. But Moses did not let his courage sink for the king's threatenings; nor did he abate of his zeal on account of the Hebrews' complaints; but he supported himself, and set his soul resolutely against them both, and used his own utmost diligence to procure liberty to his countrymen. So he went to the king, and persuaded him to let the Hebrews go to Mount Sinai, and there to sacrifice to God, because God had enjoined them so to do. He persuaded him also not to counterwork the designs of God, but to esteem his favor above all things, and to permit them to depart, lest, before he be aware, he lay an obstruction in the way of the Divine commands, and so occasion his own suffering such punishments as it was probable any one that counterworked the Divine commands should undergo, since the severest afflictions arise from every object to those that provoke the Divine wrath against them; for such as these have neither the earth nor the air for their friends; nor are the fruits of the womb according to nature, but every thing is unfriendly and adverse towards them. He said further, that the Egyptians should know this by sad experience; and that besides, the Hebrew people should go out of their country without their consent.

From: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/ant-2.htm> accessed July 10, 2017. Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*; Book 2, Chapter 13.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

### A Complete Translation of Exodus 5

#### A Reasonably Literal Translation

#### A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

#### Moses and Aaron's initial meeting with Pharaoh

Later, Moses and Aaron went in and spoke to Pharaoh, [saying], "Thus says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, the Elohim of Israel, 'Send out My people so that they [may] celebrate a feast to Me in the desert-wilderness.' "

Afterwards, both Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and they said, "This is the command of Jehovah, the God of Israel: 'You will send My people out of Egypt so that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the desert-wilderness.' "

Then Pharaoh said, "Who [is this] Y<sup>e</sup>howah that I will listen to [and obey] His voice to send away Israel? I do not know Y<sup>e</sup>howah; and therefore, I will not send [them] away."

Pharaoh answered, "Who is this Jehovah that I should listen and obey Him to send Israel away? I do not know Jehovah and, for that reason, I will not send Israel out."

So they said, "The Elohim of the Hebrews has met together with us. Please let us go a journey of 3 days into the desert-wilderness and let us sacrifice to Y<sup>e</sup>howah our Elohim, lest He fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."

So they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Please allow us to journey 3 days into the desert-wilderness so that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God, so that He will not fall upon us with sickness or with the sword."

## A Complete Translation of Exodus 5

A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
The king of Egypt said to them, “Why, Moses and Aaron, do you [both] release the people from their production; go [now and return] to your labor.”	The king of Egypt said to them, “Why, Moses and Aaron, do you think that you are able to release the people from their work? Go now and return to your assigned labors.”
Pharaoh then said, “Listen, [there are] many people in the land, but you have made them to rest from their burdens.”	Pharaoh then said, “Listen, there are many people in this land—who ought to be working—but you have decided to make this people rest from their burdens.”
Pharaoh increases the work requirements for his Hebrew slaves	
So, in that day, Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters among the people and their foremen, saying, “You will no longer give straw to the people as before. They will go out and gather the straw for themselves. Furthermore, the number of bricks which they previously made, you will [continue to] require from them [lit., <i>lay upon them</i> ]. You will not diminish their work [lit., <i>from her</i> ] for they [are quite obviously] idle.	So, in that day, Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters and their foremen who were among the people, saying, “You will no longer provide straw for the people as you did previously. They will go out and gather straw themselves. Furthermore, you will require the same number of bricks to be manufactured as before; you will not diminish their work, even though they now must provide their own straw for the bricks, since they obviously have too much time on their hands.
As a result, they are crying out, saying, ‘Let us go [and] sacrifice to our Elohim.’ The work will be heavy upon the men and they will do it; and they will not look to deceitful words.”	Because of all this idle time, they have become annoying, calling out to us, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to our God.’ I don’t want to hear that nonsense! Therefore, make certain that the work is heavy on these men, so that they will not have time to pursue after deceitful words of their idle prophets.”
So the taskmasters of the people and their foremen go out and spoke to the people, saying, “Thus proclaims Pharaoh: ‘I [will] no longer give you straw. You yourselves will go out [and] you will fetch the straw for yourselves from wherever you [might] find [it]. Nevertheless [lit., <i>for</i> ], your work will not be lessened at all [lit., <i>a word, a thing</i> ].’ ”	So the taskmasters of the people and their foremen all went out and spoke to the people, “Thus proclaims Pharaoh: ‘I will no longer provide straw for your bricks. From hereon out, you must go out and find your own straw. You will bring this straw back to the job site from wherever you might find it. Nevertheless, your work requirement will not be reduced.’ ”
The people of Israel are unable to meet their brick quota	
The people, therefore, scatter [themselves] throughout all the land of Egypt to gather up stubble to replace [lit., <i>for</i> ] the straw.	The people went out throughout the land of Egypt in order to find the stubble to replace the straw, now denied them.
The taskmasters continue urging [them], saying, “Complete your duties, [your assigned] daily tasks [lit., <i>word, thing, matter</i> ] as in the day when there was straw.”	Their taskmasters pressured them, saying, “You need to finish your work, your daily tasks, exactly as you did previously when you were given straw.”
The foremen from the sons of Israel (placed over them by Pharaoh’s taskmasters) were then beaten, saying, “Why have you [all] not completed your task to make bricks as before, today just like yesterday [lit., <i>both yesterday and today</i> ]?”	The Israelite foremen, given authority by Pharaoh’s taskmasters, were then beaten. The taskmasters demanded, “Why have you not completed your task as you did previously? Why are you not making bricks today as you did yesterday?”

<b>A Complete Translation of Exodus 5</b>	
<b>A Reasonably Literal Translation</b>	<b>A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase</b>
The Israeli foremen cry to Pharaoh for mercy	
The foremen from the sons of Israel come and cry unto Pharaoh, saying, "Why do you do this to your servants? [There is] no straw given to your servants and they are saying to us, 'Make bricks!' But listen, your servants are being beaten [yet it is] your people have sinned [or, <i>you sin against your people; or one has sinned against your people</i> ]."	The foremen of the sons of Israel came before Pharaoh and cried for mercy, saying, "Why have you done this to your servants? You order us to make bricks, but there is no straw and we are then beaten. It is not we who have sinned!"
He answered, "You have too much time on your hands [lit., <i>being idle, you (all), being idle</i> ]! Therefore, you keep saying, 'Let us go [and] sacrifice to Y <sup>e</sup> howah.' But now, go [and] work; and you will not be given straw. Furthermore, you will give [the same] number of bricks [previously required by me]."	He answered, "You sons of Israel have far too much time on your hands. As a result, you keep requesting, 'Let us go and sacrifice to Jehovah, our God.'" Instead, you must leave now and go do your work. You will not be given anymore straw. Furthermore, the requirements for brick production will remain unchanged."
The foremen of the sons of Israel recognize the evil in saying, "You [all] will not reduce from your bricks [your assigned] daily amount [lit., <i>word, thing, matter</i> ] [as] in its day."	The foremen of the sons of Israel recognized that this was evil, when the king told them, "You must continue to produce that same number of bricks now as you did previously."
The elders turn against Moses and Aaron; Moses questions Y <sup>e</sup> howah	
Moses and Aaron then met those waiting to meet them when they came out from [being] with Pharaoh. They said to Moses and Aaron [lit., <i>them</i> ], "Let Y <sup>e</sup> howah look upon you [both] and judge, as you have made our odor repulsive in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of his servants, to give a sword in their hands to kill us."	Moses and Aaron then met with the Israeli foremen, after they came out from being with Pharaoh. They said to Moses and Aaron, "Let Jehovah look upon what you have done and judge, because you have made us repulsive to Pharaoh and his servants. You have given them a sword to use to kill us."
Moses then turned to Y <sup>e</sup> howah and said, "Adonai, why have You done evil to this people? Why now have You sent me? Since I have come into Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people. You certainly have not delivered Your people."	Moses turned to Jehovah and said, "My Lord, why have You done evil to this people? For what reason did you send me? Ever since I have come to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done evil to this people; and clearly, You have not delivered Your people."
<b>Chapter Outline</b>	<b>Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines</b>

The following Psalms would be appropriately studied at this time:

<b>Doctrinal Teachers Who Have Taught Exodus 5</b>			
	<b>Series</b>	<b>Lesson (s)</b>	<b>Passage</b>
R. B. Thieme, Jr. taught this	1963 Life of Moses (#698)	#5	Exodus 5

R. B. Thieme, III has not taught this on any available lesson.







<b>Chapter Outline</b>	<b>Charts, Graphics, Short Doctrines</b>	
<b>Beginning of Document</b>	<b>Doctrines Covered or Alluded to</b>	<b>Chapters of the Bible Alluded to</b>
<b>Definition of Terms</b>	<b>Introduction and Text</b>	<b>Addendum</b>
<b><a href="http://www.kukis.org">www.kukis.org</a></b>		<b>Exegetical Studies in Exodus</b>