### Exodus

## Chapter 5

1Well 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.’  
  
2And PharaOh asked:  
  
 ‘Just who is this Jehovah, that I must pay attention to anything He has to say and send the children of IsraEl away? I don’t know Jehovah, and I’m not letting IsraEl go!’  
  
3So [Moses and Aaron] said:  
  
 ‘The God of the Hebrews has called us to Him, and we’re going on a 3-day journey into the desert to [offer] sacrifices to our God Jehovah; otherwise, we’re afraid that He might strike us and we’ll die!’  
  
4But the king of Egypt replied:  
  
 ‘Why are you, Moses and Aaron, trying to keep people from doing their work? Now, go back and just do your jobs!’  
  
5Then PharaOh said [to his people]:  
  
 ‘{Look!} There are huge numbers of them and we can’t allow them to slack off from doing their work!’  
  
6And as a result, PharaOh gave orders to those who were in charge to tell their supervisors 7not to give the people any straw for brick-making as they did the day before and three days before that.  
  
He said:  
  
 ‘Let them gather and carry the straw for themselves! 8However, 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. 9Therefore, make the men’s work much harder, so they’ll pay attention to that instead of to idle chatter!’  
  
10Well, 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. 11Go get it yourselves! Take it from wherever you can find it… But you must still make the same number of [bricks]!’  
  
12So the people were scattered all over the land of Egypt as they gathered stubble for straw. 13And the taskmasters kept pushing them, saying:  
  
 ‘You aren’t meeting the quotas you had when [we were providing] the straw.’  
  
14But 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?’  
  
15Well as a result, the children of IsraEl’s supervisors went to see PharaOh, and asked him:  
  
 ‘Why are you treating your servants this way? 16You 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?’  
  
17And he said to them:  
  
 ‘You’re lazy and you’re slackers! For you said, ‘Let us go and offer sacrifices to our God.’  
  
 18‘Now, go to work instead, because you won’t be given any straw… But you must meet the same quota of bricks.’  
  
19Well, 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.  
  
20So when they saw Moses and Aaron coming to meet them (just after they’d left PharaOh), 21they 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!’  
  
22Then 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?  
  
 23‘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.’