

In view of this discovery, it is easy to see why taking away the straw from the Israelites would greatly increase the arduousness of their work. It also shows how even stubble could be useful to them. (cf. v.12). Moreover, it indicates that the absence of visible marks of straw in an ancient brick is no proof that straw was not used. Thus an incident in the Bible that was formerly difficult to understand becomes crystal clear on the reasonable assumption that the ancient Egyptians were already familiar with a practical scientific procedure that was completely forgotten until its rediscovery within the present century. No part of the Bible is ever out of date, but much of it is ahead of date. It is always wrong to assume that there is a mistake in the sacred narrative, merely because we find something in it that is difficult for us to understand.