

Title: But They Feared God
Text: Exodus 1: 15-21
Date: October 8, 2016
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

Exodus 1: 15: And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah:

There had to be hundreds of midwives considering how the Israelites multiplied while they were slaves in Egypt. But these two were probably in charge over all the other Hebrew midwives.

Exodus 1: 16: And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see *them* upon the stools; [the midwife sat on a stool as she delivered the child] if it *be* a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it *be* a daughter, then she shall live.

Before the male baby was able to cry, before the mother knew he was alive, he ordered the midwife to kill the male baby. Among men, this was the most powerful man in the world. He expected the people to do whatever he commanded, especially these Hebrew midwife slaves. And if any did not obey, he could order *them* to be killed.

Exodus 1: 17: But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.

They revered God as the true King over all rather than this evil man who was merely king of Egypt. They saved the male children alive because they believed God's promise—the Messiah would be the woman's seed—born of an Israelite woman. This was an act of faith in Christ.

Exodus 1: 18: And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive? 19: And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women *are* not as the Egyptian women; for they *are* lively, [strong, vigorous, full of life] and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them.

This may have been true—the Hebrew women may have been lively, perhaps some even delivered before the midwives came in to them. But the real reason was that they feared God rather than sinful men.

Exodus 1: 20: Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. 21: And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.

Proposition: The church of God has, and shall be saved by fearing God rather than men.

I want to give you a few scriptures which will help us see the gospel of Christ in our text. After Adam plunged the whole human race into sin, God declared how Christ would come and how his church would be saved. Speaking to the devil, God said, “

Genesis 3: 15: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Christ is the woman's Seed. We know now that this meant that Christ would come through a virgin woman. But from the garden until the Angel told Mary the meaning, every God-fearing pregnant Hebrew woman hoped the child in her womb would be the promised Seed. Eve thought she had given birth to the Messiah—

she exclaimed, “I have gotten a man [the Man] from the LORD!”—she thought she had given birth to THE GODMAN!

God told the devil that he put enmity between the devil and the woman, and between the devil’s seed and the woman’s seed. God declared the devil would bruise Christ’s heel but Christ would bruise the devil’s head. So the devil wanted to prevent Christ from being born because he knew Christ would defeat him thus save God’s elect. So the devil and his children hated the woman.

The woman is not only God’s elect women but the woman is also Christ’s bride, the church through whom Christ would be born into the earth. Throughout the generations several times, as we see in our text, the devil and his children caused the woman great travail and sorrow in childbirth as he attempted to kill all her male children. This is the spiritual meaning of what God declared:

Gen 3: 16: Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children;

God said, “I will” because God was in full control when the devil caused them sorrow in childbirth. Then God declared how the woman would be saved in childbearing.

Genesis 3: 16:…and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

“Thy desire” means thy fear, thy faith, thy charity, thy holy consecration shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee as her savior and protector in absolute dominion so that she shall be saved. Christ is the church’s husband to whom she subjects, who rules over her for her salvation. This is what Paul meant as he was declaring why the wife is subject to her husband.

1 Timothy 2: 14: And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. 15: Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety. [with a sound mind—all toward her husband.]

Spiritually, the husband is Christ and “the woman” is Christ’s bride, the elect. God declared Christ would come through the woman, the elect of God, tribe of Judah, so on. Yet, even before Christ came, the way his elect bride was preserved in childbearing was by her desire being toward Christ her husband. Her salvation was by her continuing in faith, charity and holiness toward Christ her Husband, having a mind only for him, looking to him to preserve her and his children. And Christ did! This is what we see taking place in our text.

THE DEVIL’S ENMITY

We see the devil’s enmity toward Christ and his bride—**Exodus 1: 15: And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiphrah, and the name of the other Puah: 16: And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see *them* upon the stools; if it *be* a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it *be* a daughter, then she shall live.**

Pharaoh was one of the devil’s seed—an unbelieving, rebel against God. His purpose was to kill the Hebrew sons so he could destroy Israel so they would not threaten his throne. The devil’s purpose was the same. His desire was to destroy God’s elect Israel so that Christ would not be born and take away his power.

Revelation 12: 1: And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: 2: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. 3: And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

4: And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

So in Pharaoh we see the devil and his seed's enmity toward Christ and his people. We see the devil trying to usurp Christ's throne and God's eternal purpose. But remember, God, "saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth....And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" (Rom 9: 17-24)

OVERCOMING THE DEVIL

We see an example of how God's people overcome the devil and his seed—**Exodus 1: 17: But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.**

This was a tremendous trial of faith for these two mid-wives, as well as to the mother's and father's. You and I warn one another of evil and I am sure these mid-wives warned the pregnant wives and their husbands of Pharaoh's command. Another time, we will see God commend the faith of Moses' mother and father for having and delivering Moses.

If it were possible for these elect mid-wives to have been deceived by Satan into fearing the king of Egypt, just think of what would have happened. Christ's genealogy in Matthew 1 would have ended right here. Redemption would have never been accomplished! But it is not possible that even one of God's elect shall be deceived.

By the grace of God, by the power of God, these mid-wives did exactly what God said in the garden that all his elect bride shall do, "The midwives feared God." Their desire was to their heavenly Husband and King. By God's grace and gift, they were of a sound and sober mind and feared God.

As powerful as the king of Egypt appeared to the natural eye, Christ the King appeared infinitely more powerful to the eye of faith. So they continued in faith looking to Christ our Husband and trusted him to be their Sanctuary.

They continued in holy consecration to Christ our Husband and refused to become the defiled servants of Satan and did not as the devil and his puppet commanded.

They continued in charity constrained by the love of Christ our Husband and so in love toward his people, they "saved the men children alive."

Brethren, every sinner redeemed by Christ owe it all to these two women through whom Christ preserved his bride. Do you see how important it is to continue in faith and love trusting Christ to save us from every evil! Let us follow their example. Obey God by obeying the powers that be, so long as their command is "in the Lord." But if the command is not honoring to God, if it would steal Christ's glory, fear him alone and not men!

Isaiah 8: 12: Say ye not, A confederacy, to all *them* to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. 13: Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and *let him be* your fear, and *let him be* your dread. 14: And he shall be for a sanctuary;

CHRIST'S FAITHFULNESS

We see Christ's faithfulness to those who fear him—**Ex 1: 20: Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. 21: And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.** [dwelling places]

Because these two midwives feared God—God dealt well with them and all his elect people. The people multiplied and waxed very mighty because God multiplied them and gave them might. God preserved them from Haman's attempt to kill the Hebrews, he preserved the tribe of Judah, the house of Jesse, the house of David, even from Herod who slew all the children in Bethlehem two and under. Therefore, at the appointed time, THE SEED OF WOMAN, THE MAN CHILD, was born into this earth—

Galatians 4: 4: God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5: To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

“And it came to pass—because Shiprah and Puah feared God”—Christ went to the cross. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree and made satisfaction to God. Christ fulfilled the law and the prophets and God's elect the righteousness of God in him.

Then from his throne, the true King of all the earth gave us life and faith to behold that “Christ made them [and us] houses”—dwelling places—in him, where we shall dwell in glory with him forever more!

As we read the rest of Revelation 12 we see that this is the message of our text.

Revelation 12: 4:...and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. 5: And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and *to* his throne. 6: And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days. [until God's set time. Next is what Christ accomplished on the cross] 7: And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8: And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9: And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10: And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. 11: And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

May God be pleased to make us like Shiprah and Puah by making us to rest in the blood of the Lamb, to confess him all our days and to love not our lives unto the death. God saves those who fear him!

Amen!