

PHARAOH: Throughout my kingdom I would know -
And give him thanks that would me tell - 30
If any here might be so low
That wished my power to quell.

SOLDIER 2: My lord, there be men that wish so,
That scorn us, and in Goshen dwell
Their power does greatly grow: 35
They are called children of Israel.

They multiply with speed
And truly we suppose
Ever they shall, indeed -
And lordship we shall lose! 40

PHARAOH: Why, how have they begun this game?
Have they the power such strife to raise?

SOLDIER 1: Yea, lord, fierce folk they were, of fame
In King Pharaoh, your father's days.
Of Joseph, that was Jacob's son they came - 45
He was a prince worthy to praise! -
Ever they rise up, with great blame;
Your laws will fall to their wicked ways;

They will confound you clean
If they do not soon cease! 50

PHARAOH: What the devil do they mean
That they so fast increase?

Such bondage for them shall I plan:
 To dig and delve, to draw and bear,
 And do all that demeans a man. 75
 So shall these lads be treated here,
 In slavery for their lives' span!

SOLDIER 2: Thy subtle speech gives us good cheer -
 To spread, these folk no farther can!

PHARAOH: Now help to hold them there: 80
 See I no slackness find!

SOLDIER 1: All ready lord, we both do swear
 In bondage them to bind.

Then enters Moses with a rod in his hand, etc.

MOSES: Great God, that all this world began,
 And ordered it in harmony; 90
 Thou made me, Moses, as I am
 And from the waters thou saved me.
 King Pharaoh made a solemn ban:
 That no man-child should there be saved.
 But I escaped this wicked man - 95
 Thus has God showed his might for me!

Now am I set to keep
 Upon this mountain side
 Bishop Jethro's sheep,
 Till better things betide. 100

Ah, Lord, great is thy might!

Who knows what this marvel may mean?
 Yonder I see a splendid sight,
 Such as on earth was never seen:
 A bush I see, burning so bright, 105
 And yet all of its leaves be green!
 I will go seek upon this height
 To know which man's work this has been.

GOD: Moses! Moses!

Here he speeds to the bush, and God says to him, etc.

Moses, come not too near, 110
 But where you stand, stay still
 And hearken unto me here.
 Attend unto my will;
 These words I speak, now hear:
 Take off your shoes, I tell 115

The ground thou stands on here
 Is sacred, know thou well.

I am thy Lord, mighty and true
 Thee to preserve as I think best.
 To thy forefathers, as they knew, 120
 I am God that them addressed;
 Both Abraham and Isaac too,
 And Jacob I said should be blessed,
 By multitudes born from those few,
 So that their seed should always last. 125

But now this king, Pharaoh,
 Attacks my folk so fast,

If I his deeds allow
Their seed should soon be past!
But I will not do so, 130
If they will in me trust
Their bondage to overthrow;
Therefore now go thou fast.

With Pharaoh keep this in thy mind
If thou would prosper in thy task: 135
Tell him gently, in words kind,
That he should let my people pass,
Into the wilderness to wind,
To worship me as I shall ask.
And if to my will he be blind, 140
Then soon his song shall be "alas!"

MOSES: A, Lord! pardon me, by thy leave.
That lineage loves me not.
Gladly they would me grieve
If I such bidding brought. 145

Good Lord, let some other try
That has more force them to subdue.

GOD: Moses, come, be thou not shy,
My bidding boldly bear with you!
If they harm thee with blows unjust, 150
I shall rescue thee from there.

MOSES: Good Lord, they will not me trust,

No matter what oaths I may swear!

If I move matters new
To wayward wills, indeed, 155
Without a token true
They will not pay me heed.

GOD: If he refuse to understand
This token true have I thee sent:
Before the king cast down thy wand, 160
And it shall turn to a serpent.
Then take the tail again in hand -
Boldly, to its full extent -
And it shall be in thy command
A wand once more, at mine intent. 165

Then soon thy hand to thy breast hold:
As a leper's hand they shall it see;
Then, whole again, thy hand unfold.
Lo! Such my tokens they shall be.

And if he will not suffer then 170
My people forth to pass in peace,
I shall send plagues nine or ten
Which shall ensue before I cease.
But the Hebrews of Goshen
Shall not be plagued, but live at ease. 175
As long as my laws govern them
Their comfort ever shall increase.

MOSES: Ah, Lord, we ought to love thee well,

That make thy folk thus free
I shall unto them tell 180
All thou has told to me.

But to the king, Lord, when I come,
If he ask what is thy name,
And I stand still, both deaf and dumb
How should I escape the blame? 185

GOD: I tell thee thus: "Ego sum qui sum" -
"I am he that is the same."
If thou speak thus mettlesome,
I shall shield thee from shame.

MOSES: I understand now well this thing. 190
I go, Lord, with all the might in me.

GOD: Be bold in my blessing;
Thy succour shall I be.

MOSES: Ah, Lord of love, thy wisdom to me send,
That I thy words may truly tell! 195
Now will I fare unto each friend -
The chosen children of Israel -
That I may comfort to them lend
In the dominion in which they dwell.
God maintain you to the end: 200
With much mirth now fare you well!

YOUNG MAN 1: Ah, master Moses, dear!

Our mirth is all mourning,

For harshly held are we all here,

As serfs under the king.

205

YOUNG MAN 2: We all may mourn, this place within:
There is no man to bring solace.
But since we are all of one kin,
God send us comfort in this case.

MOSES: Brother, cease the mourning I find you in:
God will deliver you through his grace;
Out of this woe he will you win,
And put you in a pleasing place.

210

I shall complain unto the king,
And soon shall fight to make you free.

215

YOUNG MAN 1: God grant you good journeying,
And evermore he with you be!

MOSES: To my words, oh king, give consent.

PHARAOH: Why, boy, what tidings can thou tell?

MOSES: From God himself hither am I sent
To fetch the children of Israel.
To the wilderness he would they went.

220

PHARAOH: Yea, go thou to the devil of hell!
I value not thy God's intent.
In my dominion, hearest thou, shall they dwell!

225

And, traitor, for thy sake,

They shall be put to pain!

MOSES: Then will God vengeance take
On thee, and all of thine.

PHARAOH: On me? Fie on thee, lad! Out of my land! 230
Think thou our laws to thus betray?

Say, whence is yon wizard with his wand,
That thus would weasel our folk away?

SOLDIER 1: Yon is Moses, I understand,
Against all Egypt, so men say. 235
Your father found him underhand;
Now will he mar you, if he may.

PHARAOH: Fie on him! Nay, nay, that dance is done!
You lout! You've learned too late!

MOSES: God bids thee grant my boon, 240
And let me leave your gate.

PHARAOH: Bids God me? False lout, these are lies!
What token gave he? What was sent?

MOSES: He said thou should despise 245
Both me and his commandment;
Therefore, upon this wise
My wand he bad me to present:
To lay it down, and thee advise
That it should turn to a serpent.

And in his holy name 250

Here I lay it down
Lo, sir, here may thou see the same.

PHARAOH: Ah, dog! the devil thee drown!

MOSES: He bade me take it by the tail
Thus to prove his power plain. 255
Then, he said, that without fail
It should turn to a wand again.

Lo, sir, behold!
Thy luck thee fail!
For certain, this is a subtle swain!
But these boys here shall still bewail: 260
Thy games shall not their freedom gain

But worse, both morn and noon,
Shall they fare, for thy sake.

MOSES: I pray God send his justice soon,
And vengeance on you take 265

SOLDIER 1: Alas, alas, this land is torn!
We may no more remain alive
Such mischief is fallen here since morn,
No medicine may us revive!

PHARAOH: Why cry ye lads? Is this some scorn? 270

SOLDIER 2: Sir king, how may we now survive?
No man fared worse that ever was born!

PHARAOH: Now tell me, if ye wish to thrive!

SOLDIER 1: Sir, the waters on each hand
For all men's and beasts' food 275
Throughout all Egypt's land
Are turned into red blood!

And ugly and evil is this,
That was before both fresh and fair!

PHARAOH: Oh ho! the strangest thing this is 280
Of all the works that ever were!

SOLDIER 2: Nay, lord, there is another, see,
That suddenly afflicts us sore:
For toads and frogs no man may flee,
They poison us, both less and more. 285

SOLDIER 1: Great blackflies, sir, both night and day
Bite us now, bitterly!
Moses it is, we say
Does this - our enemy!

SOLDIER 2: Unless, my lord, his louts all leave, 290
More mirth now may we never know!

PHARAOH: Go, say their parting we'll not grieve -
But yet that parting may be slow!

SOLDIER 1: Moses, my lord gives leave
To lead thy folk to lands anew, 295
So that our suffering you relieve.

Were he stark mad to run!

SOLDIER: Then worse soon will it be - 345
It were better they were gone.

SOLDIER 2: My lord, new harm we must withstand!

PHARAOH: Yea, devil? will it no better be?

SOLDIER 1: Wild worms are laid all over this land;
They leave no flower, nor leaf on tree. 350

SOLDIER 2: Against that storm may no man stand.
And a greater marvel tell must we:
Three days has been on every hand
Such mist, no man may another see!

SOLDIER 1: Ah my lord! 355

PHARAOH: Hah?

SOLDIER 2: A great plague now is come!
It is likely long to last

PHARAOH: Plague? By the devil's thumb!
Then is our pride down cast.

SOLDIER 1: My lord, this woe lasts long,
And will, till Moses have his way. 360
Let him go, else we do wrong:
We should not tarry nor delay.

PHARAOH: Then give them leave to move along,
Since this game we must play -
Then, seize them soon with soldiers strong 365
Tomorrow at noonday!

SOLDIER 2: Moses, my lord he says, lo,
Thou shall have passage clear.

MOSES: Now have we leave to go;
My friends, be of good cheer! 370

Come forth! now shall ye wend
To that land longed - for many a day.

YOUNG MAN 1: But King Pharaoh, that false fiend,
He will us once more betray.
His soldiers he soon now will send 375
To destroy us as we make our way!

MOSES: Be not fearful, for God is our friend,
And all of our foes he will slay.

Therefore, come on with me -
Have done, and dread you nought! 380

YOUNG MAN 2: That Lord, blessed be he
That us from woe has brought.

YOUNG MAN 1: We never had such a friend.
But still I fear what may befall.

The Red Sea it is here at hand; 385
There will they catch us, one and all!

MOSES: I shall make way there, with my wand,
As God has said, to save us all;
On either side the sea must stand
Till we gone, like any wall. 390

Come on with me - leave none behind!
Lo! try you now your God to please.

Here they shall pass through the sea

YOUNG MAN 1: O Lord! this way is kind.
Now go we all at ease.

SOLDIER 1: King Pharaoh! these folk are gone. 395

PHARAOH: Say, is there now annoyance new?

SOLDIER 2: These Hebrews are gone, Lord, every one.

PHARAOH: How can that be?

SOLDIER 1: Lord, the tale is true.

PHARAOH: Whee! take them speedily again!
That riot rapidly they'll rue! 400
We shall not cease till they be slain;
We shall them to the sea pursue.

Go load your chariots with speed,
And fiercely look you follow me.

SOLDIER 2: We are all ready, lord, indeed, 405
At your bidding for to be.

SOLDIER 1: Here, oh lord, of tower and town,
We wait, your bidding for to heed.
We shall not cease, but ding all down
Till all be dead as dust, indeed! 410

PHARAOH: Heave up your hearts to great Mahound:
He will be near us in our need.

Help! by the ragged devil, we drown!
Now must we die for this dark deed.

Then the sea shall overcome them

MOSES: Now are we won from all our woe, 415
 And saved out of the sea!
 Give we love our God unto,
 And our way go merrily.

YOUNG MAN: We may love that Lord on height, 420
 And ever speak of this marvel.
 He has drowned King Pharaoh's might:
 Loved be that Lord Emmanuel!

MOSES: Attend thou, heaven and earth and all, 425
 To these my words: hear what I tell.
 As rain or dew to earth does fall
 And waters herbs and trees so well,

 Just so love thou God's majesty;
 His deeds are done, his ways are true.
 Honoured be he in Trinity;
 To him be honour and virtue. 430
 Amen.

Here ends Pharaoh