

## Today's Sermon

# The Wickedness of Man and the Women of God

Exodus 1:15-2:10

By Pastor Phil Layton ([www.gcb.church](http://www.gcb.church)) 8-21-2022

In the 1830s there was an estimated 3 million Jews living around the world. 100 years later that had quadrupled and there were over a half-million just in Germany. Hebrew people contributed in many positive ways to Germany earlier that century. Albert Einstein was one of a number of Jewish German scientists, even after WWI there were 5 German Jews awarded the Nobel prize.

In WWI, 100,000 Jews fought for the German army, mostly frontlines. 12,000 Jewish Germans died in that war fighting for Germany. Another 30,000 Jewish soldiers were decorated for how they fought for Germany. In the 1930s Jews in Germany multiplied by over 300,000 more, and another Fuhrer arose who did not know, i.e., he refused to acknowledge any Hebrew good. The new ruler acted like he didn't know the descendants of Israel blessing his country and its history

In the summer of 1922, 100 years ago this summer, Hitler said the "Jewish people stands against us as our deadly foe, and will so stand against us always." Germany's WWI defeat was blamed on disloyal traitors — especially the Jews.<sup>1</sup> And as WWII approached, the growth of Hebrews was seen as a threat to him, and there was propaganda about them being enemies to Germany, back-stabbers and betrayers. There was a shrewd plan of nationalist racist antisemitic rhetoric. The children of Abraham were oppressed politically and physically, separated into ghettos, and made to work in slave labor camps. Doctors tried to sterilize them to stop them having babies.

At first the plans to kill were only known to some in the government behind closed doors, as the Third Reich wanted to deal shrewdly. They ordered secret executions, starting with males. But as people hid the Jews, and while some within resisted, the Nazi's met for 'The Final Solution' Holocaust plan. To deal wisely they brought in 8 leaders with PhD's (Goebbels had 3 PhD's).<sup>2</sup> The concentration camps became death camps, and one Auschwitz survivor told of a German officer ripping a baby from its mother's arms and throwing it to its death as the mom fainted.<sup>3</sup>

In the midst of those horrors, there were heroes, heroines. There were mothers and daughters whose names aren't famous but who tricked Gestapo, sabotaged their government, and put their own lives on the line to save other lives. Corrie Ten Boom and her family's hiding place saved many. Many have heard of Anne Frank's diary, but have you heard of women in concentration camps who secretly had babies and amazingly hid them and raised them and the kids survived?<sup>4</sup>

**We could add to the names Shiprah, Puah, Jochebed, maybe Hatshepsut, her maid, and Miriam**



In many ways the Exodus story could be called the first Reich with the original Fuhrer Pharaoh. If you turn to Exodus 1, v. 7, Israel was multiplying and growing at a rapid rate (ch 12 mentions 600,000 men, so with families maybe some 2-3 million total). More than Einstein, the genius of Joseph had blessed Egypt greatly, but v. 8 says there arose another Pharaoh who didn't know in the sense that the Fuhrer refused to care for Joseph's descendants or consider good they'd done.

**There was a hateful racial antisemitic Satanic power at work in these 2 tyrants**  
In v. 9 he basically says these Jews are overrunning the place, they'll overtake our mother land.

v. 10 was the propaganda: let's be shrewd/wise, war is coming, our enemy is these traitor Jews.

Their ghetto was Goshen and the whole land became slave labor camps in v. 11-14. Efforts to kill began secretly with the males and medical profession, but there were resisters and rescuers.

*<sup>15</sup> Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, <sup>16</sup> "When you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall kill him [maybe secretly suffocate as if he died at birth?], but if it is a daughter, she shall live." <sup>17</sup> But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live. <sup>18</sup> So the king of Egypt called the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and let the male children live?" <sup>19</sup> The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." <sup>20</sup> So God dealt well with the midwives. And the people multiplied and grew very strong. <sup>21</sup> And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. <sup>22</sup> Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live."*

Why just sons? His concern is war. He may want women to intermarry and become Egyptian. But the serpent also knows a male seed of woman will crush his head--this is ultimately Satanic.

So it moves from medical professionals and closed door plans to a government command for all loyal Egyptian citizens to turn in any little hidden male Jews. Egypt's Gestapo literally is to tear babies from the arms of mothers and throw them to their death. It's his 'final solution to Jewish problems in Egypt.' It's the original murder on the Nile. Call the midwife, but they sabotage his plan, fearlessly resist, trick his SS, and risk their lives. We heard Pharaoh's word, but God has the last word. His heroines (daughters, moms) save the day, in His plan to later save the world.

***2:1** Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. <sup>2</sup> The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. <sup>3</sup> When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank. <sup>4</sup> And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. <sup>5</sup> Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe*



at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. <sup>6</sup> When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." <sup>7</sup> Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" <sup>8</sup> And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother. <sup>9</sup> And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. <sup>10</sup> When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, "Because," she said, "I drew him out of the water." [cf. mose in Pharaoh names, ex: Thutmose]

What are we to draw out from all this? We've seen God's providence and unstoppable promises,

- Today's Outline:**
- 1. See the irony and futility of sin**
  - 2. See God's mercy in these women**
  - 3. Sing God's glory for salvation**

### **1. See the irony and futility of sin**

The sin of hate ironically poisons haters. Ayaan Hirsi Ali grew up taught "practically on a daily basis that Jews were evil, the sworn enemies of Muslims whose only goal was to destroy Islam. She grew up hearing Jews blamed for everything... to war; 'if we ever wanted to know peace and stability,' she was taught, 'we would have to destroy them before they would wipe us out' ... It is a phenomenon as old as the pharaohs and as contemporary as Al Qaeda."<sup>5</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> century saw population control eugenics of Margaret Sanger, 20+ million African Americans aborted.<sup>6</sup> But here's an irony: every abortionist will face the Creator of Life. Every politician's knee will bow on judgment day and every terrorist tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. All war crimes that escape justice in this life will face it in the next. Hitler now faces the Jew, Jesus as his eternal Judge. And this King of Egypt killing babies now bows before the King of the Jews.

**On their face, all will hail the power of Jesus' name,  
even fallen angels will prostrate fall**

But even in this life, resistance is futile. In **1:10** a nameless man says 'let's be shrewd with the Jews,' but all we see is futility and folly. We saw Pharaoh thinks he'll stop Israel multiplying by imposing hard labor, but in **1:12** it just multiplies more pregnancies and moms going into labor.

The more he oppresses, the more God blesses them. He wanted Israel to dread Egypt's power, but the end of v. 12 says Egypt was in dread of Israel. In v. 17 midwives fear God, not this guy. He wants to make a name for himself, but he's not even named while the midwives are named.

Pharaoh isn't a name, it's a title for a king of Egypt, these ladies are the only named till 2:10!

**God's Word is saying this is what matters in the story, remember and honor Shiprah and Puah!**



In this passage, God uses unlikely and unsung heroines, women who don't fear this evil man.

**1:17** *But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live.* <sup>18</sup> *So the king of Egypt called the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this, and let the male children live?"* <sup>19</sup> *The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them."* It's possible that's true, God may have made the babies come before those 2 came, or they set it up to be that way? Does a madman about to murder deserve all info?

**It doesn't say if it was partial truth or untrue, but Pharaoh is fooled, and too foolish to know it**

**1:20** *God dealt well with the midwives. And the people multiplied and grew very strong.* <sup>21</sup> *And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families.* The very ones he told to end families ended up getting families of their own. Instead of murdering babies they're multiplying babies.

Shiphrah and Puah aren't household names, but they get households honoring the Lord's name.

This isn't just for OT times, we read in the NT *'the churches...walking in the fear of the Lord ...were multiplied...grew and multiplied...the number of the disciples multiplied greatly...'*<sup>7</sup>

Charles Spurgeon applied this: 'The early persecutions in Judea promoted the spread of the gospel... The church probably never increased at a greater ratio than as when her foes were most fierce to assail and most resolute to destroy her... The Reformation... never went on so prosperously as when it was most vigorously opposed... Be patient, then, my brethren, amidst the persecutions or trials you may be called upon to bear; and be thankful that they are so often overruled for the growth of the church, the spread of the gospel, and the honor of Christ.'<sup>8</sup>

Pharaoh's not worried about females as a threat to his plan, '*let the daughters live.*' But isn't it ironic, it's all daughters who overthrow his plan? This king thinks he's so wise, but he seems fooled by 2 midwives. They insult his racial superiority saying Egyptian women are weak, but the Hebrew women are strong. Then a daughter in Levi's tribe manages to hide her baby boy for 3 months and her daughter, this little girl has a big role in this story. Then 2 more women defy the king, a servant girl from the palace, and Pharaoh's own daughter joins the resistance!

He's raising the ante against Israel, but she's raising this adoptee who will later deliver Israel!

This isn't just ironic, this is comedic! Pharaoh's not just foolish, he's looney tunes! One friend said he's like Wile E. Coyote, he keeps trying different things to stop the Road Runner, but all he does keeps blowing up in his own face! His tactics destroy himself and he hears 'beep, beep'

The jokes on Pharaoh: he can't get his government employees to obey or even his own child! Ps 2 says when sinful rulers conspire together (*come let us*), He who sits in



the heavens laughs! God loves to make foolish the wisdom of this world, and destroy those who think they're wise. God delights to shame the wise by how He'll choose and use those considered weak (1 Cor 1). Rom 1 *'they became futile in their thinking... professing to be wise, they became fools'* (20-21).

**Exodus 1 is saying 'forget king-whats-his-face, fear God like these ladies, follow them!'**

This is not a book ancient men would write. The patriarch writer lifts up the women as heroes. Only God could write a story like this! The villain calls for boys to be put in the river and this boy put in the river by a heroic mom will win! Pharaoh wants to drown a potential future army of Israel in water, but what he reaps he'll sow when his own future army drowns in the water of the Red Sea! The king commands 'throw the boys in the water,' but all the king's horses and all the king's men God will throw in the sea! It's like in Esther, as Haman tries again to put down the Jews; he has to lead the parade lifting up Mordecai! He built gallows to hang the Jews, but will hang on his own gallows! Or Babylonians trying to kill Jews like Daniel and his friends, etc

**Even the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. Hallelujah!**

Acts 4:25 *'peoples devise futile things...to do whatever Your hand and...purpose predestined.'*<sup>9</sup>

Resistance is futile. If you have secret sin you think you can get away with, that's a futile effort, repent and get help. Confess your foolish sin. Don't walk as Gentiles in the futility of the mind.

Be encouraged as you see futility rise, the heart of kings is in God's hand like channels of water

**And in ch 2 His hand guides this basket in the water to the daughter of the king**  
**Which takes us to our 2<sup>nd</sup> point: See God's mercy in these women**

Ex 2:2 *The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months.* <sup>3</sup> *When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the river bank.* <sup>4</sup> *And his sister stood at a distance to know what would be done to him.*

Later in Exodus we'll learn the mom's name was Jochebed and this kid sister is Miriam who's somewhere between age 6-12 at this time. God will mercifully use this little girl and God can use you, little ones. The Bible isn't just for or about grownups, the Lord loves little children and says they matter in His kingdom. This little kid will play a big role in the plan of a very big God

**Don't let anyone let down on your youth, set an example for the believers**

In the gospels we see the Lord's special care for little children and in this text there's something special this mother sees in this precious son of hers. v. 2 says *'she saw that he was a fine child'* – that's the phrase from Gen 1 repeated 7x for all God made, He *'saw that it was good.'* Moses isn't good like the original perfect creation before sin, he's a sinner, we'll see. But his mother's intuition and insight sees something beautiful from a merciful Creator. She sees God is good as she looks at what He made, and maybe trusts He's at work again like He was *'in the beginning'*



Listen to Hebrews 11:23 (NIV): *By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.*

So like ch 1 this is another fearless and faith-motivated woman resisting this wicked man. It's one thing to have a hiding place for adult Jews as the Gestapo come by, but it's another to keep a 3-month-old baby quiet. Ex 2:3 says the day came when she couldn't hide him any longer. It may be the secret police were ramping up random sweeps for secret baby boys. It's a desperate time and her desperate measure is a floating bassinet in the reeds, so when the SS come by and ask 'do you have a baby boy', she can say 'there's no baby boy here, I put my son in the river.'

**Maybe technically true, but also tricking murderous madmen, hoping to get her baby back?**

See God's merciful providential hand at work in the midst of evil tyranny! Difficult choices will be faced by you and me in the future, too, we don't know the future, but we know the God who has the future in control, and we trust and pray He'll be merciful. There's an evil world out there you fear sending you kids to, but see the God of Exodus and trust Him. Do what you can, cast them on the Lord's mercy and trust He'll guide their path to others who can help them even if they're no longer in your home. Don't fear government edicts, live by faith like Jochebed did.

**And she joins heroic birth-moms who can't raise a baby but give them up hoping another can**

The Jews knew their history including another time many died in water. In God's judgment at the great flood there was also mercy through Noah who made a wooden boat sealed with pitch to make it waterproof. With people dying all around Noah and his family were kept alive and it may be this Jewish woman is thinking of that story she heard growing up as she seals this small wooden boat with pitch, praying he'll be kept alive in these waters killing others, and maybe in hope that God's people will be delivered again? We know from Heb 11 she did this by faith, and Hebrew readers would know *basket* in v. 3 is the same word *ark* in the great flood. It's not the word for ark of the covenant or the normal word for basket or boat, this is a life-saving ark.

**This is a much smaller ark, but the word connects those stories in redemptive history**

God would not only deliver from a watery death again, this one will be the deliverer of many. Noah and Moses both are saved to save others, to preach righteousness that many would reject, to receive a covenant and grace, and lead the people of God to a new land to be a new society. And God gave both detailed building project instructions (ch 25-32), clean, unclean animals, etc

But I'm getting ahead. Miriam in v. 4 doesn't know what's ahead or if this is a safe surrender site (there's no sign like at a fire station or hospital). This is an adventure in babysitting for her.

**v. 5:** *Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her*



servant woman, and she took it. <sup>6</sup> When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." See God's mercy in her pity, her compassion over against her father's command to kill. See God's merciful providential guiding this baby to not be found by Pharaoh's goons but by his girl who didn't inherit his hard heart.

This is a dramatic scene, but an undaunted brave little girl takes a big step, v. 7: *Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?"* <sup>8</sup> *And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go."* So the girl went and called the child's mother. <sup>9</sup> *And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages."* So the woman took the child and nursed him. <sup>10</sup> *When the child grew older, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son.* 5x it repeats that this is Pharaoh's daughter. Some think she's Hatshepsut who later became the queen. Now she's a princess giving royal protection and the payroll of the King to a Jewish boy's birthmom

The Egyptian government that tried to slay Hebrew boys will now pay for this Hebrew boy to be nursed by his own mom! And for the first 3-4 years at least he would bond and be taught by Jochebed. Until when Acts 7 says '*Pharaoh's daughter adopted him as her own son. So Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians...*' Imagine if Hitler's daughter adopted a Jew, but he didn't know and paid for the best schools to train his grandson to later defeat the Nazi's! See irony and mercy, Moses (= 'drawn out of water') will draw out Israel through Red Sea water

**His staff will cast the parted waters on Egyptian soldiers  
who cast babies in the waters**

**Which takes us to our 3<sup>rd</sup> and final point and application: Sing God's glory for salvation**

This is where Exodus is going: '*Moses and the people of Israel sang... "I will sing to the LORD*

*...he has become my salvation..."* And Miriam sang to them: "*Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and...rider he has thrown into the sea.*" That's Ex 15, this is where history is going in Rev 15, at the end John sees God's people '*sing the song of Moses ... Who will not fear, and glorify your name?...All nations will come and worship you...*' Will you?

**If you don't, repent, trust Jesus to be your salvation, fear God, glorify and worship Him**

If you have faith like Shiprah and Puah you can know your names, too, are written in His book and graven on His hands. If you see Him like Miriam did you'll sing to Him like she did, too.

Ryken's book Saved for God's Glory says: 'We are called to trust God the way a desperate mother once did when she put her heart in a basket and entrusted it to the God who saves.'<sup>10</sup> And like Pharaoh's daughter, the sins of your father don't need to be your destiny or identity.

These women should encourage us, it's not mighty men, it's ordinary people God loves to use.



The first page of the NT gospel begins with another Joseph not known to his King and another Miriam young lady (Greek spelling of Miriam is Mary). It was a crisis pregnancy for her, but as the baby comes she sees it's a beautiful child, truly good and perfect, and she puts him in a box of wood. King Herod felt his kingdom threatened by enemy Jews. He tried first to secretly deal with it through wise men, then openly ordered all Jewish baby boys to be killed in Bethlehem. Joseph is told by God to go to Egypt with his family to be saved, to return years later (Matt. 2). And like Moses, this boy is delivered so He will deliver many. What a story! What a Savior!

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<sup>1</sup> Much of the opening paragraphs of this message come from a variety of sources:

<https://jewishmuseummd.org/jews-in-the-germany-army-in-world-war-i/>

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2012/04/18/hitler-pharaoh-and-anti-semitic-culture-victimhood-victims-who-persecute/Hph5XM6IfgWN7VkObPAasI/story.html>

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/wwi-and-the-jews/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://aish.com/48957476/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/12079346/nazis-longest-serving-prisoner-auschwitz-survival/>

<sup>4</sup> See the book *Born Survivors*, by Wendy Holden.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2012/04/18/hitler-pharaoh-and-anti-semitic-culture-victimhood-victims-who-persecute/Hph5XM6IfgWN7VkObPAasI/story.html>

<sup>6</sup> SOURCE from Choose Life book?

<sup>7</sup> Acts 9:31, 12:24, 6:7 NKJV.

<sup>8</sup> Charles H. Spurgeon, "Prosperity Under Persecution," *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* (No. 997) (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim, 1971), 17:352, 353.

<sup>9</sup> NASB95.

<sup>10</sup> Philip Graham Ryken, *Exodus: Saved for God's Glory* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005), 55.