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GREEK TEXT · TRANSLATION · INTERLINEAR · DISCOURSE STRUCTURE

The Book of Exodus, Chapter 1

ΕΞΟΔΟΣ Α΄

Each verse opens with the running Greek, an English translation, and a **discourse note** (its connective, relation, and role in the argument). Below follows the word-by-word breakdown in six tiers: gloss, case (color), parsing, *syntax*, **semantic force**, and a | lexical note.

CASE ■ Nominative ■ Genitive ■ Dative ■ Accusative ■ Vocative ■ Verb (no case) ■ Indeclinable

Discourse notes head each verse: **relation** · connective · clause-flow. Indentation marks prominence — flush-left = main line of argument; indented = supporting / subordinate material.

Theme

The titular formula Ταῦτα τὰ ὀνόματα ('These are the names') opens the book here, giving it its Hebrew name שְׁמוֹת (Shemot); the LXX title ΕΞΟΔΟΣ ('departure') is a thematic rather than translational designation.

Translation & textual notes

The Greek text of Exodus 1 follows the standard critical text of the Septuagint as established in the Rahlfs–Hanhart edition (Septuaginta, rev. ed. 2006), an ancient and public-domain text; the critical apparatus is not reproduced. The chapter opens with the titular formula Ταῦτα τὰ ὀνόματα ('These are the names'), which gives the book its Hebrew name שְׁמוֹת (Shemot); the LXX title ΕΞΟΔΟΣ ('departure') is a thematic rather than translational designation. At 1:5 the LXX numbers the souls who came down to Egypt with Jacob as πέντε καὶ ἑβδομήκοντα ('seventy-five'), while the MT reads שְׁבַעִים ('seventy'); the LXX count, which includes Joseph's Egyptian-born grandsons Machir and Gilead (cf. Gen 46:20 LXX), is

explicitly cited by Stephen in Acts 7:14 — a landmark textual divergence that the NT preserves on the LXX side against the MT. The enumeration of Israel's growth in 1:7 deploys a cascade of verbs — ηὐξήθησαν καὶ ἐπληθύνθησαν καὶ χυδαῖοι ἐγένοντο καὶ κατίσχυσαν σφόδρα σφόδρα — that deliberately echo the creation blessing of Gen 1:28 (αὐξάνεσθε καὶ πληθύνεσθε), framing Israel's proliferation as fulfillment of the creation mandate; the doubled adverb σφόδρα σφόδρα is an intensive Hebraism representing Hebrew **טַחַח טַחַח**. The new king of 1:8 who 'did not know Joseph' (ὃς οὐκ ᾔδει τὸν Ἰωσήφ) is quoted verbatim in Acts 7:18, tying the Exodus narrative to Luke's Stephen speech. The oppression vocabulary is precise: κατεδυνάστευον (1:13, 'they tyrannized'), ἔργα σκληρά (1:14, 'harsh labors'), κατωδύνων τὴν ζωὴν ('they afflicted their lives with pain'). A major LXX plus appears at 1:11: after Πιθωμ and Ραμεσση the LXX adds a third store-city, ὧν ἡ ἑστὶν Ἡλίου πόλις ('On, which is Heliopolis') — a celebrated expansion with no Hebrew counterpart, likely reflecting a later Egyptian scribal tradition identifying the building projects with known sites. The midwives (1:15) are named Σεπφωρα and Φουα; their fear of God (ἐφοβήθησαν τὸν θεόν, 1:17) is the moral pivot driving their civil disobedience, and God rewards them with 'houses' (ἐποίησεν αὐταῖς οἰκίας, 1:21), understood by the tradition as genealogical households. The chapter closes (1:22) with Pharaoh's public river-decree (εἰς τὸν ποταμὸν ῥίψατε), the darkest escalation before the birth of Moses in chapter 2.

Discourse structure of the chapter

A · 1:1–7

The register of Israel's entry and their prodigious multiplication in Egypt

The chapter opens with a names-formula (1:1) connecting directly to Gen 46:8 and bridging from the close of Genesis; the twelve tribal ancestors who entered Egypt with Jacob are then listed by asyndeton (1:2–4). Verse 5 announces the total — seventy-five souls in the LXX, diverging from the MT's seventy (a crux Stephen resolves on the LXX side in Acts 7:14) — and notes that Joseph was already in Egypt. The death of Joseph and that whole generation (1:6) closes the patriarchal era and leaves Israel as a leaderless alien population. Verse 7's cascade of multiplication verbs deliberately echoes the Adamic creation blessing of Gen 1:28, presenting Israel's proliferation as fulfillment of the creation mandate and the Abrahamic promise — which paradoxically becomes the very trigger for Pharaoh's fear.

B · 1:8–14

A new king who did not know Joseph, and the onset of systematic oppression

A new Pharaoh arises with no memory of Joseph's saving role (1:8 — cited in Acts 7:18), and he frames Israel as a demographic security threat (1:9). His counter-strategy is encapsulated in the chilling verb κατασοφισώμεθα ('let us outwit/deal shrewdly against them,' 1:10), the word σοφία turned to malice. Enslavement begins with appointed taskmasters (ἐπιστάτας τῶν ἔργων, 1:11) and the forced construction of store-cities including the LXX-only addition of ὦν ἡ ἐστὶν Ἡλίου πόλις. But the harder Egypt presses, the more Israel multiplies (1:12) — an ironic reversal that enrages the Egyptians to loathing (ἐβδελύσσοντο, 1:12) and escalates to open tyranny (κατεδυνάστευον, 1:13) and life-crushing hard labour (ἔργα σκληρά, 1:14).

C · 1:15–21

The midwives' fear of God and their defiance of Pharaoh's edict

Pharaoh's first targeted decree is clandestine: he summons the two Hebrew midwives Σεπώρα and Φουα and orders them to kill male newborns at birth (1:15–16). The theological pivot is 1:17: ἐφοβήθησαν δὲ αἱ μαῖαι τὸν θεόν — 'the midwives feared God' — grounding their civil disobedience in divine rather than royal authority. When Pharaoh demands an accounting (1:18), they claim Hebrew women are too vigorous and give birth before a midwife can arrive (1:19), an answer that may be evasion or fact but functions narratively to protect life. God blesses the midwives with households of their own (1:21), and the people continue multiplying (1:20), rendering Pharaoh's covert strategy a complete failure.

D · 1:22

Pharaoh's public river-decree: every Hebrew male cast into the Nile

Frustrated by the failure of covert infanticide, Pharaoh escalates to an open public edict (συνέταξεν παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, 'he commanded all his people'), conscripting the entire Egyptian population to enforce the destruction of Hebrew males. Every male newborn is to be cast into the Nile (εἰς τὸν ποταμὸν ρίψατε); the river that will become the instrument of death is the same river from which Moses will be drawn in chapter 2, making the decree the narrative foil against which Moses' preservation reads as providential rescue.

1 Ταῦτα τὰ ὀνόματα τῶν υἱῶν Ισραὴλ τῶν εἰσπεπορευμένων εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἅμα Ιακωβ τῷ πατρὶ αὐτῶν, ἕκαστος πανοικίᾳ αὐτῶν εἰσήλθοσαν·

These are the names of the sons of Israel who had entered into Egypt together with Jacob their father; each one entered with his whole household.

Titular inventory-opening formula / narrative bridge from Genesis

Ταῦτα (asyndeton)

The verse functions as the book's heading-sentence, echoing Gen 46:8 LXX (ταῦτα δὲ τὰ ὀνόματα τῶν υἱῶν Ισραὴλ) and bridging directly from the close of Genesis with no narrative connective — the Hebrew opens וְהָיוּ without waw. The perfect participle εἰσπεπορευμένων frames the entry as a completed, historically settled fact; the appended πανοικίᾳ clause restates the collective entry in a Hebraizing resumptive construction.

Ταῦτα

these

Nominative

demonstrative pronoun — subject of the verbless clause

→ participant reference

οὗτος, αὕτη, τοῦτο: 'this/these'; the neuter plural ταῦτα functions as the subject of the verbless predication, taking ὀνόματα as its predicate; the formula ταῦτα τὰ ὀνόματα ('these are the names of') directly calques the Hebrew inventory heading שְׁמוֹת הָאֵלֶּם, from which the book of Exodus draws its Hebrew name Shemot.

τὰ

the

Nominative

article with predicate nominative

→ noun-phrase marking

τὰ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ὀνόματα

names

Nominative

predicate nominative / head of the inventory phrase

→ participant prominence

ὄνομα, -ατος, τό: 'name'; the plural ὀνόματα is the head noun of the inventory list that follows in vv.2–4. The Hebrew שְׁמוֹת (shemoth, 'names') provides the book its Hebrew title; the LXX translates rather than transliterates, then assigns the thematic title ΕΞΟΔΟΣ ('the going-out') for the Greek tradition based on the book's dominant narrative content.

τῶν

of the

Genitive

article with genitive noun phrase

→ noun-phrase marking

τῶν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

υἱῶν

sons

Genitive

genitive of relationship (whose names these are)

→ relational specification

υἱός, -οῦ, ὁ: 'son'; οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ is the LXX's standard rendering of בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, covering both the literal sons of Jacob listed in vv.2–4 and, by extension, the entire people of Israel as their descendants — the phrase governs the rest of the book.

Ἰσραὴλ

Israel

indeclinable proper noun — genitive by context following υἱῶν

→ participant identification

Ἰσραὴλ: transliteration of יִשְׂרָאֵל; indeclinable in the LXX, appearing unchanged in all syntactic positions; the covenant name given to Jacob at Peniel (Gen 32:28); here it specifies the patriarch's covenant identity rather than his personal name Ἰακωβ (which appears later in the verse for the individual).

τῶν

the

Genitive

article introducing the attributive participle

→ noun-phrase marking

τῶν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

εἰσπεπορευμένων

who had entered

Perf Mid Ptc Gen Pl Masc · εἰσπορεύομαι

attributive participle (modifying υἱῶν — identifying which sons: those who entered Egypt)

→ perfect: completed entry with ongoing resultant state — they are in Egypt still

εἰσπορεύομαι: 'enter, come into'; a compound of εἰς + πορεύομαι; the perfect participle stresses that the entry is an accomplished historical fact whose result (residence in Egypt as an alien people) constitutes the present situation of the narrative; distinct from the aorist εἰσήλθοσαν at the end of the verse, which states the bare event.

εἰς

into

preposition of direction governing accusative Αἴγυπτον

→ spatial or relational framing

εἰς: meaning 'into'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition of direction governing accusative Αἴγυπτον.

Αἴγυπτον

Egypt

Accusative

accusative complement of εἰς

→ object specification

Αἴγυπτος, -ου, ἡ: 'Egypt'; the standard LXX toponym for Hebrew מִצְרַיִם (Mitsraim), itself perhaps a Hebrew dual form reflecting the two kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt; the accusative with εἰς signals directional movement into a bounded territory.

ἅμα

together with

adverb of accompaniment (here functioning as improper preposition + dative Ἰακωβ)

→ spatial or relational framing

ἅμα: 'at the same time, together with'; in classical Greek usually an adverb; in the LXX and later Greek it can govern a dative (as here with Ἰακωβ) in the sense of 'along with, in company with'; it calques Hebrew תַּח (‘with’) but adds a nuance of simultaneity, stressing that the sons' entry was concurrent with Jacob's own.

Ἰακωβ

Jacob

indeclinable proper noun — dative by context as complement of ἅμα

→ participant identification

Ἰακωβ: transliteration of יַעֲקֹב; indeclinable in the LXX; the patriarch's personal birth-name used here alongside his covenant name Ἰσραὴλ — the distinction reinforces that the inventory names literal sons of the historical patriarch Jacob, not just the later nation.

τῷ

the

Dative

article with dative noun in apposition to Ἰακωβ

→ noun-phrase marking

τῷ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

πατρὶ

father

Dative

dative appositive to Ἰακωβ

→ sphere or reference

πατήρ, πατρός, ὁ: 'father'; the apposition τῷ πατρὶ αὐτῶν clarifies that Jacob stands in direct paternal relation to those listed — these are his sons, not merely remote descendants — grounding the inventory in biological genealogy before it becomes a register of tribes.

αὐτῶν

their

Genitive

genitive of possession with πατρί

→ relational specification

αὐτῶν: meaning 'their'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as genitive of possession with πατρί.

ἕκαστος

each one

Nominative

distributive pronoun — nominative resumptive subject of εἰσῆλθosan

→ participant reference

ἕκαστος, -η, -ον: 'each, every one'; the distributive nominative resumes the subject of the following finite verb, specifying that each son entered as a distinct family unit — a Hebraizing resumptive construction calquing שׂוּן יְהוּדָה ('each man and his household') and underlining that the entry was both collective and individually accounted for.

πανοικία

with his whole household

Dative

dative of manner / attendant circumstance

→ sphere or reference

πανοικία, -ας, ἡ: 'the whole household'; a compound of πᾶς + οἰκία, characteristically Hebraizing and used in the LXX and NT (Acts 16:34 cognate: πανοικεῖ) to render Hebrew יְהוּדָה ('his house/household'); the word emphasizes that not isolated individuals but whole extended family-clans descended to Egypt, a detail crucial to understanding the scale of the eventual people.

αὐτῶν

their

Genitive

genitive of possession with πανοικία

→ relational specification

αὐτῶν: meaning 'their'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as genitive of possession with πανοικία.

εἰσῆλθosan

they entered

Aor Act Indic 3 Pl · εἰσέρχομαι

main finite verb of the clause

→ constative aorist (summarizing the whole event of entry as a single completed historical fact)

εἰσέρχομαι: 'enter, come into'; εἰσῆλθosan is the LXX/Hellenistic alternative 3pl form alongside Attic εἰσῆλθον; the aorist concludes the periodic sentence opening at Ταῦτα, and while it overlaps semantically with the perfect participle εἰσπεπορευμένων above, the repetition is a Hebraizing pleonasm underscoring the finality and completeness of the historical entry.

2 Ρουβην, Συμεων, Λευι, Ιουδας,

Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah,

Inventory list — first four tribal names asyndeton

Verses 2–4 constitute the name-list promised by ὀνόματα in v.1. They are connected by asyndeton (no conjunction between names), the natural Hebrew register for enumeration (cf. Gen 46:8–12 LXX). The order follows birth sequence for Leah's sons: Ρουβην (firstborn), Συμεων, Λευι, Ιουδας are the first four sons of Leah (Gen 29:32–35). The trailing comma after Ιουδας signals continuation into v.3.

Ρουβην

Reuben

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by inventory context

→ participant identification

Ρουβην: transliteration of רְאוּבֵן (Re'uven); indeclinable in the LXX; Jacob's firstborn by Leah (Gen 29:32); the name is folk-etymologized in Gen 29:32 as 'see, a son!' (רְאוּבֵן); as firstborn he heads the tribal inventory, though he forfeited primogeniture (Gen 49:3–4).

Συμεων

Simeon

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by inventory context

→ participant identification

Συμεων: transliteration of שִׁמְעוֹן (Shim'on); indeclinable; Leah's second son, derived from שָׁמַע ('hear') at Gen 29:33; the name reappears in the NT as a Greek spelling of the apostle Simon and of the righteous man in Luke 2:25.

Λευι

Levi

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by inventory context

→ participant identification

Λευι: transliteration of לֵוִי (Levi); indeclinable; Leah's third son, connected with לָצַץ ('attach/join') in Gen 29:34; ancestral head of the priestly tribe that figures centrally throughout Exodus–Numbers; Moses himself is a Levite (Exod 2:1 LXX).

Ιουδας

Judah

Nominative

nominative proper noun (declinable -ας stem) — list member

→ participant prominence

Ιουδας, -ας, ό: unlike the other tribal names which the LXX treats as indeclinable transliterations, Ιουδας takes the Greek first-declension -ας ending; Leah's fourth son, connected with הָדָה ('praise') in Gen 29:35 LXX; ancestral head of the royal tribe (Gen 49:10) and of the line to David and beyond.

3 Ισσαχαρ, Ζαβουλων, Βενιαμιν,

Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin,

Inventory list — continuation (sons 5, 6, and 12) asyndeton

Ισσαχαρ and Ζαβουλων are Leah's fifth and sixth sons, completing the Leah group. Βενιαμιν — Rachel's second son and Jacob's youngest — appears here rather than at the end of the list, consistent with the LXX tradition (Gen 46:19–21) of grouping Rachel's sons together before the concubine sons of v.4. The placement departs slightly from some Hebrew listings and reflects the LXX's editorial arrangement of the tribal genealogy.

Ισσαχαρ

Issachar

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by inventory context

→ participant identification

Ισσαχαρ: transliteration of יִשָּׂכָר (Yissachar); indeclinable; Leah's fifth son (ninth of Jacob), connected with שָׂכָר ('reward/wages') in Gen 30:18; the tribe later settled in the fertile Jezreel valley of Galilee.

Ζαβουλων

Zebulun

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by inventory context

→ participant identification

Ζαβουλων: transliteration of זֶבֻלֹן (Zevulun); indeclinable; Leah's sixth son, connected with זָבַל ('honor') in Gen 30:20; the tribe's territory in lower Galilee is prophetically named in Isa 9:1 and fulfilled in Matt 4:13–16.

Βενιαμιν

Benjamin

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by inventory context

→ participant identification

Βενιαμιν: transliteration of בְּנִימִין (Binyamin); indeclinable; Rachel's second son and Jacob's youngest, named 'son of the right hand' or 'son of the south' (בֶּן יְמִין); his tribe will produce Saul, Israel's first king, and Paul the apostle (Rom 11:1; Phil 3:5).

4 Δαν καὶ Νεφθαλι, Γαδ καὶ Ασηρ.

Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher.

Inventory list — conclusion (four concubine sons)

καὶ (within pairs); asyndeton (between pairs)

The list concludes with the four sons born to Jacob's two concubines: Δαν and Νεφθαλι (sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maid; Gen 30:1–8) are paired internally by καὶ, as are Γαδ and Ασηρ (sons of Zilpah, Leah's maid; Gen 30:9–13). The internal καὶ within each concubine pair distinguishes them from the asyndeton of the main list, giving a subtle rhetorical grouping by mother. The closing period after Ασηρ seals the inventory before the numerical summary of v.5.

Δαν

Dan

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by inventory context

→ participant identification

Δαν: transliteration of דָּן (Dan); indeclinable; first son of Bilhah (Rachel's maid), fifth son of Jacob; name connected with דָּן ('judge') in Gen 30:6 ('God has judged/vindicated me'); the tribe's later territory was at the far north of Canaan (Judg 18).

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction — pairing Bilhah's sons within their group

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

Νεφθαλι

Naphtali

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by inventory context

→ participant identification

Νεφθαλι: transliteration of נַפְתָּלִי (Naftali); indeclinable; second son of Bilhah, sixth of Jacob; name connected with נַפְתָּלִי ('my wrestling') in Gen 30:8; the tribe's territory included the western shore of the Sea of Galilee (Isa 9:1; Matt 4:13).

Γαδ

Gad

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by inventory context

→ participant identification

Γαδ: transliteration of גָּד (Gad); indeclinable; first son of Zilpah (Leah's maid), seventh of Jacob; name connected with גָּד ('fortune/troop') in Gen 30:11; the tribe settled east of the Jordan in Transjordan (Num 32).

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction — pairing Zilpah's sons within their group

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

Ασηρ

Asher

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by inventory context

→ participant identification

Ασηρ: transliteration of אֲשֵׁר (Asher); indeclinable; second son of Zilpah, eighth of Jacob; name connected with אֲשֵׁר ('happy/blessed') in Gen 30:13 — 'Happy am I!'; the tribe occupied the northwestern coastal strip of Canaan, noted for olive oil and grain (Gen 49:20).

5 Ἰωσηφ δὲ ἦν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ. ἦσαν δὲ πᾶσαι ψυχαὶ ἐξ Ἰακωβ πέντε καὶ ἑβδομήκοντα.

Joseph was already in Egypt. All the souls from Jacob were seventy-five.

Parenthetical elaboration / numerical summary δέ

The first sentence is a parenthetical note explaining why Joseph does not appear in the list of those who entered Egypt with Jacob — he was already there. The second sentence provides the LXX total of seventy-five souls, diverging from the MT's seventy (a celebrated textual crux; see text_note). The verse thus closes the register of v.1–4 with its authoritative count before the narrative moves to the next generation in v.6.

Ἰωσηφ

Joseph

indeclinable proper noun — nominative subject of ἦν

→ participant identification

Ἰωσηφ: transliteration of יוסף (Yosef); indeclinable; eleventh son of Jacob, first of Rachel; his absence from the list of those who 'entered' Egypt is explained by his prior sale and rise to power (Gen 37–50); he is already the reason Israel is in Egypt at all.

δὲ

now / but

postpositive connective (mild parenthetical contrast: Joseph, by contrast, was already there)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'now'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἦν

was

Impf Act Indic 3 Sg · εἰμί

copulative verb — main verb of the parenthetical clause

→ imperfect: ongoing state (Joseph's presence in Egypt was a continuing condition preceding the narrative)

εἰμί: 'be, exist'; the imperfect ἦν describes Joseph's settled prior residence in Egypt as background to the entry-narrative, contrasting with the aorist εἰσέλθοσαν of v.1.

ἐν

in

preposition of location governing dative Αἰγύπτῳ

→ spatial or relational framing

ἐν: meaning 'in'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition of location governing dative Αἰγύπτῳ.

Αἰγύπτῳ

Egypt

Dative

dative complement of ἐν (location)

→ sphere or reference

Αἴγυπτος, -ου, ἡ: 'Egypt'; dative singular of location.

ἦσαν

were / there were

Impf Act Indic 3 Pl · εἰμί

existential copula — main verb of the counting sentence

→ imperfect: existential state (the total souls constituted an ongoing demographic reality at the time of entry)

εἰμί: existential use; ἦσαν here introduces the census-total in a construction common to LXX enumeration passages (cf. Gen 46:27 LXX ψυχὰι δὲ πᾶσαι ... ἐβδόμηκοντα πέντε).

δὲ

and / now

postpositive connective (introducing the summary clause)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

πᾶσαι

all

Nominative

adjective in predicate position (attributive to ψυχαί — total scope)

→ participial qualification

πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν: 'all, every, whole'; the feminine nominative plural agrees with ψυχαί; πᾶσαι ψυχαί renders Hebrew כָּל נַפְשֵׁי ('every soul / the total of persons').

ψυχαὶ

souls / persons

Nominative

subject of ἦσαν (census noun)

→ participant prominence

ψυχή, -ῆς, ἡ: 'soul, life, person'; in the LXX census register (cf. Gen 46:18, 22, 25, 26, 27) ψυχή renders Hebrew שְׂרָפָה as a census unit meaning 'person/individual'; the usage is a Hebraism — classical Greek would say ἄνθρωποι; the number of ψυχαὶ is the crux: LXX reads 75 vs. MT's 70.

ἐξ

from

preposition of origin / descent governing indeclinable Ἰακωβ

→ spatial or relational framing

ἐκ / ἐξ: 'from, out of'; here expressing genealogical origin — 'persons descended from / belonging to Jacob's line'; the preposition renders Hebrew לְ ('to/belonging to') in the census formula of Gen 46:26–27.

Ἰακωβ

Jacob

indeclinable proper noun — genitive by context following ἐξ

→ participant identification

Ἰακωβ: indeclinable; the ancestor from whom the seventy-five souls are reckoned; the LXX count of 75 includes Joseph's grandsons born in Egypt (Gen 46:20 LXX adds Machir and Gilead under Manasseh, and additional sons of Ephraim), bringing the total to 75 — the number cited by Stephen in Acts 7:14 against the MT's 70.

πέντε

five

numeral — part of compound number (75 = 70 + 5)

→ measure or count

πέντε: 'five'; the compound πέντε καὶ ἑβδομήκοντα ('five and seventy') = 75; this formula, listing the smaller number first then the decade, follows the LXX's standard numeral convention. The MT reads simply סְנַיִם ('seventy') in the parallel at Gen 46:27 and Exod 1:5, making this a major LXX–MT divergence flagged in Acts 7:14.

καὶ

and

conjunction linking the two parts of the compound numeral

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἑβδομήκοντα

seventy

numeral — decade component of the compound number 75

→ measure or count

ἑβδομήκοντα: 'seventy'; indeclinable numeral; together with πέντε gives the LXX total of 75 souls. The Samaritan Pentateuch also reads 75, suggesting the LXX reflects a Hebrew Vorlage tradition that included Joseph's Egyptian grandchildren in the count; Stephen's speech in Acts 7:14 follows this LXX reading.

6 ἐτελεύτησεν δὲ Ἰωσηφ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ πάσα ἡ γενεὰ ἐκείνη.

And Joseph died, and all his brothers, and all that generation.

Narrative transition — era closure δέ

This verse marks the decisive generational break that separates the patriarchal era from the situation of an alien, leaderless people. The three-fold καὶ (Joseph, brothers, whole generation) has a cumulative, exhaustive force — every member of the protecting generation is gone. The verse parallels the death-notices of Gen 50:26 (Joseph) and sets the stage for the 'new king who did not know Joseph' in v.8. Its brevity in contrast with the elaborate patriarchal death scenes of Genesis is itself rhetorically significant.

ἐτελεύτησεν

died

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · τελευτάω

main verb — historical aorist opening the generational closure

→ constative aorist (the whole event of death as a completed fact)

τελευτάω: 'to end one's life, die'; a common LXX word for death (renders Hebrew מָוַת /); the aorist ἐτελεύτησεν is the standard LXX death-report formula (cf. Gen 50:26 LXX καὶ ἐτελεύτησεν Ἰωσηφ).

δὲ

and / now

postpositive connective — narrative transition marking a new episode-phase

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

Ἰωσηφ

Joseph

indeclinable proper noun — nominative subject of ἐτελεύτησεν

→ participant identification

Ἰωσηφ: indeclinable; his death closes the Genesis narrative and removes Israel's last powerful advocate at the Egyptian court; the detail that 'a new king did not know Joseph' (v.8) is only significant because Joseph is now gone.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (adding the brothers to the death-notice)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

πάντες

all

Nominative

adjective in substantive position — subject of implied ἐτελεύτησαν

→ participial qualification

πᾶς, πᾶσα, πᾶν: 'all'; πάντες οἱ ἀδελφοί is a sweeping collective — every member of Joseph's generation of tribal heads is included in the death-notice.

οἱ

the

Nominative

article with nominative noun

→ noun-phrase marking

οἱ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἀδελφοὶ

brothers

Nominative

subject of the implied parallel verb (also died)

→ participant prominence

ἀδελφός, -οῦ, ὁ: 'brother'; the eleven other sons of Jacob who entered Egypt with him (vv.2–4); their collective death removes the last members of the founding generation.

αὐτοῦ

his

Genitive

genitive of relationship with ἀδελφοί

→ relational specification

αὐτοῦ: meaning 'his'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as genitive of relationship with ἀδελφοί.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (adding the whole generation as the third and final member)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καί: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

πάσα

all / whole

Nominative

adjective (substantive-adjunct with γενεά — comprehensive scope)

→ participial qualification

πᾶς: feminine singular agreeing with γενεά; 'all that generation' extends the death-notice beyond Joseph and the twelve brothers to every member of the founding generation — a totality marker that makes the break absolute.

ἡ

the

Nominative

article with nominative noun

→ noun-phrase marking

ἡ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

γενεά

generation

Nominative

subject of the implied parallel verb

→ participant prominence

γενεά, -ᾶς, ἡ: 'generation, age'; renders Hebrew דֹּר דֹּר ('that generation'); the term covers the entire contemporaneous cohort who entered Egypt with Jacob — not just blood relatives but the whole age-group that knew the patriarchal era firsthand.

ἐκείνη

that

Nominative

attributive demonstrative adjective (retrospective: 'that generation' — the one named in vv.1–5)

→ participial qualification

ἐκεῖνος, -η, -ο: 'that'; the retrospective demonstrative points back to the generation enumerated in vv.1–5, marking them as now definitively past; the device is characteristically LXX narrative.

7 οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ ἠὺξήθησαν καὶ ἐπληθύνθησαν καὶ χυδαῖοι ἐγένοντο καὶ κατίσχυσαν σφόδρα σφόδρα, ἐπλήθυνεν δὲ ἡ γῆ αὐτούς.

But the sons of Israel increased and multiplied and swarmed and grew exceedingly, exceedingly strong, and the land filled with them.

Counter-movement — life proliferating against the backdrop of death δέ (contrastive)

Verse 7 is the theological hinge of the chapter's first panel: juxtaposed against the death-notice of v.6, it presents Israel's explosive growth as providential irony — the generation dies, but the people thrives beyond measure. The cascade of four verbs (ἠὺξήθησαν ... ἐπληθύνθησαν ... χυδαῖοι ἐγένοντο ... κατίσχυσαν) and the doubled σφόδρα σφόδρα consciously echo Gen 1:28 (the Adamic blessing) and Gen 12:2 (the Abrahamic promise), framing Israel's multiplication as covenant fulfillment. This very fulfillment then triggers Pharaoh's fear (v.9) — the blessing becomes the narrative precipitant of the oppression.

οἱ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

οἱ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

δὲ

but / now

postpositive connective — mild adversative
(contrast with the dying generation of v.6)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'but'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

υἱοὶ

sons

Nominative

subject of the four verbs

→ participant prominence

υἱός; οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ; the phrase now refers to the next generation — the descendants of the twelve sons, the people of Israel as a whole — no longer the individual patriarchs.

Ἰσραὴλ

Israel

indeclinable proper noun — genitive by context

→ participant identification

Ἰσραὴλ: transliterated proper name rendered in Greek letters; here it functions as indeclinable proper noun — genitive by context.

ηὕξηθησαν

increased / grew

Aor Pass Indic 3 Pl · αὕξάνω

first verb in the proliferation-cascade — main clause

→ constative aorist (the growth seen as a total accomplished development over time)

αὕξάνω: 'grow, increase'; the passive ηὕξηθησαν ('they were caused to grow / they grew') renders Hebrew וַיִּבְרָא ('and they were fruitful'); it deliberately echoes Gen 1:28 LXX αὕξάνεσθε καὶ πληθύνεσθε (the creation mandate) and Gen 26:13; the divine passive may imply God is the hidden agent of growth.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (chaining the proliferation verbs — καί-parataxis Hebraism)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἐπληθύνθησαν

multiplied

Aor Pass Indic 3 Pl · πληθύνω

second verb in the proliferation-cascade

→ constative aorist

πληθύνω: 'multiply, increase in number'; the passive ἐπληθύνθησαν renders Hebrew וַיִּבְרָא ('and they multiplied'); it directly echoes Gen 1:28 LXX πληθύνεσθε and appears in the Abrahamic promise (Gen 17:2, 20); together with ηὕξηθησαν it frames the growth as fulfillment of the double blessing.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

χυδαῖοι

swarming / teeming

Nominative

predicate adjective with ἐγένοντο — characterizing the mode of proliferation

→ participant prominence

χυδαῖος, -α, -ον: 'poured out, swarming, teeming'; a rare word in the LXX, here rendering Hebrew וַיִּבְרָא ('and they swarmed'; from וַיִּבְרָא, the verb used of teeming creatures in Gen 1:20–21); the word evokes uncontrolled, creaturely abundance — Israel is figured as filling the land the way water-creatures fill the sea, a vivid and slightly unsettling image of organic proliferation.

ἐγένοντο

became

Aor Mid Indic 3 Pl · γίνομαι

third verb in the cascade — copula with predicate adjective χυδαῖοι

→ constative aorist

γίνομαι: 'become, come to be'; with the predicate adjective χυδαῖοι it describes the character or mode of their proliferation rather than merely its quantity — they did not just multiply, they swarmed.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

κατίσχυσαν

grew very strong / prevailed

Aor Act Indic 3 Pl · κατισχύω

fourth verb in the cascade — climactic statement of Israel's power

→ constative aorist

κατισχύω: 'prevail, become very strong, overpower'; a compound of κατά (intensive) + ισχύω; renders Hebrew וַיִּבְרָא ('and they became mighty'); the word carries a connotation of growing to a point of dominance, which is precisely what Pharaoh fears (v.9: ισχύει ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς).

σφόδρα

exceedingly

adverb of degree — first of the doubled intensive

→ clausal contribution

σφόδρα: 'very much, exceedingly'; a standard LXX intensifier rendering Hebrew **טַחַח**; its doubling here (σφόδρα σφόδρα) is a Hebraism calquing the rare **טַחַח טַחַח**, which appears only in heightened narrative moments.

σφόδρα

exceedingly

adverb of degree — second of the doubled intensive (superlative Hebraism)

→ clausal contribution

The doubled σφόδρα σφόδρα is the LXX's calque of Hebrew **טַחַח טַחַח** ('exceedingly, exceedingly'), a rare superlative repetition that conveys a degree of proliferation beyond normal description — Israel's growth is presented as surpassing ordinary human enumeration.

ἐπλήθυνεν

multiplied / was filled

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · πληθύνω

main verb of the closing summary clause (subject: ἡ γῆ)

→ constative aorist

πληθύνω: here in the active with ἡ γῆ as subject and αὐτούς as object — 'the land multiplied them' or 'the land filled with them'; it renders Hebrew **וַיִּמְלֵא אֶת-הָאָרֶץ** ('the land was filled with them'), a construction that personifies the land as the vehicle of divine blessing.

δὲ

and / now

postpositive connective — introduces the closing summary clause

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἡ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

ἡ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

γῆ

land / earth

Nominative

subject of ἐπλήθυνεν

→ participant prominence

γῆ, γῆς, ἡ: 'earth, land, country'; here specifically the land of Egypt (ἡ γῆ Αἰγύπτου by context); personified as the agent of demographic multiplication — the land itself 'multiplied' Israel upon it.

αὐτούς

them

Accusative

accusative direct object of ἐπλήθυνεν

→ participant reference

αὐτούς: meaning 'them'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as accusative direct object of ἐπλήθυνεν.

8 ἀνέστη δὲ βασιλεὺς ἕτερος ἐπ' Αἴγυπτον, ὃς οὐκ ᾔδει τὸν Ἰωσήφ.

Now there arose a different king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.

Narrative turning point — new antagonist introduced **δέ**

Verse 8 is the pivot that opens the oppression narrative; the concise relative clause ὃς οὐκ ᾔδει τὸν Ἰωσήφ carries the entire theological weight — the new king's ignorance of Joseph means Israel's protection is gone. Stephen quotes this verse nearly verbatim in Acts 7:18 (ἄχρι οὗ ἀνέστη βασιλεὺς ἕτερος ἐπ' Αἴγυπτον ὃς οὐκ ᾔδει τὸν Ἰωσήφ), making it a key NT citation of the LXX Exodus text. The verb ᾔδει (pluperfect of οἶδα functioning as an imperfect) denotes not mere factual ignorance but the absence of the relational knowledge (νῦν) that would have guaranteed loyalty.

ἀνέστη

arose / came to power

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · ἀνίστημι

main verb — historical aorist opening the new episode

→ **ingressive aorist (coming to power as the entry into a new state)**

ἀνίστημι: 'rise up, stand up, come to power'; in narrative contexts of rulers the verb denotes ascending to the throne (cf. 1 Kgs 2:12 LXX); it renders Hebrew **וַיָּקָם** ('and there arose'); the ingressive force marks the beginning of a new reign that will define Israel's fate for generations.

δὲ

now / and

postpositive connective — narrative transition to new episode

→ **discourse linkage or contrast**

δὲ: meaning 'now'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

βασιλεὺς

king

Nominative

subject of ἀνέστη

→ **participant prominence**

βασιλεὺς, -έως, ὁ: 'king'; the anarthrous βασιλεὺς ἕτερος ('a different / another king') emphasizes the break in continuity — this is a new dynasty or new political configuration, not a successor king in an ongoing relationship with Joseph's memory.

ἕτερος

another / different

Nominative

attributive adjective with βασιλεὺς (qualitative: a king of a different kind from what went before)

→ **participial qualification**

ἕτερος, -α, -ον: 'another, different (in kind)'; distinguished from ἄλλος ('another of the same kind'); ἕτερος here implies not merely succession but a qualitative rupture — a king who represents a different orientation toward Israel entirely; the word is preserved in Acts 7:18.

ἐπὶ

over

*preposition of authority / rule governing
accusative Αἴγυπτον*

→ spatial or relational framing

ἐπί + accusative: 'over, upon'; in regal contexts ἐπί + accusative denotes sovereignty over a territory (cf. ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν Αἴγυπτον, Gen 41:41 LXX); renders Hebrew מֵעַל לְעֵלָּה.

Αἴγυπτον

Egypt

Accusative

accusative complement of ἐπί (the realm over which he rules)

→ object specification

Αἴγυπτος: accusative singular; Egypt as the domain of the new king's sovereignty.

ὅς

who

Nominative

relative pronoun — nominative subject of the relative clause (antecedent: βασιλεύς)

→ participant reference

ὅς, ἦ, ὅ: relative pronoun; the clause ὅς οὐκ ᾔδει τὸν Ἰωσηφ is the narrative's entire explanation for the catastrophe that follows — the new king's non-knowledge of Joseph is the theological hinge of the chapter.

οὐκ

not

negation particle

→ discourse linkage or contrast

οὐκ: meaning 'not'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ᾔδει

knew

Pluperfect Act Indic 3 Sg (functioning as Imperfect) · οἶδα

verb of the relative clause — imperfect in sense (ongoing ignorance)

→ imperfect-equivalent: ongoing state of not knowing

οἶδα: 'know' (perfect-system verb with present meaning); the pluperfect ᾔδει functions as an imperfect, describing a continuous state of unknowing. The verb renders Hebrew וְלֹא יָדָע ('did not know'), where וְלֹא connotes not merely factual awareness but relational acknowledgment — the new king refuses to honor the covenant obligation that Joseph's history created. This clause is quoted verbatim in Acts 7:18.

τὸν

the

Accusative

article with accusative direct object

→ noun-phrase marking

τὸν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

Ἰωσηφ

Joseph

indeclinable proper noun — accusative by context as direct object of ᾔδει

→ participant identification

Ἰωσηφ: indeclinable; the definite article τὸν signals that Ἰωσηφ is a known referent — the Joseph of the Genesis narrative whose saving role was well established — making the new king's 'not knowing' all the more pointed: he is choosing not to acknowledge a history that favors Israel.

9 εἶπεν δὲ τῷ ἔθνει αὐτοῦ Ἴδου τὸ γένος τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ μέγα πλῆθος καὶ ἰσχύει ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς·

And he said to his people: 'Behold, the race of the sons of Israel is a great multitude and is stronger than us!'

Speech introduction — Pharaoh's threat-assessment **δέ**

Pharaoh addresses his own people (τῷ ἔθνει αὐτοῦ), framing Israel as a demographic and military threat. The exclamation Ἴδου ('behold!') functions as an attention-commanding device that calques Hebrew הִנֵּה, drawing the audience's focus to the observed danger. The combination μέγα πλῆθος καὶ ἰσχύει ('a great multitude and is stronger') builds from quantity to power, expressing Pharaoh's double fear: Israel's numbers and their force together threaten Egyptian hegemony. The verse sets up the deliberative of v.10.

εἶπεν

said

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · λέγω

main verb — speech-introducing formula

→ constative aorist

λέγω: 'say, speak'; the aorist εἶπεν is the LXX's standard speech-introduction verb (calquing הִנֵּה); the subject is Pharaoh, carried over from v.8.

δὲ

and / now

postpositive narrative connective

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δέ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

τῷ

the

Dative

article with indirect object

→ noun-phrase marking

τῷ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἔθνει

nation / people

Dative

dative indirect object of εἶπεν (addressee)

→ sphere or reference

ἔθνος, -ους, τό: 'nation, people, ethnic group'; here Pharaoh addresses his own Egyptian nation (αὐτοῦ), distinguishing them from Israel (οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ); in the LXX ἔθνος most often renders Hebrew 'עַם and can bear a slightly deprecatory edge when contrasted with λαός (the covenant people).

αὐτοῦ

his

Genitive

genitive of possession with ἔθνει

→ relational specification

αὐτοῦ: meaning 'his'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as genitive of possession with ἔθνει.

Ἴδου

behold / look

attention-commanding interjection (Hebraism calquing רָאָה)

→ participant identification

ἰδού: a frozen imperative of ὁράω used as a presentative particle; in the LXX it consistently renders Hebrew רָאָה ('behold, look!'); it commands the audience's attention to what follows, presenting the observation as urgent and demanding response.

τὸ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

τὸ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

γένος

race / people / kin

Nominative

subject of the verbless predication (γένος ... μέγα πλῆθος)

→ participant prominence

γένος, -ους, τό: 'race, birth-kin, people of common descent'; renders Hebrew דָּבָר ('people') in some traditions; Pharaoh's use of γένος rather than λαός or ἔθνος frames Israel in ethnic/genealogical terms — a racially defined threat.

τῶν

of the

Genitive

article with genitive noun phrase

→ noun-phrase marking

τῶν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

υἱῶν

sons

Genitive

genitive of identity / exepexegetic genitive with γένος

→ relational specification

υἱός: the genitive τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ identifies whose γένος this is, specifying the people by their patriarchal descent.

Ἰσραὴλ

Israel

indeclinable proper noun — genitive by context

→ participant identification

Ἰσραὴλ: transliterated proper name rendered in Greek letters; here it functions as indeclinable proper noun — genitive by context.

μέγα

great / large

Nominative

predicate adjective with πλῆθος (nominal predication)

→ participant prominence

μέγας, μεγάλη, μέγα: 'great, large'; the neuter agrees with πλῆθος; μέγα πλῆθος ('a great multitude') is a standard LXX formula for overwhelming numbers (cf. Num 11:21; 1 Kgs 3:8).

πλῆθος

multitude / crowd

Nominative

predicate nominative (subject complement: 'is a great multitude')

→ participant prominence

πλῆθος, -ους, τό: 'multitude, great number'; renders Hebrew בָּרַב ('many, numerous'); the word picks up the multiplication theme of v.7 (ηὐξήθησαν, ἐπληθύνθησαν) and confirms that Israel's growth has indeed become visible and alarming to Pharaoh.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (adding the second predication: strength)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἰσχύει

is stronger / prevails

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · ἰσχύω

main verb of the second predication

→ gnomic / stative present (describing Israel's characteristic power as an ongoing reality)

ἰσχύω: 'be strong, have power, prevail'; the present tense describes the ongoing condition Pharaoh observes; the verb echoes κατίσχυσαν of v.7 — Israel's prevailing strength (κατισχύω) is now confirmed by the enemy's own admission (ἰσχύει ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς).

ὑπὲρ

above / more than

preposition expressing comparative superiority (ὑπὲρ + accusative = 'beyond, more than')

→ spatial or relational framing

ὑπὲρ + accusative: 'above, beyond, more than'; in comparative constructions (as here) it can replace the genitive of comparison; 'is stronger than us' — Pharaoh's admission that Israel's power exceeds Egypt's is the premise for all subsequent policy.

ἡμᾶς

us

Accusative

accusative complement of ὑπὲρ (comparative reference: Israel stronger than Egypt)

→ participant reference

ἡμᾶς: meaning 'us'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as accusative complement of ὑπὲρ (comparative reference: Israel stronger than Egypt).

10 δεῦτε οὖν κατασοφισώμεθα αὐτοὺς μή ποτε πληθυνθῶσιν καί, ἡνίκα ἂν συμβῇ ἡμῖν πόλεμος, προστεθήσονται καὶ οὗτοι πρὸς τοὺς ὑπεναντίους καὶ ἐκπολεμήσαντες ἡμᾶς ἐξελεύσονται ἐκ τῆς γῆς.

Come then, let us deal shrewdly against them, lest they multiply and — whenever war befalls us — these too join our enemies and, having conquered us, go out from the land.

Deliberative speech — policy proposal οὖν (inferential)

Verse 10 is Pharaoh's deliberative proposal, marked by the hortatory δεῦτε οὖν ('come then') and the rare verb κατασοφισώμεθα ('let us deal shrewdly against them'), the key word of the oppression narrative. The μή ποτε clause expresses Pharaoh's fear: uncontrolled multiplication will make Israel a military fifth column in wartime. The irony the narrative will drive home is that the σοφία Pharaoh deploys against Israel will be confounded by the divine wisdom that stands behind Israel's multiplication — cf. Acts 7:19 (κατασοφισάμενος).

δεῦτε

come! / come now!

Pres Act Impv 2 Pl · δεῦρο

imperative call to action (hortatory introduction)

→ imperative of summons

δεῦτε: plural imperative of δεῦρο ('come here'); a call to attention and collective action; renders Hebrew הִבֵּה ('come! / let us'); in the LXX δεῦτε frequently introduces a collective deliberative proposal (cf. Gen 11:3, 4, 7 LXX at the Tower of Babel — the structural parallel is pointed: as at Babel, a corporate human scheme is launched against a divinely blessed proliferation).

οὖν

therefore / then

inferential conjunction (drawing the policy conclusion from the threat assessment of v.9)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

οὖν: 'therefore, then, so'; postpositive in classical but here placed third after δεῦτε; it marks Pharaoh's proposal as a logical inference from the observed threat — 'since they are stronger than us, therefore we must outwit them.'

κατασοφισώμεθα

let us deal shrewdly against / outwit

Aor Mid Subj 1 Pl · κατασοφίζομαι

hortatory subjunctive — the chapter's key policy verb

→ hortatory subjunctive (first-person plural urging collective action)

κατασοφίζομαι: 'to deal shrewdly/cunningly against, to outwit to someone's harm'; a compound of κατά (against, to the detriment of) + σοφίζω (act wisely/cleverly); renders Hebrew הִמְצַחֵנִי (from חָכָה, 'be wise'); the verb turns σοφία — normally a virtue — into an instrument of oppression. It is cited in Acts 7:19 (κατασοφισάμενος τὸ γένος ἡμῶν), making it a key LXX term preserved in the NT critique of Pharaoh.

αὐτοὺς

them

Accusative

accusative direct object of κατασοφισώμεθα

→ participant reference

αὐτοὺς: meaning 'them'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as accusative direct object of κατασοφισώμεθα.

μή

lest / not

negative particle introducing the purpose/fear clause

→ discourse linkage or contrast

μή: meaning 'lest'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ποτε

at any time / ever

indefinite temporal particle (with μή: 'lest at any time')

→ discourse linkage or contrast

μή ποτε: 'lest at any time, for fear that'; a fear/purpose construction introducing the negative consequence Pharaoh seeks to prevent; renders Hebrew יָּזֵק ('lest').

πληθυνθῶσιν

they multiply

Aor Pass Subj 3 Pl · πληθύνω

verb in the μή ποτε fear-clause (subjunctive after purpose negative)

→ aorist: viewed as a single feared outcome

πληθύνω: the same verb as in v.7 (ἐπληθύνθησαν); Pharaoh's policy is explicitly aimed at preventing what v.7 has narrated as divinely ordained — he is trying to undo the creation/Abrahamic blessing; the subjunctive expresses uncertain but feared possibility.

καί

and

coordinating conjunction (introducing the second feared scenario)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καί: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἡνίκα

when / whenever

temporal conjunction (ἡνίκα ἄν = 'whenever' — indefinite future temporal clause)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ἡνίκα: 'when, at the time when'; with ἄν it forms an indefinite temporal construction equivalent to 'whenever'; a characteristic LXX usage rendering Hebrew כִּי ('when/if').

ἄν

(modal particle)

modal particle making the temporal clause indefinite/conditional

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ἄν: meaning '(modal particle)'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

συμβῇ

befalls / happens

Aor Act Subj 3 Sg · συμβαίνω

verb of the temporal clause (subjunctive with ἄν = indefinite future)

→ aorist: single contingent event

συμβαίνω: 'happen, come about, befall'; renders Hebrew הִנָּחַל ('happen, chance'); the verb presents war not as a certainty but as a contingency — Pharaoh's fear is prospective and strategic.

ἡμῖν

to us

Dative

dative of disadvantage with συμβῇ ('war befalls us')

→ participant reference or interest

ἡμῖν: meaning 'to us'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as dative of disadvantage with συμβῇ ('war befalls us').

πόλεμος

war

Nominative

subject of *συμβῆ*

→ participant prominence

πόλεμος, -ου, ὁ: 'war, battle, conflict'; the anarthrous noun is generic ('war' as an eventuality); Pharaoh's fear that Israel would defect to Egypt's enemies in wartime is a classic ancient security concern about internal alien populations.

προστεθήσονται

will be added to / will join

Fut Pass Indic 3 Pl · προστίθῃμι

apodosis of the conditional (future indicative: what will happen if war comes)

→ predictive future (Pharaoh's feared outcome stated as a certainty once the condition obtains)

προστίθῃμι: 'add to, attach to, join'; the passive προστεθήσονται ('will be added/joined') renders Hebrew *וַיִּשָּׁבֶן* ('and [they] will be joined'); the idiom 'join to the enemies' describes military defection or alliance — Israel going over to Egypt's enemies.

καὶ

also

adverbial *καί* (emphatic: 'these too,' intensifying the threat)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καί: meaning 'also'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

οὗτοι

these

Nominative

demonstrative pronoun — subject of the apodosis (referring contemptuously to Israel)

→ participant reference

οὗτος: the demonstrative is used with a slightly contemptuous or distancing force — 'these [people here in our midst]'; it identifies Israel as the specific group that will defect.

πρὸς

toward / against

preposition of direction (joining toward the enemy side)

→ spatial or relational framing

πρὸς: meaning 'toward'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition of direction (joining toward the enemy side).

τούς

the

Accusative

article with accusative noun

→ noun-phrase marking

τούς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ὑπεναντίους

enemies / adversaries

Accusative

accusative complement of *πρὸς* (those to whom Israel would defect)

→ object specification

ὑπεναντίος, -α, -ον: 'opposed, hostile, enemy'; a strong compound of *ὑπό* + *ἐναντίος*; renders Hebrew *רִצְוֹן* ('adversary/enemy'); describes Egypt's military opponents, those to whose side Pharaoh fears Israel would defect in wartime.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (adding the final feared outcome)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καί: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἐκπολεμήσαντες

having conquered / having made war
against

Aor Act Ptc Nom Pl Masc · ἐκπολεμέω

*circumstantial aorist participle (attendant
circumstance: 'after they have made war against
us')*

→ aorist: the conquest is seen as the prior
completed action before the departure

ἐκπολεμέω: 'make war against to the point
of conquest, drive out by war'; a compound
of ἐκ + πολεμέω, rare in classical Greek but
used in the LXX; renders Hebrew וַיִּלָּחֶם
(*'and fought against us'*); the ἐκ- prefix
implies thorough, driving-out warfare.

ἡμᾶς

us

Accusative

accusative object of ἐκπολεμήσαντες

→ participant reference

ἡμᾶς: meaning 'us'; pronoun marking
person, possession, or reference within the
clause; here it functions as accusative
object of ἐκπολεμήσαντες.

ἐξελεύσονται

they will go out / depart

Fut Mid Indic 3 Pl · ἐξέρχομαι

main verb of the final apodosis clause

→ predictive future

ἐξέρχομαι: 'go out, depart'; the verb used of
the Exodus itself (cf. Exod 3:21; 12:41 LXX);
the supreme irony of the narrative is that
the very Exodus Pharaoh fears and tries to
prevent is the one God will accomplish —
Pharaoh's fear is prophetically accurate
even as his counter-strategy is futile.

ἐκ

from / out of

preposition of separation governing genitive γῆς

→ spatial or relational framing

ἐκ: meaning 'from'; here it marks the
relation signaled by preposition of
separation governing genitive γῆς.

τῆς

the

Genitive

article with genitive noun

→ noun-phrase marking

τῆς: Greek article marking definiteness and
the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

γῆς

land

Genitive

*genitive complement of ἐκ (land of Egypt — left
implied)*

→ relational specification

γῆ: 'land'; ἐκ τῆς γῆς refers to the land of
Egypt — Israel's departure from Egypt is
precisely what v.10 fears and what the book
of Exodus will accomplish; the narrative
drives toward the fulfillment of Pharaoh's
worst-case scenario.

11 καὶ ἐπέστησεν αὐτοῖς ἐπιστάτας τῶν ἔργων, ἵνα κακώσωσιν αὐτοὺς ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις· καὶ ὠκοδόμησαν πόλεις ὀχυρὰς τῷ Φαραῶ τήν τε Πιθωμ καὶ Ραμεσση καὶ Ὠν, ἥ ἐστὶν Ἑλίου πόλις.

And he set over them taskmasters of the works, that they might afflict them with the labors; and they built fortified cities for Pharaoh: both Pithom and Ramesses and On, which is the City of the Sun.

Implementation — Pharaoh's policy put into action καὶ (narrative sequence)

Verse 11 moves from deliberation (v.10) to action: Pharaoh implements his shrewdness with forced labor. The LXX introduces a significant plus over the MT: where the MT names two store-cities (Pithom and Ramesses), the LXX adds a third — Ὠν ἥ ἐστὶν Ἑλίου πόλις ('On, which is Heliopolis'), identified by the explanatory gloss as the city of the sun-god Ra. This is a celebrated LXX expansion with no Hebrew counterpart, likely reflecting Alexandrian-Egyptian scribal knowledge that associated the construction projects with the sacred precinct of Ra at Heliopolis. The relative clause ἥ ἐστὶν Ἑλίου πόλις is the LXX translator's own explanatory note.

καὶ
and

*narrative sequential conjunction (καί-parataxis
Hebraism: 1-consecutive)*

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἐπέστησεν

appointed / set over

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg· ἐφίστημι

main verb — Pharaoh's administrative action

→ constative aorist

ἐφίστημι (ἐπίστημι in some forms): 'set over, appoint as overseer'; renders Hebrew וַיָּשִׁימוּ עָלָיו שָׂרִי ('and they set over him princes/officers'); the verb implies both appointment to office and imposition of authority from above.

αὐτοῖς

over them

Dative

dative of disadvantage (those over whom the taskmasters are set)

→ participant reference or interest

αὐτοῖς: meaning 'over them'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as dative of disadvantage (those over whom the taskmasters are set).

ἐπιστάτας

taskmasters / overseers

Accusative

accusative direct object of ἐπέστησεν

→ object specification

ἐπιστάτης, -ου, ὁ: 'overseer, taskmaster, superintendent'; renders Hebrew שָׂרֵי מִסִּים ('officers of forced labor / corvée-masters'); in the NT ἐπιστάτης is used as an address to Jesus ('Master' Luke 5:5 etc.), the same root bearing opposite authority connotations.

τῶν

of the

Genitive

article with genitive noun

→ noun-phrase marking

τῶν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἔργων

works / labors

Genitive

genitive of specification (taskmasters over the works)

→ relational specification

ἔργον, -ου, τό: 'work, labor, task'; in Exodus ἔργα consistently refers to the forced labor imposed on Israel; the genitive τῶν ἔργων defines the sphere of the taskmasters' authority.

ἵνα

in order that / so that

purpose conjunction introducing the final-purpose clause

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ἵνα + subjunctive: standard purpose construction; the purpose of appointing taskmasters is explicitly to afflict Israel — κακώσωσιν αὐτούς — making the oppression's malicious intent transparent in the text.

κακώσωσιν

they might afflict / harm

Aor Act Subj 3 Pl · κακώω

verb of the purpose clause (subjunctive with ἵνα)

→ aorist: viewed as the goal of the action

κακώω: 'to harm, afflict, maltreat, oppress'; renders Hebrew יגזל ('they might afflict/humble'); the verb makes explicit that the oppression is not incidental but intentional — the taskmasters are appointed for the specific purpose of causing harm; cited in Acts 7:19 (κακοῦν τὰ βρέφη).

αὐτούς

them

Accusative

accusative direct object of κακώσωσιν

→ participant reference

αὐτούς: meaning 'them'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as accusative direct object of κακώσωσιν.

ἐν

in / with

preposition of means / sphere governing dative τοῖς ἔργοις

→ spatial or relational framing

ἐν: meaning 'in'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition of means / sphere governing dative τοῖς ἔργοις.

τοῖς

the

Dative

article with dative noun

→ noun-phrase marking

τοῖς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἔργοις

works / labors

Dative

dative of means ('afflict them by means of the labors')

→ sphere or reference

ἔργον: the instrument of oppression is the labor itself — forced construction work.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (narrative sequence)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ᾠκοδόμησαν

they built

Aor Act Indic 3 Pl · οἰκοδομέω

main verb of the second clause (subject shifts to the Israelites under compulsion)

→ constative aorist

οἰκοδομέω: 'build, construct'; the subject shift from Pharaoh (ἐπέστησεν) to the implied Israelite builders (ᾠκοδόμησαν) may reflect a Hebrew impersonal 3pl ('they built'), i.e., 'people built / it was built'; Israel's forced labor produces structures for their oppressor.

πόλεις

cities

Accusative

accusative direct object of ᾠκοδόμησαν

→ object specification

πόλις, -εως, ἡ: 'city'; renders Hebrew יָגֵד תִּנְנִימָה ('store-cities / supply cities'); the plural πόλεις introduces the list of three cities that follows.

ὀχυράς

fortified / strong

Accusative

attributive adjective with πόλεις

→ object specification

ὀχυρός, -ά, -όν: 'fortified, strong, secure'; renders Hebrew תִּנְנִימָה ('store-cities / treasure-cities'); the adjective ὀχυρός emphasizes the defensive and strategic character of the construction, making clear that Israel's labor was militarily useful to Egypt.

τῷ

for

Dative

article with dative noun (dative of advantage)

→ noun-phrase marking

τῷ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

Φαραω

Pharaoh

indeclinable proper noun — dative by context (for whose benefit the cities were built)

→ participant identification

Φαραω: transliteration of Hebrew פַּרְעֹה (Par'oh), itself a borrowing of Egyptian pr-ꜥ; ('great house'), the title of the Egyptian king; indeclinable in the LXX and NT; it is a title, not a personal name — the historical identity of the 'Pharaoh of the Oppression' remains debated.

τήν

the

Accusative

article with first named city (in apposition to πόλεις)

→ noun-phrase marking

τήν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

τε

both

enclitic connective particle (τε ... καί ... καί = 'both ... and ... and,' listing the three cities)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

τε: a lighter coordinating particle than καί, used in the LXX to introduce the first member of a list before καί; here τε ... καί introduces the three-city list.

Πιθωμ

Pithom

indeclinable proper noun — accusative by context (first named city)

→ participant identification

Πιθωμ: transliteration of Hebrew פִּתּוֹם (Pithom); possibly Egyptian pr-ʿItm ('house of Atum') or pr-Tm; tentatively identified with Tell el-Maskhuta or Tell er-Retaba in the eastern Nile Delta; one of the two cities named in the MT.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (second member of the city list)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

Ραμεσση

Ramesses

indeclinable proper noun — accusative by context (second named city)

→ participant identification

Ραμεσση: transliteration of Hebrew רַמֶּסֶס (Ra'amases); the Egyptian royal name 'Ra has fashioned him'; widely identified with Pi-Ramesses (Qantir) in the eastern Delta; named also in Gen 47:11 as the region of Goshen. The second of the MT's two cities.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (introducing the LXX-only third city — a significant textual plus)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

This καὶ adds a third city absent from the MT — the LXX plus of ὧν ἡ ἔστιν Ἡλίου πόλις.

ὧν

On

indeclinable proper noun — accusative by context (LXX-only third city)

→ participant identification

ὧν: transliteration of Hebrew הֶן (On, also called הֵיִלֹּס); the ancient Egyptian city of Iunu, known to the Greeks as Ἡλίου πόλις (Heliopolis); the center of the Egyptian solar cult of Ra-Atum. Joseph's wife Asenath was daughter of the priest of On (Gen 41:45 LXX: ὧν ἱερέως). This third city has no counterpart in the MT of Exod 1:11 and is a celebrated LXX expansion; the explanatory gloss that follows (ἡ ἔστιν Ἡλίου πόλις) indicates the LXX translator's own identification of the site for Greek readers.

ἥ

which

Nominative

relative pronoun — subject of ἔστιν (antecedent: ὧν)

→ participant reference

ὅς, ἥ, ὅ: relative pronoun, feminine nominative agreeing with the implied πόλις of ὧν.

ἔστιν

is

Pres Act Indic 3 Sg · εἰμί

copula of the explanatory identification clause

→ gnomic/timeless present (Heliopolis is always 'the City of the Sun' — a standing identification)

εἰμί: copulative; the phrase ἡ ἔστιν is the LXX translator's standard identification gloss (cf. Gen 14:17 LXX; Josh 15:8 LXX), linking an unfamiliar Semitic toponym to its recognizable Greek or Egyptian equivalent.

Ἡλίου

of the Sun

Genitive

genitive of relationship (Sun's city = city sacred to the Sun)

→ relational specification

Ἡλίου, -ου, ὁ: 'sun, Sun'; the genitive Ἡλίου πόλις ('City of the Sun') is the standard Greek designation for Egyptian Iunu, the cult-center of Ra; the translator's gloss connects the site with the Greek solar deity, making the LXX's addition also a polemical observation — Israel was forced to build a city for the god of Egypt's oppressors.

πόλις

city

Nominative

predicate nominative in the identification clause

→ participant prominence

πόλις, -εως, ἡ: 'city'; here as the predicate of the relative identification clause — 'which is [the] City of the Sun' = Heliopolis.

12 καθότι δὲ αὐτοὺς ἐταπείνουν, τοσούτῳ πλείους ἐγίνοντο καὶ ἴσχυον σφόδρα· καὶ ἐβδελύσσοντο οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι ἀπὸ τῶν υἱῶν Ισραὴλ.

But as much as they humiliated them, by so much the more they were becoming and growing exceedingly strong; and the Egyptians loathed the sons of Israel.

Ironical reversal — oppression intensifies multiplication

δέ (contrastive after καθότι-clause)

Verse 12 states the chapter's central irony with a proportional correlative (καθότι ... τοσούτῳ: 'as much as ... so much the more'); the harder Egypt presses, the more Israel multiplies — a pattern that renders Pharaoh's strategy self-defeating from the start. The loathing (ἐβδελύσσοντο) of the Egyptians is the emotional consequence of this irony, preparing for the escalation to open tyranny in vv.13–14. The verse echoes the logic of Gen 1 creation: divine blessing is not suppressible by human power.

καθότι

as much as / just as / in proportion as

proportional conjunction (correlative with τοσοῦτω: 'as much as ... so much more')

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καθότι: 'as, just as, inasmuch as'; in the LXX it renders Hebrew כִּן or כַּן in proportional-correlative constructions; here it introduces the protasis of the ratio: 'as much as they humiliated them' — paired with the apodosis 'by so much the more they became.' The construction is a LXX Hebraism for the Hebrew proportional idiom כַּן יִרְבֶּה יַעֲנֵנוּ ... כַּן יִשְׁאָלָם.

δὲ

but / now

postpositive connective — mild adversative (the oppression's counter-productive outcome)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'but'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

αὐτοὺς

them

Accusative

accusative direct object of ἐταπείνουν

→ participant reference

αὐτοὺς: meaning 'them'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as accusative direct object of ἐταπείνουν.

ἐταπείνουν

they were humiliating / oppressing

Impf Act Indic 3 Pl · ταπεινῶ

verb of the καθότι-clause (imperfect: ongoing, repeated oppression)

→ iterative / progressive imperfect (the humiliation was a sustained policy, not a single act)

ταπεινῶ: 'humble, humiliate, oppress'; renders Hebrew נָגַעְתִּי ('they afflicted/humbled'); in the LXX ταπεινῶ often carries the sense of social and physical degradation imposed from without; the imperfect stresses the continuous, ongoing nature of the oppression as a sustained program.

τοσοῦτω

by so much / all the more

Dative

correlative demonstrative adverb (dative of degree: 'by so much the more')

→ participial qualification

τοσοῦτος, -αύτη, -οῦτο: 'so great, so much'; the dative τοσοῦτω in the apodosis pairs with καθότι in the protasis to express a mathematical inverse proportion — the intensity of oppression is directly proportional to the growth of Israel, an irony the text deploys as theological commentary.

πλείους

more / greater in number

Nominative

predicate adjective (comparative) with ἐγίνοντο

→ participant prominence

πολύς (comparative: πλείων / πλείους): 'more, greater'; the comparative here renders Hebrew יִרְבֶּה ('he/they will multiply, be great'); the more Egypt oppresses, the more (πλείους) Israel becomes — a direct reversal of Pharaoh's intent.

ἐγίνοντο

they were becoming

Impf Mid Indic 3 Pl · γίνομαι

main verb of the apodosis (imperfect: continuous process of becoming more numerous)

→ progressive imperfect (continuous, ongoing increase)

γίνομαι: 'become, come to be'; the imperfect describes Israel's multiplication as an uninterrupted ongoing process throughout and in spite of the oppression.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (adding the second element of Israel's growth: strength)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἰσχυον

they were strong / prevailed

Impf Act Indic 3 Pl · ἰσχύω

coordinate verb (also imperfect — parallel ongoing condition)

→ progressive imperfect

ἰσχύω: 'be strong, have strength'; the same root Pharaoh used in v.9 (ἰσχύει ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς) — Israel continues to be exactly what Pharaoh feared; oppression confirms rather than reduces Israel's strength.

σφόδρα

exceedingly

adverb of degree with ἰσχυον

→ clausal contribution

σφόδρα: 'very much, exceedingly'; echoes the σφόδρα σφόδρα of v.7 — Israel's strength remains at the level the narrator described before the oppression began.

καὶ

and

narrative sequential conjunction (introducing the emotional consequence)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἐβδελύσσοντο

loathed / were disgusted

Impf Mid Indic 3 Pl · βδελύσσομαι

main verb of the closing clause

→ progressive imperfect (the loathing was a sustained emotional state)

βδελύσσομαι: 'to abhor, loathe, feel revulsion toward'; renders Hebrew וַיִּבְרָאוּ ('and they were in dread / were loathing,' from וַיִּרָא 'be disgusted/dreaded'); a strong word of visceral revulsion, used elsewhere of abominations (cf. Lev 11:11 LXX); the Egyptians' loathing of Israel indicates that the oppression has moved from policy calculation to emotional hatred.

οἱ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

οἱ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

Αἰγύπτιοι

Egyptians

Nominative

subject of ἐβδελύσσοντο

→ participant prominence

Αἰγύπτιος, -α, -ον: 'Egyptian'; the substantive use of the adjective designates the Egyptian people collectively; it is the Egyptians as a whole — not merely Pharaoh — who have come to loathe Israel, preparing for the collective complicity in the oppression of vv.13–14.

ἀπὸ

from / toward

preposition expressing the object of loathing (ἀπό with verbs of aversion)

→ spatial or relational framing

ἀπό: with verbs of aversion and emotion (βδελύσσομαι, προσοχθίζω etc.) ἀπό introduces the object of the feeling — 'they loathed [away from] the sons of Israel'; this construction renders Hebrew מִן ('from before / because of').

τῶν

of the

Genitive

article with genitive noun phrase (object of ἀπό)

→ noun-phrase marking

τῶν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

υἱῶν

sons

Genitive

genitive complement of ἀπό

→ relational specification

υἱός: οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ — the covenant people, toward whom Egypt's loathing is now directed; the contrast between Israel's divine-blessed vitality and Egypt's revulsion is the emotional climax of the oppression narrative.

Ἰσραὴλ

Israel

indeclinable proper noun — genitive by context

→ participant identification

Ἰσραὴλ: transliterated proper name rendered in Greek letters; here it functions as indeclinable proper noun — genitive by context.

13 καὶ κατεδυνάστευον οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ βίᾳ·

And the Egyptians tyrannized the sons of Israel with force.

Escalation summary — open tyranny stated baldly

καί (narrative sequence)

Verse 13 is a concise, declarative summary of the oppression that vv.11–12 were building toward: the loathing of v.12 has turned into open tyranny. The verb κατεδυνάστευον is the key LXX lexeme for systematic political oppression (rendering Hebrew וַיַּעַבְדוּ, 'and they enslaved'), and βίᾳ ('by force') adds the note of coercive violence. The verse functions as a heading-summary before the detailed description of the harsh labors in v.14.

καὶ

and

narrative sequential conjunction

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

κατεδυνάστευον

were tyrannizing / oppressing

Impf Act Indic 3 Pl · κατεδυναστεύω

main verb — sustained oppressive action

→ progressive imperfect (ongoing, unrelenting tyranny as a continued policy)

κατεδυναστεύω: 'to tyrannize, oppress with power'; a compound of κατά (intensive/against) + δυναστεύω (exercise power); renders Hebrew יַדְגֵּלוּ ('and they enslaved / put to hard service'); the κατα- prefix intensifies the oppressive character; the word appears in the LXX Prophets as a term for political and economic exploitation of the weak (cf. Amos 4:1; Mic 2:2; Ezek 22:29 LXX).

οἱ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

οἱ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

Αἰγύπτιοι

Egyptians

Nominative

subject of κατεδυνάστευον

→ participant prominence

Αἰγύπτιος: the Egyptians collectively — not merely Pharaoh's administration but the whole people, consistent with the collective loathing of v.12 (ἐβδελύσσοντο οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι).

τοὺς

the

Accusative

article with accusative direct object

→ noun-phrase marking

τοὺς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

υἱοὺς

sons

Accusative

accusative direct object of κατεδυνάστευον

→ object specification

υἱός: τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ is the collective nation, here positioned as the object of Egyptian tyranny — a structural reversal of the covenantal narrative, in which Israel is the people God is building toward liberation.

Ἰσραὴλ

Israel

indeclinable proper noun — genitive by context

→ participant identification

Ἰσραὴλ: transliterated proper name rendered in Greek letters; here it functions as indeclinable proper noun — genitive by context.

βία

with force / by violence

Dative

dative of manner (characterizing the mode of tyranny)

→ sphere or reference

βία, -ας, ἡ: 'force, violence, compulsion'; renders Hebrew כֹּחַ ('with crushing force / with harshness'); in v.14 the cognate μετὰ βίας repeats the term, bracketing the description of the labors with the note of violent coercion.

14 καὶ κατωδύνων αὐτῶν τὴν ζωὴν ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς σκληροῖς, τῷ πηλῷ καὶ τῇ πλινθείᾳ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις τοῖς ἐν τοῖς πεδίοις, κατὰ πάντα τὰ ἔργα ὧν κατεδουλοῦντο αὐτοὺς μετὰ βίας.

And they afflicted their life with the harsh labors — with clay and with brick-making and with all the works in the fields — according to all the labors by which they enslaved them with force.

Elaboration — the harsh labors enumerated καί (continuation)

Verse 14 elaborates the tyranny of v.13 with concrete detail: clay, brick-making, and field labor (πηλός, πλινθεία, τὰ ἔργα ἐν τοῖς πεδίοις). The verb κατωδύνων ('they afflicted with pain') renders the note of bodily suffering more vividly than the preceding κατεδυνάστευον. The closing relative clause (κατὰ πάντα τὰ ἔργα ὧν κατεδουλοῦντο αὐτοὺς μετὰ βίας) is itself a Hebraizing pleonasm that returns to the theme of violent enslavement (βίας echoing v.13), sealing the unit of oppression-description before the narrative pivot to the midwives in v.15.

καὶ

and

narrative sequential conjunction

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καί: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

κατωδύνων

they were causing pain / afflicting

Impf Act Indic 3 Pl · κατοδυνάω

main verb — the physical suffering inflicted

→ progressive imperfect (sustained affliction)

κατοδυνάω: 'to cause intense pain, afflict with anguish'; a compound of κατά + ὀδυνάω ('to pain'); renders Hebrew וַיַּמְרִינֵם ('and they embittered / made life bitter'); the ὀδύνω root (pain, grief) is stronger than mere oppression — it targets the quality of life itself.

αὐτῶν

their

Genitive

genitive of possession with ζωὴν (possessive

genitive preceding the noun it modifies)

→ relational specification

αὐτῶν: meaning 'their'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as genitive of possession with ζωὴν (possessive genitive preceding the noun it modifies).

τὴν

the

Accusative

article with accusative direct object

→ noun-phrase marking

τὴν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ζωήν

life

Accusative

accusative direct object of καταδύνων

→ object specification

ζωή, -ῆς, ἡ: 'life'; renders Hebrew חַיִּים ('their lives'); the targeting of ζωή as the direct object of καταδύνων is striking — not just their labor or their bodies but their life itself is the object of affliction; this foreshadows the move to target their children in vv.15–22.

ἐν

in / with

preposition of means / sphere

→ spatial or relational framing

ἐν: meaning 'in'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition of means / sphere.

τοῖς

the

Dative

article with dative noun phrase

→ noun-phrase marking

τοῖς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἔργοις

works / labors

Dative

dative of means (the labors are the instrument of affliction)

→ sphere or reference

ἔργον: the fifth occurrence of this word in the chapter (vv.11 ×2, 12, 13, 14); the repetition of ἔργα is a deliberate rhetorical device hammering home the totality of forced labor.

τοῖς

the

Dative

article with attributive adjective

→ noun-phrase marking

τοῖς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

σκληροῖς

harsh / hard

Dative

attributive adjective with ἔργοις

→ sphere or reference

σκληρός, -ά, -όν: 'hard, harsh, severe'; renders Hebrew קָשָׁה ('with crushing harshness'); the word group σκληρός / σκληρότης / σκληροτράχηλος ('hard-necked/stiff-necked') is important in Exodus (cf. Exod 32:9; 33:3 LXX).

τῷ

the

Dative

article with dative noun (first item in the apposition-list of specific labors)

→ noun-phrase marking

τῷ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

πηλῷ

clay / mud

Dative

dative of means (specifying the medium of labor — clay for bricks)

→ sphere or reference

πηλός, -οῦ, ό: 'mud, clay'; the raw material of brick-making; renders Hebrew מַלְחָה ('clay/mortar'); paired with πλινθεία ('brick-making') it gives the two stages of the process: preparing the clay and forming the bricks. The same word is used in John 9:6 (Jesus mixing mud to heal the blind man) in an entirely different register.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (linking the labor items)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

τῇ

the

Dative

article with dative noun

→ noun-phrase marking

τῇ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

πλινθεία

brick-making

Dative

dative of means (second specific labor: brick-making)

→ sphere or reference

πλινθεία, -ας, ἡ: 'brick-making, brick-work'; from πλίνθος ('brick'); renders Hebrew **בְּצִבְלֵי** ('bricks'); together with **πηλός** it describes the quintessential Egyptian slave labor — making mudbricks — which archaeological evidence confirms was a major occupation in the New Kingdom Delta building projects.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

πᾶσι

all

Dative

adjective (comprehensive scope — covering everything beyond clay and bricks)

→ participial qualification

πᾶς: 'all, every'; the comprehensive **πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις** ensures that the list does not limit the forced labor to brick-making alone — it extends to the full range of field and agricultural work.

τοῖς

the

Dative

article with dative noun

→ noun-phrase marking

τοῖς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἔργοις

works / labors

Dative

dative of means (third category of labor)

→ sphere or reference

ἔργον: the third catalog item; 'all the works in the fields' adds agricultural labor to the construction work — a total enclosure of Israel's capacity for productive work in the service of Egypt.

τοῖς

the

Dative

article with prepositional phrase (attributive to ἔργοις)

→ noun-phrase marking

τοῖς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἐν

in

preposition of location (specifying where the labors occur: in the fields)

→ spatial or relational framing

ἐν: meaning 'in'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition of location (specifying where the labors occur: in the fields).

τοῖς

the

Dative

article with dative noun (location)

→ noun-phrase marking

τοῖς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

πεδίοις

fields / plains

Dative

dative complement of ἐν (the fields as the locus of the third category of labor)

→ sphere or reference

πεδῖον, -ου, τό: 'plain, field, open country'; renders Hebrew תְּחִמָּה ('in the field'); the field labors contrast with the urban construction (bricks/clay) — Israel's oppression encompasses both the building sites and the agricultural lands of Egypt.

κατὰ

according to / in accordance with

preposition of measure/accordance governing accusative ἔργα

→ spatial or relational framing

κατά + accusative: 'according to, in conformity with'; introduces the generalizing summary clause — 'according to all the labors by which they enslaved them'; this Hebraizing pleonasm rounds off and summarizes the entire labor description.

πάντα

all

Accusative

adjective (comprehensive scope with ἔργα in the closing summary)

→ participial qualification

πᾶς: 'all'; the second comprehensive marker in the verse (cf. πᾶσι above), emphasizing that no category of labor was exempt.

τὰ

the

Accusative

article with accusative noun

→ noun-phrase marking

τὰ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἔργα

works / labors

Accusative

accusative object of κατὰ (the labors being specified by the relative clause)

→ object specification

ἔργον: sixth and final occurrence of this word in vv.11–14; the density of ἔργα creates a rhetorical drumbeat of forced labor across the passage.

ὧν

by which / with which

Genitive

genitive relative pronoun (antecedent: ἔργα) — genitive of means with κατεδουλοῦντο

→ relational specification

ὧς, ἧ, ὅ: relative pronoun, genitive plural neuter (agreeing with ἔργα); 'the labors by means of which they enslaved them.'

κατεδουλοῦντο

they were enslaving

Impf Mid Indic 3 Pl · καταδουλόω

verb of the relative clause — imperfect (sustained process of enslavement)

→ progressive imperfect

καταδουλόω: 'to enslave completely, reduce to slavery'; a compound of κατά + δουλόω ('enslave'); renders Hebrew עָבַד ('work, enslave'); the middle voice here may be reflexive or intensive; the verb is used in the NT for false teachers 'enslaving' believers (Gal 2:4; 2 Cor 11:20).

αὐτούς

them

Accusative

accusative direct object of κατεδουλοῦντο

→ participant reference

αὐτούς: meaning 'them'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as accusative direct object of κατεδουλοῦντο.

μετά

with

preposition of accompaniment / manner governing genitive βίας

→ spatial or relational framing

μετά: meaning 'with'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition of accompaniment / manner governing genitive βίας.

βίας

force / violence

Genitive

genitive complement of μετά (manner: 'with force')

→ relational specification

βία: same word as βίᾱ in v.13; by ending v.14 with μετά βίας, the narrator brackets the description of the labors between two references to violence, creating an inclusio that underlines the coercive character of the entire oppression-passages.

15 εἶπεν δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ταῖς μαίαις τῶν Εβραίων, ᾧ ὄνομα τῇ μιᾷ Σεπφωρα καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τῇ δευτέρᾳ Φουα,

And the king of the Egyptians spoke to the midwives of the Hebrews, whose name for the one was Shiphrah and the name for the second was Puah,

Scene change — Pharaoh's covert command to the midwives

δέ (narrative transition to a new scene)

Verse 15 opens the midwife episode with a grammatically complex speech-introduction clause: the parenthetical naming of the two midwives (ᾧ ὄνομα τῇ μιᾷ Σεπφωρα ... τῇ δευτέρᾳ Φουα) is embedded before the speech itself is given (in v.16). The names are preserved in the LXX from the Hebrew: Σεπφωρα (Hebrew שִׁפְרָא, 'bird') and Φουα (Hebrew פּוּא, uncertain etymology). Their naming is significant — the text individualizes them, a narrative sign that their moral agency is about to be emphasized.

εἶπεν

said / spoke

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · λέγω

main verb — speech-introduction formula

→ constative aorist

λέγω: standard LXX speech introduction verb (calquing לַמַּדְבָּר); the aorist frames the speech as a specific historical moment.

δὲ

and / now

postpositive narrative connective — scene transition

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ὁ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

ὁ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

βασιλεὺς

king

Nominative

subject of εἶπεν

→ participant prominence

βασιλεὺς: 'king'; the fuller title ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ('the king of the Egyptians') here replaces the simple Φαραῶ of vv.11, 22 — the fuller title may mark the formality of an official command.

τῶν

of the

Genitive

article with genitive noun (specifying whose king)

→ noun-phrase marking

τῶν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

Αἰγυπτίων

Egyptians

Genitive

genitive of relationship with βασιλεὺς

→ relational specification

Αἰγύπτιος: 'Egyptian'; the genitive specifies Pharaoh as king of Egypt (not of Israel), a designation that will contrast implicitly with God's own claim over Israel.

ταῖς

the

Dative

article with dative indirect object

→ noun-phrase marking

ταῖς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

μαίαις

midwives

Dative

dative indirect object of εἶπεν (the addressees of the command)

→ sphere or reference

μαῖα, -ας, ἡ: 'midwife'; renders Hebrew מִדְּבָרִי ('those who cause to give birth / midwives'); the word appears five times in vv.15–21, making the midwives the dominant human figures of the chapter's second half; the 'fear of God' (v.17) is explicitly predicated of them.

τῶν

of the

Genitive

article with genitive noun (specifying whose midwives)

→ noun-phrase marking

τῶν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

Εβραίων

Hebrews

Genitive

genitive of relationship with μαίαίς

→ relational specification

Ἑβραῖος, -α, -ον: 'Hebrew'; renders Hebrew עִבְרִי ('Hebrew'), a term of ethnic or social identity; in Exodus the Hebrews are consistently identified as the oppressed people (cf. 1:19; 2:6, 7, 11, 13); the LXX preserves the distinctions between Εβραῖοι (Hebrews) and Ἰσραηλ (Israel as covenant people).

ὧς

whose / to whom

Dative

relative pronoun — dative (dative of possession in the naming clause: 'to whom [as] name')

→ participant reference or interest

ὧς, ἧ, ὅ: relative pronoun, dative singular neuter — the naming formula ὧς ὄνομα τῇ μιᾷ ('whose name for the one was') is an idiomatic LXX naming construction calquing Hebrew בְּשֵׁם אֶחָד ('whose name the one was').

ὄνομα

name

Nominative

subject of the verbless naming clause

→ participant prominence

ὄνομα: 'name'; the individualizing naming of the midwives is a significant narrative marker — biblical texts rarely name minor figures unless those figures are morally significant; Shiphrah and Puah are here elevated to named agents whose fear of God (v.17) will defy Pharaoh's command.

τῇ

the

Dative

article with dative noun (the one to whom the name belongs)

→ noun-phrase marking

τῇ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

μιᾷ

one / the first

Dative

dative substantive (the first midwife identified)

→ measure or count

εἷς, μία, ἓν: 'one'; used as an ordinal 'the first/one'; τῇ μιᾷ ... τῇ δευτέρᾳ = 'the one ... the other/second'; a Hebraizing distributive formula.

Σεπφωρα

Shiphrah

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by context (as the name predicated)

→ participant identification

Σεπφωρα: transliteration of Hebrew שִׁפְרָה (Tipporah); related to צִפּוֹר ('bird'); indeclinable in the LXX; the same name as Moses' wife (Exod 2:21), though a different individual; the name places these women in the same semantic field as the avian imagery associated with freedom and divine care in the Exodus tradition.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (introducing the second midwife's name)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

τὸ

the

Nominative

article with subject ὄνομα (second naming clause)

→ noun-phrase marking

τὸ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ὄνομα

name

Nominative

subject of the second verbless naming clause

→ participant prominence

ὄνομα: repeated for the second midwife; the article τὸ before ὄνομα in the second clause distinguishes it slightly from the first, perhaps reflecting a Hebrew text that uses כִּי only on the second occurrence.

τῇ

the

Dative

article with dative noun

→ noun-phrase marking

τῇ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

δευτέρα

second

Dative

dative ordinal substantive (the second midwife identified)

→ sphere or reference

δεύτερος, -α, -ον: 'second'; τῇ δευτέρᾳ parallels τῇ μιᾷ above; the contrast μιᾷ / δευτέρᾳ ('the one / the second') is a standard LXX distributive pair (cf. Gen 19:30–38 LXX).

Φουα

Puah

indeclinable proper noun — nominative by context (the second name predicated)

→ participant identification

Φουα: transliteration of Hebrew פּוּעָה (Pu'ah); indeclinable; the etymology is uncertain — possibly related to פּוּעַ ('to cry out, to groan') or to a Semitic root meaning 'girl'; paired with Σεπώρα as the two named protagonists of the midwife episode; together they represent the first recorded act of civil disobedience on grounds of conscience in the biblical narrative.

16 καὶ εἶπεν Ὅταν μαιοῦσθε τὰς Εβραίας καὶ ὧσιν πρὸς τῷ τίκτειν, ἐὰν μὲν ἄρσεν ἦ, ἀποκτείνετε αὐτό, ἐὰν δὲ θήλυ, περιποιεῖσθε αὐτό.

And he said: 'When you are midwifing the Hebrew women and they are about to give birth — if it is male, kill it; but if female, let it live.'

Direct speech — Pharaoh's clandestine infanticide decree

καί (continuation of speech)

Verse 16 gives the content of Pharaoh's secret order: selective neonatal killing — kill males, spare females. The command is structured as a conditional doublet (ἐὰν μὲν ... ἐὰν δέ) built on the biologically binary classification ἄρσεν / θήλυ ('male / female'). The verb ἀποκτείνετε ('kill!') is stark and unmitigated; its counterpart περιποιεῖσθε ('preserve / let live') with no explicit rationale reveals the purely demographic logic: eliminate males who could become warriors, keep females who could be incorporated into Egyptian society.

καὶ

and

narrative sequential conjunction (resuming the speech after the parenthetical naming of v.15)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καί: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

εἶπεν

said

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · λέγω

speech-introduction resumptive verb (re-opening the direct speech after the parenthetical v.15b)

→ constative aorist

λέγω: the second εἶπεν in two verses signals that v.15 broke off to name the midwives and v.16 now delivers the actual command.

Ὅταν

when / whenever

temporal conjunction introducing the circumstantial condition (ὅταν + subjunctive = 'whenever')

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ὅταν: 'whenever, at the time when'; with the subjunctive it forms an indefinite temporal clause rendering Hebrew *כִּי תִלְדִּי* ('when you deliver'); the indefiniteness makes the command standing policy, not a one-time order.

μαιοῦσθε

you are midwifing / delivering

Pres Mid Indic 2 Pl · μαιόμαι

verb of the temporal clause (indicative after ὅταν — gnomic/customary present)

→ customary present (describing their regular professional activity)

μαιόμαι: 'to act as midwife, to deliver a child'; a verb directly derived from *μαῖα* ('midwife'); rare in classical Greek, it is the professional term for the practice the two women are called to pervert; the verb's professional specificity makes Pharaoh's command a calculated corruption of a life-giving vocation.

τὰς

the

Accusative

article with accusative noun (the women being served in labor)

→ noun-phrase marking

τὰς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

Εβραίας

Hebrew women

Accusative

accusative direct object of *μαιοῦσθε*

→ object specification

Ἑβραία: feminine of Ἑβραῖος; 'Hebrew woman'; the ethnic designation both identifies the scope of the command (Hebrew women, not Egyptian) and signals the community whose future is at stake.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (adding the second temporal condition: being at the point of birth)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ᾧσιν

they are / may be

Pres Act Subj 3 Pl · εἰμί

verb of the second temporal clause (subjunctive expressing the specific moment of labor)

→ present: the state of being in active labor

εἰμί: copulative; the clause ᾧσιν πρὸς τῷ τίκτειν ('they may be at the point of giving birth') specifies the exact critical window — the moment of delivery — during which the killing was to be carried out.

πρὸς

at / toward

preposition expressing temporal proximity with articular infinitive (πρὸς τῷ + inf = 'at the point of, about to')

→ spatial or relational framing

πρὸς τῷ τίκτειν: a construction of temporal proximity — 'at/when about to give birth'; πρὸς + dative articular infinitive is a LXX idiom expressing immediate temporal context.

τῷ

the

Dative

article with dative infinitive

→ noun-phrase marking

τῷ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

τίκτειν

to give birth

Pres Act Inf · τίκτω

articular infinitive (complement of πρὸς τῷ — specifying the critical moment)

→ progressive present: the act of giving birth as an ongoing process during which the midwife acts

τίκτω: 'give birth, bear a child'; a common LXX word for parturition; the critical moment πρὸς τῷ τίκτειν specifies the midwife's window of opportunity for the killing — and also the window of the midwives' moral decision.

ἐάν

if

conditional particle (first conditional — if the child is male)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ἐάν + subjunctive: third-class condition (future possibility); the doublet ἐάν μὲν ... ἐάν δέ exhaustively covers both biological outcomes.

μὲν

(contrastive particle — first of the pair)

particle introducing the first member of a μὲν ... δέ contrast (male / female)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

μὲν: used with δέ in v.16b to create the binary contrast (ἐὰν μὲν ... ἐὰν δέ = 'if on the one hand ... but if on the other').

ἄρσεν

male

Nominative

predicate adjective (subject complement with ἦ: 'if it be male')

→ participant prominence

ἄρσεν, -ενος, τό: 'male'; the neuter form ἄρσεν renders Hebrew רָכָז ('male'); the medical/biological term is deliberately clinical, as if to distance the category from the person — what Pharaoh is commanding is the killing of infants reduced to a gender classification.

ἦ

it may be / is

Pres Act Subj 3 Sg · εἰμί

verb of the conditional clause (subjunctive with ἐάν)

→ present: the state of being male

εἰμί: copulative; ἐάν ἦ = 'if it be'; the third-class condition treats the sex of each newborn as an open, unknowable contingency that the midwife must assess at delivery.

ἀποκτείνετε

kill it!

Aor Act Impv 2 Pl · ἀποκτείνω

imperative — Pharaoh's command in the first conditional

→ imperative of command (immediate compliance expected)

ἀποκτείνω: 'to kill, slay'; the most direct and unambiguous Greek word for killing; the aorist imperative ἀποκτείνετε implies a single decisive act — 'kill it now (at delivery)'; the midwives' refusal to carry out this command (v.17) is therefore direct disobedience of an explicit royal order.

αὐτό

it

Accusative

accusative direct object of ἀποκτείνετε

→ participant reference

αὐτό: meaning 'it'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as accusative direct object of ἀποκτείνετε.

ἐάν

if

conditional particle (second conditional — if female)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ἐάν: meaning 'if'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

δὲ

but

postpositive adversative particle (second member of the μὲν ... δέ contrast)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'but'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

θῆλυ

female

Nominative

predicate adjective (subject complement with implied ἦ: 'if [it be] female')

→ participant prominence

θῆλυς, -εἰα, -υ: 'female'; neuter θῆλυ; renders Hebrew נְקֵבָה ('female'); the binary ἄρσεν / θῆλυ echoes the creation language of Gen 1:27 (ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ ἐποίησεν αὐτούς) — Pharaoh is targeting the created order, attempting to destroy the male half of the image of God.

περιποιεῖσθε

preserve / let live / keep

Pres Mid Impv 2 Pl · περιποιέω

imperative — the counter-command for female infants

→ imperative of command / permission

περιποιέω: in the middle, 'to preserve for oneself, to keep alive, to save'; renders Hebrew רִיחֵיָהּ ('let her live / keep alive'); the contrast with ἀποκτείνετε is stark — male neonates are to be killed, female ones 'preserved'; no rationale is given in the text, but the demographic logic (males as potential warriors and ancestors; females as absorbable into Egyptian society) is implied.

αὐτό

it

Accusative

accusative direct object of περιποιεῖσθε

→ participant reference

αὐτό: meaning 'it'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as accusative direct object of περιποιεῖσθε.

17 ἐφοβήθησαν δὲ αἱ μαῖαι τὸν θεὸν καὶ οὐκ ἐποίησαν καθότι συνέταξεν αὐταῖς ὁ βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου, καὶ ἐζωογονοῦν τὰ ἄρσενά.

But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, and they kept the males alive.

Climax of the midwife episode — the decisive act of civil disobedience

δέ (adversative — counter-action against Pharaoh's command)

Verse 17 is the theological pivot of the chapter: ἐφοβήθησαν δὲ αἱ μαῖαι τὸν θεόν ('but the midwives feared God') is the moral explanation for their disobedience. The verb φοβέομαι with τὸν θεόν is the classic LXX formula for covenant piety — the fear of God that produces ethical action. Their action (ἐζωογονοῦν τὰ ἄρσενά) directly inverts Pharaoh's command (ἀποκτείνετε, v.16): instead of killing males they kept males alive. The contrast between the two loyalties — fear of Pharaoh vs. fear of God — is the chapter's theological thesis.

ἐφοβήθησαν

they feared

Aor Pass Indic 3 Pl · φοβέομαι

main verb — the chapter's theological keyword

→ constative aorist (the fear of God as a settled disposition, seen as a completed fact that explains their conduct)

φοβέομαι: 'to fear, reverence'; the aorist passive ἐφοβήθησαν renders Hebrew **וַיִּתְּיָוּ** ('and they feared'); the phrase φοβεῖσθαι τὸν θεόν is the LXX's standard expression for practical covenant piety — not mere emotional dread but the reverence that governs conduct (cf. Gen 22:12; Prov 1:7 LXX); this is the theological explanation for the midwives' entire behavior.

δὲ

but

postpositive adversative connective (strongly contrastive: Pharaoh commanded; the midwives, by contrast, feared God)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'but'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

αἱ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

αἱ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

μαῖαι

midwives

Nominative

subject of ἐφοβήθησαν

→ participant prominence

μαῖα: 'midwife'; the women named in v.15 are here reidentified by function; their professional identity is inseparable from their moral identity — it is as midwives that they are positioned to obey or disobey.

τὸν

the

Accusative

article with accusative object of φοβέομαι

→ noun-phrase marking

τὸν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

θεόν

God

Accusative

accusative direct object of ἐφοβήθησαν (object of reverential fear)

→ object specification

θεός, -οῦ, ὁ: 'God'; the accusative with φοβέομαι renders the Hebrew direct object **אֱלֹהֵי הָיִדְיָו** / **הָיִדְיָו**; whether the midwives are Hebrews or Egyptians is debated — the LXX text is ambiguous (τῶν Εβραίων may modify μαῖαις, meaning 'Hebrew midwives,' or could mean 'midwives of the Hebrews' who may not themselves be Hebrew); but their fear of God places them within the moral community of God-fearers regardless of ethnicity.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (connecting the fear of God with the action it produces)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

οὐκ

not

negation particle

→ discourse linkage or contrast

οὐκ: meaning 'not'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἐποίησαν

did

Aor Act Indic 3 Pl · ποιέω

main verb of the non-compliance clause

→ constative aorist (the whole act of non-compliance seen as a single fact)

ποιέω: 'do, make, carry out'; οὐκ ἐποίησαν καθότι ... = 'they did not do as ... commanded'; the negative aorist of ποιέω is the technical idiom for failure (deliberate or otherwise) to execute a command; here it is deliberate.

καθότι

as / just as

comparative/manner conjunction (specifying what they did not do)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καθότι: 'just as, in the manner that'; introduces the content of the command they refused to obey; as in v.12, it functions here to establish precise correspondence — they did not do exactly what the king commanded.

συνέταξεν

commanded / ordered

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · συντάσσω

verb of the καθότι-clause (the command they disobeyed)

→ constative aorist

συντάσσω: 'arrange together, command, order'; renders Hebrew נִצַּח ('command'); the compound συν- suggests a systematic, organized command — Pharaoh's command was deliberate policy, and their refusal is equally deliberate counter-policy.

αὐταῖς

to them

Dative

dative indirect object of συνέταξεν (addressees of the command)

→ participial qualification

αὐταῖς: meaning 'to them'; it contributes descriptive or attendant verbal force; here it functions as dative indirect object of συνέταξεν (addressees of the command).

ὁ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject of συνέταξεν

→ noun-phrase marking

ὁ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

βασιλεὺς

king

Nominative

subject of συνέταξεν

→ participant prominence

βασιλεὺς: the command-authority whose command the midwives defy; the pairing of βασιλεὺς (human king) and θεός (God) in this verse sets up the contrast between two competing authority-structures, and the midwives' fear of God overrides their obligation to the king.

Αἰγύπτου

of Egypt

Genitive

genitive of relationship with βασιλεὺς

→ relational specification

Αἰγύπτου: meaning 'of Egypt'; it serves as genitive of relationship with βασιλεὺς.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (adding the positive result of their disobedience)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἐζωογόνουν

they were keeping alive / letting live

Impf Act Indic 3 Pl · ζωογονέω

main verb of the positive result clause (imperfect: ongoing practice)

→ iterative / progressive imperfect (they habitually kept male infants alive — a sustained counter-policy)

ζωογονέω: 'to keep alive, to give or preserve life'; a compound of ζωή + γονή ('life-production'); renders Hebrew יִיָּצִיחַ ('they kept alive'); the imperfect here contrasts with the aorist of the disobedience — non-compliance was a single decision (aorist), but keeping the infants alive was their ongoing practice (imperfect).

τὰ

the

Accusative

article with accusative noun

→ noun-phrase marking

τὰ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἄρσενα

males

Accusative

accusative direct object of ἐζωογόνουν

→ object specification

ἄρσεν: the same word Pharaoh used in his kill-command (ἐὰν μὲν ἄρσεν ἦ, ἀποκτείνετε αὐτό); its reappearance here as the direct object of ἐζωογόνουν ('they kept the males alive') creates a deliberate verbal echo that underlines the exact inversion of Pharaoh's order — the midwives did precisely what he forbade and in precisely the category he had targeted.

18 ἐκάλεσεν δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου τὰς μαίας καὶ εἶπεν αὐταῖς τί ὅτι ἐποιήσατε τὸ πρᾶγμα τοῦτο καὶ ἐζωογονεῖτε τὰ ἄρσενα;

And the king of Egypt called the midwives and said to them, 'Why did you do this thing and keep the males alive?'

Confrontation — Pharaoh's interrogation of the midwives δέ (narrative sequence)

Verse 18 dramatizes the confrontation Pharaoh initiates when his covert policy fails — he summons the midwives and demands an accounting. The rhetorical question τί ὅτι ('why is it that?') is a Hebraism rendering מַה־לָּזֶה ('why?'), expressing a combination of bewilderment and reproach. The imperfect ἐζωογονεῖτε ('you were keeping alive') in Pharaoh's question mirrors the narrator's imperfect ἐζωογόνουν in v.17, confirming that the king has learned of their ongoing practice.

ἐκάλεσεν

summoned / called

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · καλέω

main verb — Pharaoh's summoning action

→ constative aorist

καλέω: 'call, summon, invite'; in an administrative context it means to officially summon (cf. the summoning of officials in Gen 41:8 LXX); Pharaoh's summoning of the midwives reverses the power dynamic they created by defying him — he attempts to reassert control.

δὲ

and / now

postpositive narrative connective

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ὁ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

ὁ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

βασιλεὺς

king

Nominative

subject of ἐκάλεσεν

→ participant prominence

βασιλεὺς: 'king'; the fuller title ὁ βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου ('the king of Egypt') appears again (as in v.15), perhaps to emphasize the formality of the judicial interrogation that follows.

Αἰγύπτου

of Egypt

Genitive

genitive of relationship with βασιλεὺς

→ relational specification

Αἰγύπτου: meaning 'of Egypt'; it serves as genitive of relationship with βασιλεὺς.

τάς

the

Accusative

article with accusative direct object

→ noun-phrase marking

τάς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

μαίας

midwives

Accusative

accusative direct object of ἐκάλεσεν

→ object specification

μαῖα: the two named women of v.15; their summons to the royal court places them in a position of maximum jeopardy — they must answer for their defiance before the king they defied.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (adding the speech act to the summoning)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

εἶπεν

said

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · λέγω

speech-introduction verb

→ constative aorist

λέγω: the speech-introduction formula opens the royal question.

αὐταῖς

to them

Dative

dative indirect object of εἶπεν

→ participial qualification

αὐταῖς: meaning 'to them'; it contributes descriptive or attendant verbal force; here it functions as dative indirect object of εἶπεν.

τί

why / what

Nominative

interrogative pronoun — head of the rhetorical question

→ participant reference

τίς, τί: 'who, what, why'; the neuter τί functions as the interrogative head of the question; τί ὅτι is a Hebraizing interrogative formula (calquing וְלִמָּה, 'why is it that?'), expressing indignant reproach — a stronger and more expressive idiom than simple τί alone.

ὅτι

that / because

conjunction forming the Hebraizing interrogative τί ὅτι ('why is it that')

→ discourse linkage or contrast

τί ὅτι: a LXX Hebraism rendering וְלִמָּה ('why?'); literally 'what is it that,' used as an emphatic 'why?'; cf. Luke 2:49 LXX echo (τί ὅτι ἐζητεῖτέ με;) and Acts 5:4.

ἐποιήσατε

did you do

Aor Act Indic 2 Pl · ποιέω

verb of the rhetorical question (referring to the specific act of defiance)

→ constative aorist (the whole act of non-compliance viewed as a single fact to be accounted for)

ποιέω: Pharaoh's question uses the same verb (ποιέω) the narrator used in v.17 for what they did not do (οὐκ ἐποίησαν) — but now applied to what they did do (keeping the males alive); the verbal echo makes explicit that their action was exactly what he commanded them not to do.

τὸ

the

Accusative

article with accusative noun (pointing to the specific act)

→ noun-phrase marking

τὸ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

πράγμα

thing / matter / deed

Accusative

accusative direct object of ἐποιήσατε

→ object specification

πράγμα, -ατος, τό: 'thing done, matter, deed, affair'; renders Hebrew הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה ('this thing/word'); the indefiniteness of πράγμα with the demonstrative τοῦτο — 'this thing' — allows Pharaoh to refer to the entire act of disobedience with a certain contemptuous vagueness.

τοῦτο

this

Accusative

demonstrative pronoun — attributive with πράγμα (deictic: 'this specific deed')

→ participant reference

οὗτος: deictic demonstrative pointing to the specific act of disobedience just described in vv.17.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (adding the specific behavior questioned)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἐζωογονεῖτε

you were keeping alive

Impf Act Indic 2 Pl · ζωογονέω

verb of the coordinate question clause (imperfect: the ongoing practice Pharaoh is questioning)

→ iterative imperfect (Pharaoh knows this was not an isolated event but a habitual practice)

ζωογονέω: the same verb as in v.17 (ἐζωογόνουν) — Pharaoh's question echoes the narrator's report, confirming that he has full knowledge of what they did; the imperfect ἐζωογονεῖτε ('you were keeping alive') indicates he knows it was a sustained pattern, not an accident.

τὰ

the

Accusative

article with accusative noun

→ noun-phrase marking

τὰ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ἄρσενά

males

Accusative

accusative direct object of ἐζωογονεῖτε

→ object specification

ἄρσεν: third occurrence of this word in the chapter (vv.16, 17, 18, 22); its repetition tracks the fate of Hebrew males as the chapter's central contested category — Pharaoh wants them dead, God and the midwives keep them alive, Moses among them.

19 εἶπαν δὲ αἱ μαῖαι τῷ Φαραῶ Οὐχ ὥς γυναῖκες Αἰγύπτου αἱ Εβραῖαι· ζώουσιν γάρ· πρὶν ἢ εἰσελθεῖν πρὸς αὐτὰς τὴν μαῖαν, τίκτουςιν.

And the midwives said to Pharaoh, 'The Hebrew women are not like the women of Egypt — for they are vigorous; before the midwife enters to them, they have given birth.'

Speech — the midwives' defense before Pharaoh

δέ

Verse 19 is the midwives' response: they claim Hebrew women are simply too vigorous and give birth before a midwife arrives. Whether this is evasion, lie, or exaggeration is left to the reader; the narrative does not condemn them for it, and God blesses them (v.20–21). The rhetorical structure Οὐχ ὥς ... αἱ Εβραῖαι sets up a comparative denial followed by the causal γάρ-clause; the present tenses (ζώουσιν, τίκτουςιν) frame it as a general observation about Hebrew women's character rather than a specific incident, making it harder to refute.

εἶπαν

said

Aor Act Indic 3 Pl · λέγω

main verb — speech introduction

→ constative aorist

λέγω: εἶπαν is the Hellenistic/LXX alternative 3pl form alongside εἶπον; the midwives take the active role in responding — they do not wait but immediately offer their defense.

δὲ

and

postpositive narrative connective

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

αἱ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

αἱ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

μαῖαι

midwives

Nominative

subject of εἶπαν

→ participant prominence

μαῖαι: the same women who feared God (v.17) now display the rhetorical confidence that their moral clarity gives them — they answer the most powerful man in Egypt without apparent fear.

τῷ

to the

Dative

article with dative indirect object

→ noun-phrase marking

τῷ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

Φαραω

Pharaoh

indeclinable proper noun — dative by context (addressee of the speech)

→ participant identification

Φαραω: the title used when the midwives address the king directly; his royal title frames the power asymmetry against which the midwives' confident response stands out.

Οὐχ

not

negation particle (οὐχί + comparative: 'not like...')

→ discourse linkage or contrast

οὐ / οὐχ: emphatic negation (before ὥς it forms the comparative denial 'not like...'); the midwives' opening move is to assert a difference between the two groups of women.

ὥς

as / like

comparative particle (with Οὐχ: 'not like')

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ὥς: 'as, like'; introduces the comparative standard — Hebrew women are being distinguished from Egyptian women as a class.

γυναῖκες

women

Nominative

nominative subject of the verbless predication (Αἰγύπτου = genitive of source/identity)

→ participant prominence

γυνή, -αῖκος, ἡ: 'woman, wife'; the comparison is between two categories of women defined by ethnicity — Egyptian women (γυναῖκες Αἰγύπτου) are the standard of comparison.

Αἰγύπτου

of Egypt

Genitive

genitive of origin / ethnic identity with γυναῖκες

→ relational specification

Αἰγύπτου: used in the genitive as an ethnic identifier — 'Egyptian women'; the implicit claim is that Hebrew women are constitutionally different, more vigorous, which explains the situation.

αἱ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject (the Hebrew women — subject of ζῶουσιν)

→ noun-phrase marking

αἱ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

Εβραῖαι

Hebrew women

Nominative

subject of the following clause (ζῶουσιν γάρ)

→ participant prominence

Εβραῖαι: the feminine substantive adjective designating Hebrew women as a distinct ethnic category; the midwives present Hebrew women's vitality as a general characteristic of their ethnicity, not as a special circumstance — making the claim difficult to contradict.

ζώουσιν

they are vigorous / they are lively

Pres Act Indic 3 Pl · ζάω

main verb of the causal explanation

→ **gnomic present** (a characteristic truth about Hebrew women as a class)

ζάω: 'live, be alive, be vigorous'; here in the sense of being full of vital strength — Hebrew women are 'lively / vigorous' (renders Hebrew חַיִּים, 'they are vigorous/lively'); the same root as ζωογονέω ('keep alive') in vv.17–18, creating a verbal irony: the midwives are keeping males alive (ζωογονέω) because Hebrew women themselves are 'so full of life' (ζώουσιν).

γάρ

for / because

postpositive causal conjunction (giving the reason for the comparative claim)

→ **discourse linkage or contrast**

γάρ: 'for, because'; introduces the causal explanation of why the midwives could not carry out the command — Hebrew women simply give birth too quickly.

πρὶν

before

temporal conjunction (πρὶν ἢ + infinitive = 'before')

→ **discourse linkage or contrast**

πρὶν: 'before'; with ἢ and the infinitive (πρὶν ἢ εἰσελθεῖν) it forms the standard LXX temporal construction 'before [someone] enters'; the speed of Hebrew birth is the key claim.

ἢ

(comparative marker)

particle after πρὶν (forming πρὶν ἢ + inf)

→ **discourse linkage or contrast**

ἢ: meaning '(comparative marker)'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

εἰσελθεῖν

to enter

Aor Act Inf · εἰσερχομαι

articular infinitive with πρὶν ἢ (specifying the action that is too late: the midwife's arrival)

→ **aorist: the single act of entering**

εἰσερχομαι: 'enter, come in'; εἰσελθεῖν here is the aorist infinitive of a single event — the midwife's arrival at the birth scene; the claim is that delivery is already complete before this event can occur.

πρὸς

to / toward

preposition of direction (the midwife's movement toward the woman in labor)

→ **spatial or relational framing**

πρὸς: meaning 'to'; here it marks the relation signaled by preposition of direction (the midwife's movement toward the woman in labor).

αὐτάς

them

Accusative

accusative complement of πρὸς (the Hebrew women in labor)

→ **participant reference**

αὐτάς: meaning 'them'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as accusative complement of πρὸς (the Hebrew women in labor).

τήν

the

Accusative

article with accusative subject of the infinitive

→ **noun-phrase marking**

τήν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

μαῖαν

midwife

Accusative

accusative subject of the infinitive εἰσελθεῖν (the agent of the action)

→ object specification

μαῖα: 'midwife'; accusative subject of the infinitive — a standard Greek construction; the indefinite singular τὴν μαῖαν ('the midwife,' i.e., any midwife) makes the claim generic.

τίκτουσιν

they give birth

Pres Act Indic 3 Pl · τίκτω

main verb of the conclusion — the birth is already complete before the midwife arrives

→ gnomic present (a standing characteristic: they always give birth in this way)

τίκτω: 'give birth, bear'; the present tense makes the claim universal — 'they give birth [before the midwife arrives]'; the same verb as πρὸς τῷ τίκτειν in v.16, echoing the word Pharaoh used in his command and now turned against the premise of his policy: if Hebrew women always give birth before the midwife arrives, the command itself was unenforceable.

20 εὖ δὲ ἐποίει ὁ θεὸς ταῖς μαίαις· καὶ ἐπλήθυνεν ὁ λαὸς καὶ ἴσχυεν σφόδρα.

And God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and grew exceedingly strong.

Divine response — God's blessing on the midwives and the people **δέ**

Verse 20 is the narrator's theological verdict on the midwife episode: God ('doing well,' εὖ ἐποίει) rewards the midwives' fear of God with his favor. The verse then pivots to the demographic consequence — ἐπλήθυνεν ὁ λαὸς ('the people multiplied'), directly echoing v.7's multiplication language and confirming that Pharaoh's policy has continued to fail. The verse functions as a hinge: it closes the midwife episode and prepares for the specific divine reward of v.21. The word λαός here, rather than υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ, subtly elevates Israel to the status of a covenant people.

εὖ

well

adverb of manner with ἐποίει (God 'did well by / dealt well with')

→ clausal contribution

εὖ: 'well, beneficently'; εὖ ποιέω τινι = 'do good to someone, deal well with'; renders Hebrew בָּטַח ('and he dealt well/beneficently'); the construction is a standard LXX idiom for divine blessing in response to human faithfulness.

δὲ

and / now

postpositive narrative connective

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἐποίει

was dealing / did

Impf Act Indic 3 Sg · ποιέω

main verb — God's sustained favorable treatment of the midwives

→ iterative / ongoing imperfect (God continually blessed them — not a single act but sustained favor)

ποιέω: 'do, deal, treat'; the imperfect ἐποίει (rather than aorist) suggests ongoing divine favor — God continued to deal well with the midwives over time, not merely as a one-time reward.

ὁ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

ὁ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

θεός

God

Nominative

subject of ἐποίει

→ participant prominence

θεός: 'God'; the same word used in v.17 (ἐφοβήθησαν τὸν θεόν — 'they feared God'); the repetition creates a causal chain: because they feared God (v.17), God did well by them (v.20); fear of God produces divine favor.

ταῖς

to the

Dative

article with dative indirect object

→ noun-phrase marking

ταῖς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

μαῖαις

midwives

Dative

dative of advantage (those for whose benefit God acts)

→ sphere or reference

μαῖα: the midwives receive the divine blessing they chose God's authority over Pharaoh's; the specific form of blessing is elaborated in v.21 (houses/households).

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (adding the broader demographic result)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἐπλήθυνεν

multiplied

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · πληθύνω

main verb of the second clause (subject: ὁ λαός)

→ constative aorist (the multiplication seen as a total ongoing reality)

πληθύνω: 'multiply, increase'; the same verb as in vv.7 and 12; its reappearance here confirms that Pharaoh's systematic oppression has entirely failed to check Israel's growth — in fact, God continues to multiply them in direct proportion to their fear of him.

ὁ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

ὁ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

λαός

people

Nominative

subject of ἐπλήθυνεν and ἴσχυεν

→ participant prominence

λαός, -οῦ, ὁ: 'people'; in the LXX λαός (rendering Hebrew **עַם**) carries a stronger covenantal connotation than ἔθνος or γένος; after the midwife episode, Israel is identified here as ὁ λαός ('the [covenant] people') rather than 'the sons of Israel' — a subtle elevation of status.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἴσχυεν

grew strong / was strong

Impf Act Indic 3 Sg · ἰσχύω

coordinate verb (subject: ὁ λαός)

→ progressive imperfect (ongoing growing strength)

ἰσχύω: 'be strong, have power'; the imperfect ἴσχυεν describes Israel's continued strength as an ongoing state; it echoes κατίσχυσαν (v.7) and ἰσχύει ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς (v.9) — Israel's strength persists and grows despite everything Pharaoh does.

σφόδρα

exceedingly

adverb of degree with ἴσχυεν

→ clausal contribution

σφόδρα: 'very, exceedingly'; the same adverb as in vv.7 and 12; its reappearance here closes the demographic motif — Israel is still multiplying and still strong exceedingly, confirming the total failure of Pharaoh's population-control strategy.

21 ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἐφοβοῦντο αἱ μαῖαι τὸν θεόν, ἐποίησεν αὐταῖς οἰκίας.

And because the midwives feared God, he made them households.

Divine reward — the specific blessing given to the midwives ἐπειδὴ δέ (causal)

Verse 21 specifies the form of God's blessing: ἐποίησεν αὐταῖς οἰκίας ('he made them houses/households'). The term οἰκίας is debated — it may mean literal houses (material provision), or more likely dynasties / households in the genealogical sense: God gave them families of their own. The causal ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἐφοβοῦντο τὸν θεόν restates v.17's motive in a subordinate clause, completing the narrative arc: fear of God → disobedience of Pharaoh → God's blessing. The rabbinical tradition identified the 'houses' as the priestly and royal houses of Aaron and David, whose midwife-ancestors these women represent.

ἐπειδὴ

because / since

causal conjunction introducing the reason for divine blessing

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ἐπειδὴ: 'because, since, after'; here a strong causal conjunction ('because ... God made them households'); renders Hebrew רַחֵם or יָדָה; the causal ground of the divine reward is explicitly stated — God acts because of their fear of him.

δὲ

and

postpositive connective (with ἐπειδὴ: ἐπειδὴ δέ = 'and because')

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

ἐφοβοῦντο

they were fearing

Impf Mid Indic 3 Pl · φοβέομαι

verb of the causal clause (imperfect: ongoing disposition of reverent fear)

→ iterative / habitual imperfect (their fear of God was a continuous, settled orientation, not merely a single moment)

φοβέομαι: 'fear, reverence'; the imperfect ἐφοβοῦντο ('they were [habitually] fearing') restates the aorist ἐφοβήθησαν of v.17 but now as an ongoing disposition rather than a single act — their fear of God was a defining characteristic of their lives, which is why God's favor toward them is ongoing (the imperfect ἐποίει of v.20).

αἱ

the

Nominative

article with nominative subject

→ noun-phrase marking

αἱ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

μαῖαι

midwives

Nominative

subject of ἐφοβοῦντο

→ participant prominence

μαῖα: final appearance of the midwives as protagonists; the verse completes their story and rewards their courage with the summary theological verdict: God made them households.

τὸν

the

Accusative

article with accusative object

→ noun-phrase marking

τὸν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

θεόν

God

Accusative

accusative direct object of ἐφοβοῦντο (object of reverential fear)

→ object specification

θεός: 'God'; the third and final occurrence of the φοβέομαι + θεός formula in vv.17, 20, 21 — the chapter brackets the midwife episode with the theme of fearing God as the ground of both their action and their reward.

ἐποίησεν

made / gave

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · ποιέω

main verb — God's specific act of reward (subject: God, implied from context)

→ constative aorist (the gift of households as a completed divine act)

ποιέω: 'make, do'; here in the sense of 'make for them' — God as the agent of the reward; the aorist marks the definitive, completed nature of the reward, in contrast with the ongoing imperfect of v.20 (ἐποίει εὔ); the specific reward-object (οἰκίας) follows.

αὐταῖς

to them / for them

Dative

dative of advantage (the beneficiaries of God's reward)

→ participial qualification

αὐταῖς: meaning 'to them'; it contributes descriptive or attendant verbal force; here it functions as dative of advantage (the beneficiaries of God's reward).

οἰκίας

houses / households

Accusative

accusative direct object of ἐποίησεν (the specific form of divine reward)

→ object specification

οἰκία, -ας, ἡ: 'house, household'; renders Hebrew בֵּיתִּים ('houses/households'); the term is interpreted in two main ways: (1) literally, material houses as part of divine blessing; (2) genealogical households / dynasties, i.e., God gave them families and lineages of their own. The rabbinic tradition (Sotah 11b) identifies these 'houses' as the priestly (Aaron's) and royal (David's) dynasties, suggesting the midwives were ancestors of Miriam and Moses (Jochebed) or similar figures — a reading that, while midrashic, captures the narrative logic of the extraordinary reward.

22 συνέταξεν δὲ Φαραω παντὶ τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ λέγων Πᾶν ἄρσεν, ὃ ἐὰν τεχθῇ τοῖς Εβραίοις, εἰς τὸν ποταμὸν ρίψατε· καὶ πᾶν θῆλυ ζωογονεῖτε αὐτό.

And Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying: 'Every male that is born to the Hebrews — cast it into the river; and every female — let it live.'

Climax — Pharaoh's final and most extreme edict

δέ (narrative climax — escalation to public decree)

Verse 22 is the chapter's narrative climax and darkest point: frustrated by the failure of covert infanticide, Pharaoh issues a public decree (συνέταξεν παντὶ τῷ λαῷ) that conscripts the entire Egyptian population into enforcing the killing of Hebrew males. The river-decree (εἰς τὸν ποταμὸν ρίψατε) turns the Nile — life-giver of Egypt — into an instrument of genocide. The LXX adds καὶ πᾶν θῆλυ ζωογονεῖτε αὐτό ('and every female — let it live'), an element absent or less explicit in the MT's Masoretic text, spelling out the binary decree fully. The chapter closes on this darkest note, setting the stage for Moses' birth in chapter 2 — the very river of death will be the instrument of his preservation.

συνέταξεν

commanded / ordered

Aor Act Indic 3 Sg · συντάσσω
main verb — Pharaoh's public edict

→ constative aorist (the decree as a single, completed authoritative act)

συντάσσω: 'to arrange, command, give orders'; the same verb as in v.17 (συνέταξεν αὐταῖς ὁ βασιλεὺς — the private command to the midwives); its reappearance here marks the escalation from covert command (v.17) to public decree: Pharaoh's failure with the midwives drives him to go public and involve all his people.

δὲ

and / now

postpositive narrative connective (chapter-closing transition)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

δὲ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

Φαραω

Pharaoh

indeclinable proper noun — nominative subject of συνέταξεν

→ participant identification

Φαραω: the royal title is used without the fuller designation (cf. ὁ βασιλεὺς Αἰγύπτου in vv.15, 18) — the bare Φαραω at the chapter's close has an almost iconic force, the oppressor acting in his own name.

παντὶ

to all

Dative

adjective in the dative indirect object phrase (comprehensive scope of the command's audience)

→ participial qualification

πᾶς: 'all, every'; παντὶ τῷ λαῷ ('all his people') marks the decisive shift from covert to public policy — the entire Egyptian nation is now conscripted as enforcers of the genocidal decree.

τῷ

the

Dative

article with dative indirect object

→ noun-phrase marking

τῷ: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

λαῶ

people

Dative

dative indirect object of συνέταξεν (the audience commanded)

→ sphere or reference

λαός: 'people'; Pharaoh's own people (λαῶ αὐτοῦ) — his Egyptian nation — are now made agents of the decree; the word echoes ὁ λαός of v.20 (where it designated Israel) and παντὶ τῷ ἔθνει αὐτοῦ of v.9 — Pharaoh is mobilizing his nation against God's people.

αὐτοῦ

his

Genitive

genitive of possession with λαῶ

→ relational specification

αὐτοῦ: meaning 'his'; pronoun marking person, possession, or reference within the clause; here it functions as genitive of possession with λαῶ.

λέγων

saying

Pres Act Ptc Nom Sg Masc · λέγω

circumstantial participle of manner (how the command was given — the content follows in direct speech)

→ present participle: simultaneous with the act of commanding

λέγω: 'say'; the participial phrase λέγων introduces direct speech in a standard LXX formula (rendering Hebrew מִן־הַיּוֹם, the infinitive construct used before direct speech); it bridges the command-verb συνέταξεν to the decree's content.

Πᾶν

every / all

Nominative

adjective (substantival — heading the decree's first category)

→ participial qualification

πᾶς: 'every'; Πᾶν ἄρσεν ('every male') with the relative clause ὃ ἐὰν τεχθῇ is the universal category of males condemned by the decree; the universality (πᾶν) makes no exceptions — any male born to any Hebrew is included.

ἄρσεν

male

Nominative

nominative head noun of the decree's first category

→ participant prominence

ἄρσεν: 'male'; fifth occurrence of this word in the chapter (vv.16, 17, 18, 22); the escalation from the private command to midwives (ἐὰν μὲν ἄρσεν ἦ, ἀποκτείνετε αὐτό, v.16) to the public decree (Πᾶν ἄρσεν ... ῥίψατε) tracks the intensification of Pharaoh's genocidal policy across the chapter.

ὃ

that / which

Nominative

relative pronoun — nominative subject of the relative clause (antecedent: ἄρσεν)

→ participant reference

ὃς, ἦ, ὅ: relative pronoun; the relative clause ὃ ἐὰν τεχθῇ ('that may be born') makes the decree prospective and absolute — it applies to all future births.

ἐάν

if / that

conditional particle (ὃ ἐάν + subjunctive = 'whatever is born' — generalizing relative with indefinite force)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

ἐάν: with the relative ὃ it forms a generalizing construction ('every male, whatever may be born') — effectively 'any male that is born'; renders Hebrew כָּל־הַבֶּן הַיּוֹלֵד ('every son that is born').

τεχθῆ

may be born

Aor Pass Subj 3 Sg · τίκτω

*verb of the generalizing relative clause
(subjunctive: indefinite future births)*

→ aorist: each individual birth as a single event

τίκτω: 'give birth; be born' (passive); the aorist passive τεχθῆ refers to each individual birth event — every male that comes to be born; the same verb as πρὸς τῷ τίκτειν (v.16) and τίκτουσιν (v.19), closing the chapter with the birth-language that runs through the midwife episode.

τοῖς

to the

Dative

article with dative noun (dative of group membership: 'born belonging to the Hebrews')

→ noun-phrase marking

τοῖς: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

Εβραίοις

Hebrews

Dative

dative of group membership / indirect object of τεχθῆ ('born to the Hebrews')

→ sphere or reference

Ἑβραῖος: 'Hebrew'; the dative τοῖς Εβραίοις specifies the ethnic group whose male infants are targeted; the category is ethnic rather than religious — Pharaoh is enacting demographic destruction of a people.

εἰς

into

preposition of direction governing accusative τὸν ποταμὸν

→ spatial or relational framing

εἰς: 'into'; the directional force is stark — not 'beside' or 'near' but into the river.

τὸν

the

Accusative

article with accusative noun

→ noun-phrase marking

τὸν: Greek article marking definiteness and the role of the accompanying noun phrase.

ποταμὸν

river

Accusative

accusative complement of εἰς (the destined locus of death)

→ object specification

ποταμός, -οῦ, ὁ: 'river'; the definite article τὸν makes this the Nile specifically — ὁ ποταμός is the standard LXX reference to the Nile (the great river of Egypt, cf. Gen 41:1 LXX); the Nile is the life-giving artery of Egypt, and Pharaoh's decree turns it into the instrument of death — an instrument that chapter 2 will invert when Moses is preserved in a basket on this same river.

ρίψατε

throw / cast

Aor Act Impv 2 Pl · ρίπτω

imperative — the decree's verb of execution

→ imperative of command (directed at all Egyptians as enforcers)

ρίπτω: 'throw, hurl, cast'; the aorist imperative ρίψατε is forceful and violent — not simply 'put in' but 'cast/hurl'; it renders Hebrew הַשְׁלִיכֵהוּ ('throw it!'); the word is echoed in the NT in Acts 27:19, 29 (cargo and anchors thrown overboard in the shipwreck) — in both cases ρίπτω describes a violent disposal.

καὶ

and

coordinating conjunction (adding the complementary decree for females)

→ discourse linkage or contrast

καὶ: meaning 'and'; conjunction or particle linking this unit with the surrounding discourse.

πᾶν

every

Accusative

adjective (substantival — heading the second category: females)

→ participial qualification

πᾶς: 'every/all'; Πᾶν θῆλυ ('every female') exactly parallels Πᾶν ἄρσεν above, creating the binary structure of the decree: males → death; females → life (for their usability to Egypt).

θῆλυ

female

Accusative

accusative head noun of the second decree-category

→ object specification

θῆλυς: 'female'; the final occurrence of the ἄρσεν / θῆλυ binary in the chapter (cf. v.16); the MT of Exod 1:22 as preserved in some traditions mentions only the male decree, but the LXX text adds this explicit complementary clause for females (ζωογονεῖτε αὐτό), making the gender-based structure of the decree fully explicit.

ζωογονεῖτε

let live / keep alive

Pres Act Impv 2 Pl · ζωογονέω

imperative — the complementary decree for females

→ imperative of permission / command

ζωογονέω: 'to keep alive, preserve life'; the same verb the narrator used of the midwives' defiant act (ἐζωογόνουν, v.17) and Pharaoh's accusation (ἐζωογονεῖτε, v.18); its reappearance in the closing decree creates a final verbal irony — the word that described the midwives' life-giving defiance is now the word Pharaoh uses to order females kept alive, but for his own purposes.

αὐτό

it

Accusative

accusative direct object of ζωογονεῖτε

→ participant reference

αὐτό: the neuter pronoun referring to θῆλυ (neuter in Greek); the chapter closes with this single pronoun — 'let it live' — setting up the ultimate irony of Exodus 2, where the child who survives is not a female but a male, preserved in a basket on the very river of this decree.

On the labels. Parsing gives Tense·Voice·Mood·Person·Number (+ Case·Number·Gender for participles) and lemma. The *syntactic-function* and **semantic-force** tiers follow standard intermediate-grammar categories (e.g. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*); both involve interpretive judgment, and the majority reading has been chosen where opinions differ. Lexical notes condense commonly cited data (etymology, sense range, synonym contrasts, NT frequency, OT/LXX echoes) and are no substitute for a lexicon.

On the discourse tier. Discourse structure operates above the word, so it is shown at the clause/verse level (the connective, the relation it signals, and the role of the clause) and summarized in the chapter outline. Relation labels, any proposed chiasm, and the paragraph divisions reflect a common reading of the argument; other discourse analyses segment and label some relations differently.