

Exodus 1:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour:

Analysis

And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour (עבדו) denotes brutal, crushing, ruthless oppression. This intensified cruelty follows the failure of forced labor to suppress population growth. The verb **made to serve** (עבד, avad) will become thematic in Exodus—Israel exchanges service to Pharaoh for service to YHWH (3:12, 4:23). The escalating harshness prepares for Israel's desperate cry (2:23) and God's compassionate response (2:24-25).

Historical Context

Egyptian sources rarely document harsh treatment of laborers, but archaeological evidence and comparative ancient Near Eastern practices confirm brutal conditions for state slaves. The Hebrew text's emphasis on "rigour" suggests treatment exceeding normal forced labor—deliberate cruelty intended to break the people.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How do you maintain spiritual identity when external forces seek to crush your dignity and humanity?
2. What does the escalation from forced labor to brutal oppression teach about the nature of sin and tyranny?

Interlinear Text

בְּפָרָה: יִשְׁרָאֵל מִצְרָיִם אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׁרָאֵל לְיִצְחָק
made And the Egyptians the children of Israel with rigour
H5647 H4714 H853 H1121 H3478 H6531

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