

SPECIAL FOCUS TREASURING WHO GOD TREASURES

INTRODUCTION

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The throw-away aspect of cancel culture is even more insidious. In many places, the world in which we live considers humans as throw away. When an older person is seen as having no value, they are placed out of sight and out of mind. When a pre-born human is inconvenient, may not look like we want, or will face health and development issues, his or her life is terminated. In Exodus 2, we will see a self-absorbed king of Egypt wreak havoc upon Israel because he considered them of no value. But we will also discover what God can do through those who fear Him and treasure those He treasures.

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TREASURING WHO GOD TREASURES

Leader pages on pp. 136-139

THE POINT:
LIFE IS A GIFT FROM GOD
WE ARE TO PROTECT AND
PRESERVE.

EXODUS 1:16-17, 22-2:10

MEMORY VERSE

^{1:16} “When you help the Hebrew women give birth, observe them as they deliver. If the child is a son, kill him, but if it’s a daughter, she may live.”

¹⁷ **The midwives, however, feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt had told them; they let the boys live.**

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^{1:22} Pharaoh then commanded all his people, “You must throw every son born to the Hebrews into the Nile, but let every daughter live.”

^{2:1} Now a man from the family of Levi married a Levite woman.

² The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son; when she saw that he was beautiful, she hid him for three months.

³ But when she could no longer hide him, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with asphalt and pitch. She placed the child in it and set it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile.

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⁴ Then his sister stood at a distance in order to see what would happen to him.

⁵ Pharaoh’s daughter went down to bathe at the Nile while her servant girls walked along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds, sent her slave girl, took it,

⁶ opened it, and saw him, the child—and there he was, a little boy, crying. She felt sorry for him and said, “This is one of the Hebrew boys.”

⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Should I go and call a Hebrew woman who is nursing to nurse the boy for you?”

⁸ “Go,” Pharaoh’s daughter told her. So the girl went and called the boy’s mother. ⁹ Then Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse him for me, and I will pay your wages.” So the woman took the boy and nursed him.

¹⁰ 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.”

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KEYWORDS

Beautiful (v. 2)—The Hebrew term (*tob*) can mean good (both in general and referring to moral goodness), well, pleasing, sweet, and attractive.

His sister (v. 4)—Moses’s sister was named Miriam and his brother Aaron (Num. 26:59).

Felt sorry (v. 6)—The Hebrew term (*chamal*) means to spare or have compassion.

Moses (v. 10)—Part of the adoption process was being given an Egyptian name. The name Moses means “son” or “to beget a son.”

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO VALUE LIFE?

"There is a home for disabled children about 15 miles down the road. Put her there. There is no way you can properly care for her at home. Your back will give out from toting around the equipment necessary to sustain her life. Trust me. Both you and she will be better off."

These words from the family pediatrician to a young mother whose daughter suffered severe brain damage as a result of a mishandled delivery. Tears battled for a prominent place on the mother's cheek. Each one falling in rapid succession. Her voice, barely audible over the



sobs, eeked out these words, "This is my baby. I will carry whatever weight necessary for as long as necessary to sustain her life."

The old pediatrician, shaking his cocked head, countered, "Don't say I didn't warn you."

Two years later and a week or so after the death of that sweet baby, the mother received a letter from the pediatrician.

Mrs. [Life-valuer], I have to admit I was wrong. You did, in fact, care for Mya well despite the weight it brought. I am sorry for your loss, but your fortitude inspired me."

That old pediatrician may have seen what that mother knew all along — all life is valuable. It just depends on where you place your value.

Treasure All Human Life //

Exodus 1:16-17

Mya Christina, the subject in our introduction, was severely brain damaged. Unable to do the simplest of things: cry, swallow, smile, cough, etc. The doctor saw no useful qualities in her. Though all of what the doctor observed about Mya was true, his valuation of her fell short. She single-handedly, in two years and 27 days of life, increased her mother's faith, made Jesus Christ known to many, and solidified her brother's calling into the educational field. Little Miss Mya did all of this without uttering one intelligible word or sound . . . her very being . . . her presence in that family brought about change that is still unfolding today.

Though the subjects in this passage of Scripture were not physically handicapped, someone like Mya's pediatrician had deemed them unworthy to live. The reasoning? They were, like Mya, perceived as an obstacle to a greater life.

Through divine providence, Jacob, God's chosen vessel from which He would birth a nation, had a son named Joseph. Long story short, Joseph lands in Egypt. (Gen. 37; 39-41) His wisdom and

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obedience to God propelled him to the second highest position in the land. Eventually, his family joined him there. They grow from a meager seventy to over one million people. A new king came into power who did not know of Joseph and his contribution to Egypt's survival and current life-sustaining practices. His eyes only observed a powerful people group who unceasingly multiplied.

His first thought was not what this group could add to his life, but what they might take away. He hatched a plan. Initially, he pits one ethnicity against the other by elevating the Egyptians over the Hebrews. He, then, adds physical exhaustion to the existing mental anguish. Yet, multiplication continues. Finally, he resorts to premeditated murder. Shiphrah and Puah, most likely the heads of the midwifery division, are summoned and given orders to make sure no Hebrew male child lives to see the light of day (Gen. 42-Ex. 1).

IN WHAT WAYS DO WE SEE SATAN REPEATING THIS PATTERN TODAY? WHAT IS THE REMEDY TO DESTROYING THIS UNGODLY PRACTICE?

What made the king think the Hebrew midwives would take the baby boys from their mother and kill them? He didn't count on their faith and belief in God. "The midwives, however, feared God." (v. 17) Everything begins with the fear of God.

The midwives feared God in such a way that they would choose to disobey an earthly king rather than offend the eternal King of kings. To fear God meant the midwives chose a hard right over an easy wrong. They stood against injustice and fought for the rights of innocent children and the preservation of a people group.

The king of Egypt and the Hebrew midwives stood in stark contrast to each other. The king represents the lengths to which one will go when the only life he values is his own. Others are not treasured and viewed as wonderful masterpieces created in the image of God. They are pawns, a means to an end of personal, self-centered comfort, security, success, and happiness. By contrast, the Hebrew midwives are the shining example of what happens when the fear of God is the foundation upon which a life is built. It is a life characterized by integrity, purpose, strength, and obedience.

Protect Life from Harm //

Exodus 1:22-2:3

Mya's mother has something in common with Shiphrah and Puah, the willingness to protect regardless of weighty consequences. Think about the great risk for each, especially the midwives. They refused to follow a direct command from Pharaoh. Jen Wilkin in a



DIGGING DEEPER MIDWIVES VS. PHARAOH

The showdown between Pharaoh and the midwives can be traced back to Genesis 3. The theme, woman against beast, runs throughout Scripture. Though not specifically stated, the language of the battle is expressed in these examples:

- Tamar vs. Judah (Gen. 38)
- Vashti vs. Ahasuerus (Esth. 1)
- Esther vs. Haman (Esth. 3:7)
- Jael vs. Sisera (Judg. 4)
- The Woman who washed Jesus' Feet vs. Simon (Luke 7)
- Babylon (The Church) vs. Rome (1 Pet.)

This short list displays in different forms and personalities exactly what the midwives did in taking on the beast known as Pharaoh. At the core of each is the fight to treasure who God treasures with the bold assurance of being backed by Almighty God.

How does this information enhance, inform, or alter your understanding of Exodus 1-2:10?



Gospel Coalition video, *Female Bravery and God's Mission*, says this of the midwives, "... Commentators will tell you what is implied here is that in a time where children die often in the process of childbirth, [Pharaoh says] 'Make it look like an accident.' Because imagine if the Hebrew women knew the midwives were putting the male children to death. They would not trust them at the birth stool. Pharaoh has commanded them to practice deceit on their own women, but what do they do? Instead, they practice deceit on him."¹² The same weapon of deceit Pharaoh wielded for destruction became the thing that would destroy his plan.

WHAT ARE SOME MODERN-DAY FORMS OF GENOCIDE, AND WHAT WEAPONS ARE AT OUR DISPOSAL?

Not to be deterred, Pharaoh enlists the Egyptian people in what can only be described as a blatant disregard of the Imago Dei within every person and the inherent dignity and value accompanying it.

"You must throw every son born to the Hebrews into the Nile, but let every daughter live." (Ex. 1:22). Imagine the fear. Yet, two others joined the fight to protect life and preserve a people group. "Now a man from the family of Levi married a Levite woman.

The woman gave birth to a son; when she saw that he was beautiful, she hid him for three months" (Ex. 2:1-2).

Do not miss what is happening in the text. Satan knows that a deliverer is coming. He incites one who was the law, judge, and jury in the land of Egypt against not only the people of Israel, but the family line through which a Great Shepherd would come. God does some inciting of His own using both the midwives' and this unnamed Levitical family to bring protection to His plan and His people.

What is the modern-day significance? Members of the Body of Christ have a duty to stand up against laws and regulations that will harm, disenfranchise, or destroy human life without fear of persecution. Yes, the Bible teaches obedience to those who rule over us. (Romans 13:1) And yet this passage reveals a truth every believer needs in their arsenal—God's law supersedes mankind's when it threatens to deter His plan.

Take Care of Human Needs // Exodus 2:4-10

The next set of events solidifies God's miraculous hand of protection and the invitation He extends to join him in taking care of others. The baby is set afloat on the Nile River. Unbeknownst to the mother, her daughter quietly watched the care given in building this tiny boat of safety. When the mother set the baby a sail, this daughter joined the care team without being asked and without notifying anyone else of the mission she embarked upon.

In this case, both factors saved numerous lives. Had the sister revealed her mission to the mother, perhaps mom's need to protect would have kicked in and stopped her from getting involved. Also, the girl's watchful eye served as an alert to the need.

Pharaoh's daughter, with servants in tow, headed toward the river not far from the baby-toting ark. It was bath time. The fact that the princess of Egypt chose to bathe in the Nile, instead of in her palatial palace, points to the Egyptians' belief in the river being a gift from the gods. Ironically, the God of the heavens and Earth used that idolatrous thinking.

One of her servants lifted the lid and discovered the crying baby. The princess' first reaction was sympathy, "She felt sorry for him" (v. 6), which was

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quickly followed by the second discovery: "This is one of the Hebrew boys" (v. 6). His ethnicity could have been known through his skin color and clothing. A Hebrew boy under the edict of death from her very household, floating on the "supernatural" Nile. Coincidence? No. It is a [GOD]cidence!

The sister sprang into action. She jumped out of hiding and suggested that an already nursing lady could possibly feed him and stop his crying. The fate of the treasured life in the ark rested in the princess' response. If she said no, the child would be tossed into the jaws of the Nile. But in her own act of defiance against her father's brutal policies, the princess chose life. With one word she saved his life. Instead of no, she said "Go" (v. 8). She consented for the sister to get the woman who could nurse him.

At the conclusion of the nursing period, his mother brought him back to Pharaoh's daughter, where the princess adopted him as her own. She gave him a name that sounds like the word that means "to draw out." It reminded her that she drew him out of the water and saved him. That name? Moses.

HAVE YOU USED YOUR VOICE AT THE APPROPRIATE TIMES AS A MEANS OF TAKING CARE OF THE NEEDS OF OTHERS?

DID YOU KNOW?

Wadjet, the matron God of Pharaoh, was symbolized by a serpent. She could be found centered on the headdress of every Pharaoh. Wadjet was also known as the protector of women in childbirth. How ironic that Pharaoh wore the symbol of his protection and that of women in childbirth on his head. A head that concocted lies and deceit to crush the very thing the Egyptian goddess was assigned to protect. This serves as a stark warning for today's church. Satan presents himself in many forms, but he rarely shows up as his true self, not initially. Think about the contrast of the above situation. To the Egyptian people Pharaoh had respect and reverence for birthing mothers. Yet, he attempts a secret crushing of that very section of society. When it looks like Wadjet might fail at protecting Pharaoh from the great might he perceived in the Israelites, then his true identity springs forth.

Biblical Truth: There is only one true God and Lord of all.

How might believers be deceived by the pharaohs of our day?

LIVE IT

How can we treasure who God treasures?

Much like the Exodus scene, the Israelites are suffering great persecution, constantly under the threat of death by a Pharaoh like ruler. Peter, suffering the same persecution, writes to exiles who are dispersed to the north, south, east, and west. At the core of the original language, Peter means. Bring regulation to your life so that you can regulate others.¹ Peter 4:7-11 tells us. Peter's words are applicable to us. Treasuring who God treasures requires a few practical, but soul-searching steps.

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- **Pray for yourself.** Confess your deepest angst, aggravations, and egregious behaviors. This clears the way for you to receive God's love without guilt or shame.
- **Pray for others.** Sincere prayers for others have sin-pardoning power and opens your eyes to their needs.
- **Serve without bringing attention to what you are doing.** Use your spiritual gifts to meet needs. Remember, this step can only be reached by taking the first two.

DAILY READINGS

1. WHEN THE DEVIL WHISPERS // EXODUS 1:16

Pharaoh was considered a god in Egyptian culture—all-powerful, all-knowing, all-wise, all-everything. Seems surprising that he would call Shiphrah and Puah in and quietly suggest that all male Hebrew children meet an accidental death. First things first, who would believe that a succession of deaths involving only one gender was an accident? Secondly, if he was all that he purported, why would anyone, including hefty Hebrew boy children who grew into substantial men, be a threat to him? Because he was neither little “g” god nor God. Here’s the point, when the Devil whispers, we can be sure of three things. His plan is stupid. He is scared. He is unsure.

Relevance? Scared unsure devils have no power. They are only stupid. Stop following their direction!

2. TRASH OR TREASURE // GENESIS 1:26-31

“One man’s trash is another man’s treasure.” The origin of this quote is not fully known, but it was recently used by Yotam Assaf Ottolenghi, an Israeli-born chef living in Britain. He used it to explain that what some chefs believe is useless food to be thrown away is a treasure in the hands of another chef.¹⁴

God’s view of his children is like the chef who picks up undesirables thrown away by others. Because just like the chef, God knows the intended use and purpose of each one of his children. In the wrong hands they are mistaken as trash, but in God’s hands they are very good (Gen. 31). May we believe Genesis 1:26-31 with our whole hearts and act accordingly.

One man’s trash is God’s treasure and so should it be ours.

3. REVERENCE OVER FEAR // PROVERBS 9:10

Although they are not the same, both reverence and fear are translated as fear. Interestingly, reverence can be fear, but fear is not equivalent to reverence. Reverence is awe. A stunning emotion that overwhelms one with gratitude and wonder which leads to unconditional surrender. Fear is an emotion that signals danger or peril. It also leads to surrender,

but the surrender is conditional. Once the threat is removed, so is the surrender. Pharaoh used fear to garner surrender. The true and living God is so wonderfully powerful that those who look to him automatically reverence him. Why do we need to know this after studying Exodus 1:2:10?

God is calling us to a reverent fear of Him, one that causes us to see His image in those around us.

4. KALUPTO ME // 1 PETER 4:8

Is God really concerned about the treatment believers bestow upon one another? The short answer is yes. The focal passage tells us a little more: . . . *because love covers a multitude of sins*. The Greek word used here is kalupto—to cover; To procure pardon of them from God. It paints the picture of a believer so filled with God’s love that their prayers move his heart to pardon the sins of the one being prayed for. Kalupto in action looks like a person who goes out of their way to take care of the needs of others. So much so that the person’s problem dissipates.

If you have ever been covered by a kalupto prayer, you know it and as a result you desire to show it by being kalupto for someone else.

5. DRAWN OUT // EPHESIANS 4:11-13

We learned that Moses was the child lovingly placed in a mini ark to avoid being drowned by some zealous Egyptian. The question is why? Was it simply because his baby-faced beauty enthralled his mother? Probably not. The answer to the question might lie in his name. Moses’ adopted mother called him, drawn out. Which was exactly who he was, drawn out for a purpose. His deliverance pointed to, at very least, two things:

- 1) The deliverance of the Savior of the world.
- 2) The Savior delivering the whole world.

As joint heirs of Jesus, we too are drawn out. Our purpose is not to save the world. It is to build the kingdom of God. Moses used the gift of a rod to shepherd his people to safety.

We have spiritual gifts. These gifts are not to benefit ourselves. They are given for the purpose of pouring into others.