

# Exodus 17:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.

## Analysis

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**And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me**—Moses' cry demonstrates proper response: taking complaint to God rather than arguing with complainers. His question 'What shall I do?' recognizes human insufficiency—Moses cannot create water. The phrase 'almost ready to stone me' (וְלֹא-זָהָר-תִּשְׁתַּחַד, od m'at us'qaluni) reveals how quickly murmuring becomes murder in intent. This prefigures Christ's crucifixion: like Moses, the appointed deliverer faces death from those He came to save. Moses' intercession despite their hostility models Christ's prayer: 'Father, forgive them' (Luke 23:34). Leadership means bearing others' unbelief while seeking God's solution.

## Historical Context

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Stoning was community execution for extreme offenses. Israel's willingness to execute Moses shows the depth of their unbelief and the danger leaders face when following God through trials.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

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1. How does taking complaints to God rather than defending ourselves model faithful leadership?
2. What does the speed from murmuring to murderous intent teach about unbelief's trajectory?

## Interlinear Text

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אָשָׁשׁ הָנָה לְאַמְתָּר הַנְּהָרָה מִשְׁאָה וַיַּצְאָה קָרְבָּן  
cried And Moses H413 unto the LORD saying H4100 What shall I do  
H6817 H4872 H3068 H559 H6213

וְשִׁלְבָּלִים מִעַת עַד הַנְּהָרָה לְעַד  
unto this people H2088 H5750 they be almost ready to stone  
H5971 H4592 H5619

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Samuel 30:6** (References Lord): And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

**Numbers 14:10** (References Lord): But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.

**Acts 14:19** (Parallel theme): And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

**John 10:31** (Parallel theme): Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

**John 8:59** (Parallel theme): Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

