

The Brave Hebrew Midwives

Exodus 1:15-22

I like to think Genesis is the perfect book to begin the Bible. It tells us where we came from, why the human race is in such trouble and God's unfolding plan to redeem a people for Himself. But do not discount Exodus, the second book of Moses: Exodus. Exodus is about redemption, the rescue of the Israelites from Egyptian slavery and their establishment as a great nation that would be instrumental in bringing to mankind the Law, the Prophets and the Messiah, God's ultimate solution to the deadly problem of sin.

I. **The Sovereignty of Jehovah God** (15) [**There is no part Jehovah and part something else.**]

- A. Long before Jacob found himself in Egypt, God was working on His plan of redemption.
- B. He determined not to save a bunch of "good" people, but sinners who relied only on faith.
- C. To that end he led Jacob, aka Israel, and his family to Egypt and slavery. (skip details)
- D. Ultimately, the question arose: Who is sovereign? Who rules? Pharaoh or Jehovah?
- E. The king of Egypt sovereignly commanded (15, 22), but God had spoken earlier.
God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions. (Gen. 15:13-14)
- F. Nothing nor anyone will overrule the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

II. **The Fear of the Lord** (17, 21) [**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.** Ψ 111.10]

- A. The enslaved Hebrews had not lost all connection to the faith of their fathers.
- B. But we do not find YHWH used until Chapter 3, indicating the Covenant lacked attention.
- C. Although the Mosaic Law had not yet been given, it was written on their hearts. (Rom 2:15)
- D. Shiphrah and Puah were not just good-hearted souls but actually feared the God they knew.
- E. They feared offending God, and they purposely "let the boys live."
- F. Our society could do with even a little fear of God and a lot less fear of His rivals.

III. **The Futility of Resistance** (16, 20, 22) [**King Canute could not stop the tide.**]

In the story, Canute demonstrates to his flattering courtiers that he has no control over the elements (the incoming tide), explaining that secular power is vain compared to the supreme power of God. Shakespeare (Julius Caesar): There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea are we now afloat. And we must take the current when it serves, or lose our ventures.

- A. God had determined the course of Egyptian and Israelite history, i.e., the tide.
- B. Egypt's Pharaoh had neither the wisdom of Canute nor the confidence of Brutus.
- C. His destiny was multiple disappointments: disobedience, lies, disaster.
- D. The Lord scorns His opponents' efforts. Ψ 2:4
He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.
- E. When we are weak (enslaved), He is strong. *For when I am weak, then am I strong.* 2 Cor. 12:10
- F. Don't be fooled by the arrogance of today's leaders who are sure they will never yield to God.

IV. follows •

IV. **The Reward of the Righteous** (20, 21) [**Fireman meets long-ago rescued one**]

And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.
Luke 18:29-30

- A. God is good all the time.
- B. He makes all things to work together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. (Rom. 8:28)
- C. The midwives were able to see the fruit of their endeavors, whether or not under duress.
- D. The midwives were protected, provided for and had children of their own who lived.
- E. It is implied that the midwives were spiritually rewarded, perhaps drew closer to God.
- F. Eternal salvation is not a reward, but there are rewards nevertheless.

And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.
(general principle) Luke 18:29-30