

Exodus 5

Verses 1 - 2

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.’”² 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.”

Afterward Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh

The elders may have gotten word to the king through the Hebrew foreman that Moses and Aaron wanted an audience with Pharaoh

Let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness

This was a very unusual request seeing it came from the slaves of the king

But Pharaoh said, “Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord

In Exodus 1:8 it says a new king arose that did not know Joseph

If he didn't know Joseph then there is a good chance he didn't know about the Lord

However, the King may have been willingly ignorant of Joseph and the Lord

See 2 Peter 3:8 See KJV of this verse

Verses 3-4

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, otherwise He will fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword.”⁴ But the king of Egypt said to them, “Moses and Aaron, why do you draw the people away from their work? Get *back* to your labors!”

Please, let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God,

It would have been impossible for the Hebrews to sacrifice in Egypt

See Exodus 8:25 - 26

Also the time required for this event would require at least 1 week

3 days out, time to sacrifice and 3 days back

Otherwise He will fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword

This was a strong argument in their favor

A fatal disease among the Israelites would also quickly spread to the Egyptians

In the case of a war, Egypt would stand alone against the invader and the slaves might even join forces with the invader

Get *back* to your labors

The king looked on Moses and Aaron as trouble makers

If they got their way, it would keep the slaves from their work

Verses 5-9

⁵ Again Pharaoh said, "Look, the people of the land are now many, and you would have them cease from their labors!" ⁶ So the same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters over the people and their foremen, saying, ⁷ "You are no longer to give the people straw to make brick as previously; let them go and gather straw for themselves. ⁸ 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 us go and sacrifice to our God.' ⁹ Let the labor be heavier on the men, and let them work at it so that they will pay no attention to false words."

Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters over the people and their foremen

The king used managers and supervisors to complete his projects

The taskmasters were Egyptians with responsibility over the foremen

The foremen were slaves that were given responsibility over their fellow Israelites

The king will now make three arguments why the slaves should not leave

1. The king's 1st response to let my people go was.....**Make them work harder**

Let them go and gather straw for themselves.

Mud bricks were made of Nile mud, a mixture of clay and sand, mixed with straw and manure and then pressed into molds

The straw made the mud easier to handle and increased the stability of the brick before it was dried

See Video 505 Making bricks

<http://www.levickfamily.com/8.12.html>

2. The king's 2nd response to let my people go was.....**The slaves are lazy**

Because they are lazy, therefore they cry out, Let us go and sacrifice to our God

This is how evil slave masters respond to their subjects

3. The king's 3rd response to let my people go was.....**Moses and Aaron are liars**

Let the labor be heavier so they will pay no attention to false words

The king wanted to destroy any faith that the Hebrews had in Moses & Aaron

This was the plight of the Hebrew slaves under their current king.

There was no room for mercy or concern in his hardened heart.

Verses 10-14

¹⁰ So the taskmasters of the people and their foremen went out and spoke to the people, saying, “Thus says Pharaoh, ‘I am not going to give you *any* straw. ¹¹ You go *and* get straw for yourselves wherever you can find *it*, but none of your labor will be reduced.” ¹² So the people scattered through all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. ¹³ The taskmasters pressed them, saying, “Complete your work quota, *your* daily amount, just as when you had straw.” ¹⁴ Moreover, the foremen of the sons of Israel, whom Pharaoh’s taskmasters had set over them, were beaten and were asked, “Why have you not completed your required amount either yesterday or today in making brick as previously?”

Thus says Pharaoh, ‘I am not going to give you *any* straw

This would severely increase the work load for everyone

So the people scattered through all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw

Stubble includes all kinds of field rubbish

To make this fit for making brick, it had to be gathered, chopped up, and sorted

The foremen were beaten and asked, “Why have you not completed your required amount either yesterday or today in making brick as previously?”

The lowest level of management always suffers the most

Verses 15-18

¹⁵ Then the foremen of the sons of Israel came and cried out to Pharaoh, saying, “Why do you deal this way with your servants? ¹⁶ 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.” ¹⁷ But he said, “You are lazy, *very* lazy; therefore you say, ‘Let us go *and* sacrifice to the Lord.’ ¹⁸ So go now *and* work; for you will be given no straw, yet you must deliver the quota of bricks.”

Then the foremen of the sons of Israel came and cried out to Pharaoh

Their attempt to "go around" Moses and Aaron would not be successful

But he said, "You are lazy, very lazy

Can you imagine a leader that criticizes those who have worked hard to do his will under impossible conditions, and then acts like they created the problem?

Verses 19 - 23

¹⁹ The foremen of the sons of Israel saw that they were in trouble because they were told, "You must not reduce *your* daily amount of bricks." ²⁰ When they left Pharaoh's presence, they met Moses and Aaron as they were waiting for them. ²¹ They said to them, "May the Lord look upon you and judge *you*, for you have made us odious in Pharaoh's sight and in the sight of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to kill us." ²² Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, "O Lord, why have You brought harm to this people? Why did You ever send me? ²³ Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has done harm to this people, and You have not delivered Your people at all."

May the Lord look upon you and judge you for you have made us odious in Pharaoh's sight

The foremen heard a message of freedom from Moses

But now they had been physically beaten and saw no resolution in sight

Then Moses returned to the Lord and said, "O Lord, why have you brought harm to this people

So Moses told God that he is good all the time.....Right

NO, he did not do that.

However, Moses did do what every believer should do in moments of frustration

He went straight to God with the problem

²³ Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done harm to this people, and you have not delivered your people at all.”

Does this frankness from Moses surprise you?

After all, he is talking to God, and he is blaming Him for making things worse

In the next chapter we will see how God responds to Moses concerning his accusation