

# The Women of Exodus



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## LESSON ONE

### WOMAN FIFTEEN



**The Hebrew Midwives In Egypt**  
**The faithful helpers of God**

#### **I. Two of the Midwives are named: Shiphrah and Puah. (Ex 1:15)**

A. Shiphrah means “fair.”

B. Puah means “splendid.”

C. There were more midwives but they were not mentioned by name.

Since Pharaoh gave his edict directly to them, then it is probable that they were the head midwives.

## **II. They were faithful servants to their people.**

**A. They faithfully served as midwives. (:16-17)**

**B. They faithfully protected their people from Pharaoh's decree. (:18-19)**

## **III. They were successful as servants and were rewarded for their labors.**

**A. They were rewarded by God. (:20- 21)**

**B. They were also rewarded in that they saw their success in the people's prosperity. (:20b)**

## **IV. They were godly women.**

**A. They were God-fearing women. (:17a)**

**B. They obeyed God rather than man. (:17)**

**C. They were rewarded for their godliness as well as their obedience. (:20-21)**

## **V. Question- were they justified in lying to Pharaoh?**

What they told Pharaoh was not an outright lie, but rather a deception. However, a deception is still a lie. It is true that the Hebrew women were "livelier" than the Egyptian women. That is because as slaves they had to work, and exercise from working kept them in much better shape than the Egyptian women who did not have to work like the slaves. The women who are in shape from exercising, we know, generally have much less trouble giving birth than would the indolent Egyptian women. So the possibility that they would have given birth before the midwives arrived was quite plausible. However, verse :17 tells us that the midwives "... saved the men children alive." Therefore, the midwives were there when they were born which makes their statement to Pharaoh that the women delivered their children before the midwives arrived, an outright lie.

**So the question remains- were the midwives justified in lying to Pharaoh?**

**Several possibilities exist which I will enumerate so you can consider them. I am not saying any of these are fact; I am only giving you possibilities for you to consider.**

**A. It was a case of the lesser evil being allowed because the law was not yet given?**

**B. The lesser evil was allowed because it prevented a much greater evil?**



**C.** Was the prevention of a much greater evil approved of by God and was that why their deed, lying, was even mentioned in the Old Testament in an obviously positive manner? (**Ex 1:15-21**)

**D.** Or was it their deed of saving the Hebrew children alive that is commended by God, and not their deed of lying about it? (**Ex 1:15-21**)

**E.** Was it the deed of lying or was it the deed of fearing God and obeying Him that was being commended?

**F.** Can there be a righteous deed, fearing God, that can be commended by Him even when that deed has been accomplished in conjunction with the unrighteous deed of lying?

**G.** One day you will be asked if it is ever "right" to lie. When that happens, you better have thought the matter through ahead of time so that you will know how you are going to answer the question.

**H.** Maybe the best way to approach it is from the angle of "the lesser of two evils." That will not make the deed, lying, "righteous." Rather, it will make the deed "allowed" as an exception to the rule.

Therefore, the explanation should direct the understanding of the incident away from whether it is "righteous" and toward the understanding that it was "allowed" as the "lesser of two evils" in an evil world to frustrate the massively evil intentions of evil men.

## **VI. Their far-reaching effect on history?**

**A.** The history of the nation of Israel, in its germinal form, was allowed to continue by the deeds of the Hebrew midwives.

**B.** As God was preparing the calling out of the Hebrews as the precursor to the nation He would form from them, He was, through the Hebrew midwives, protecting the next generation of the Hebrews- those who would be the first whole generation of a free people.

**C.** Through the Hebrew midwives God was preventing the destruction of the Hebrew nation. Not the race but the nation. In that day and time the families were built upon the male succession; and if Pharaoh had succeeded in killing all the male children, then he would have succeeded in killing the whole next generation of the Hebrews; effectively bringing to an end any possibility of them becoming the nation of God's people. And, incidentally, preventing the birth of the Saviour, Jesus Christ. This being, of course, the main objective of Satan, the one behind this fight to subvert God's plan through Israel.

The women saved alive could be used as slaves; but they also could be married to Egyptian men or to men of other nations, whether slave or free really makes no

difference in the outcome, and when so united they would then become a member of the nation to which their husbands belonged. This would effectively destroy the next generation of the Hebrews and thus, the Hebrew nation. But the male children, if left alive, should they be married to Egyptians or those of other nations would bring those others into the Hebrew nation by marriage. Thus, Pharaoh's decree to kill the male children was an attempt by him at destroying the Hebrews completely through cutting off the entire next generation.

**D.** The history of the Hebrews and the history of the whole world would have been much different if the Hebrew midwives had obeyed Pharaoh. Because they did not, the Hebrews continued and the history of the world, which centered so much on that people, has unfolded as we know it. And because The People continued, the birth of the Saviour, Jesus Christ, came about at the proper time later in history.

**E.** A repeat of the attack of Pharaoh upon God's Chosen Nation is a repetitive plague that has surfaced over and over again down through the centuries, most notably during the Crusades in France and Germany and the thousands killed in pogroms in Spain and Cordoba, in the 11th century. The first "Christian" pogroms occurred in England in the late 1100s. The Satan inspired decree of Pharaoh echoed as recently as the last century (the 1900's) and is resounding again even today (the 2000s). Only these are all attempts at destruction after-the-fact of the forming of the nation by God while Pharaoh attempted his destruction before-the-fact.

The attack by Hitler with his "final solution" tried once again to end the existence of the Children of Israel. Earlier, during the same century, the Russian pogroms and the persecution of the Jews all across Europe began what became a half-century of escalating persecution that culminated in the death camps like Auschwitz and Dachau in which six million Jews were murdered.

The radical Islamic attacks upon Israel today are the modern echos of the decree of Pharaoh to the Hebrew midwives in Egypt. The terrorists target children



whenever they can because they too want to bring an end to Israel. Pharaoh tried to carry out destruction before the nation was formed by God and the Islamic terrorists are now trying to carry out the destruction after the nation has been formed by God. But both have the same end in mind, to destroy God's chosen nation- by violent prevention before-hand or by violent destruction after- but total destruction is their common goal.



F. Those who stand with Israel today are fulfilling the role of the Hebrew midwives by subverting the plans of the devil today as the midwives did back then. And God's promise of blessing to the midwives is being realized also by those today who stand in their stead. Both are receivers of the blessing promised by God for those who bless Abraham's seed.

**Gen 12:3** "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: ..."



**NOTE:** It is interesting to note that later The People would accuse God of trying to kill their children; thus, placing Him on a par with the evil Pharaoh. God then deals with them harshly, but justly, just as He dealt with Pharaoh in this story here in Exodus. (read Numbers chapter 14)

## SUMMARY:

1. The main lesson to be learned from the story of the Hebrew midwives is obvious- fear God and obey Him above all men, even Kings.  
"... **We ought to obey God rather than men.**" (Acts 5:29)
  2. The secondary lesson is that God rewards his people for their godly actions of obedience.  
**1Co 15:58 "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."**
  3. We also learn from the story of the midwives that He uses us in spite of the sins which we all commit.
    - a. If God only used completely sinless people, then there would be no one used of God.
    - b. In addition, Christ would have died in vain if we all be not sinners; and, additionally, God would be a liar for saying,  
"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God..." (Ro 3:23)
  4. The fourth lesson learned is that God protects His people and He uses other people to carry out His plans for their protection.  
**Exo 1:17 & 19 "But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive. ... and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty."**
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## LESSON ONE TEST WOMAN FIFTEEN

This test is "**open book**," which means you may use your study materials while taking this test.

If you fail this test then you must wait a minimum of one day before you can retake it. During that time you are required to go to the textbook and the Bible, whichever is appropriate, and find the correct answers to every question missed on the failed test. You may use the copy of the failed test that was sent to you and refer to it for the correct answers, which are included on it, to verify that you have found the correct answers in your study materials. Once you have found all of the correct answers and waited the required one day, then you may retake the test.

Your attendance for the next Lesson begins the day after you have passed this Lesson Test and found all of the correct answers in the textbook or the Bible, whichever is appropriate, to all questions missed on this test even though you received a passing score.

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