

## **Exodus 5    Making Bricks Without Straw**

Exodus 5: 1-21    Initial Request to Pharaoh

Moses and Aaron go before Pharaoh requesting the people of Israel be let go that they may worship God in the wilderness. This request came from the Lord, the God of Israel. Pharaoh replied, "I do not know the Lord," and stated, "Who is the Lord?" "I will not let Israel go." Pharaoh is defiant as well as ignorant of the Lord's identity. Just as the Lord "knew" the suffering and problems Israel was undergoing, Pharaoh does not "know" the God of the Universe. Moses and Aaron make sure Pharaoh understands the consequences of ignoring the requests of God – pestilence and warfare.

Pharaoh tells them that the people are to go back to work, and the taskmasters are told not to supply straw for the brickmaking. Israel must have too much time to waste on the "false or lying" words of Moses and Aaron, the representatives of the Lord. The people must gather their own "straw" and the daily quotas of bricks will be the same.

The supervisors and taskmasters said, "Thus says Pharaoh," a complete mockery of what Moses had said, "Thus said the Lord," Pharaoh therefore denying the power of God's words and asserting the authority of his own. The supervisors of Israel go before Pharaoh and call themselves his servants, even though the Lord had called them His people. These same supervisors show anger towards Moses and imply future opposition to Moses. These same people must learn to trust the Lord who is working on their behalf.

Exodus 5:22-6:9    God Promises to Deliver Israel from Egypt

Moses questions God why has He done this? Not only is Israel defiant, but they are under even greater hardships. Pharaoh is doing evil, exerting more hardships on the people, and they are not better off. The Lord had previously told Moses this would be the sequence of events that must take place before the people would be set free.

The Lord reaffirms to Moses that He will bring His people out of Israel. He will do this by His own strong hand, which will cause Pharaoh to order them out. The Lord reminds Moses He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and he will remember His covenant. He reminds Moses He will be with him, and that He will redeem, He will bring out, He will be their God, and they will be His people. Moses reminded the people of all these things, but they did not listen, because of their broken spirit and harsh conditions.