



Shiphrah and Puah

Shiphrah and Puah are heroes. These two Hebrew midwives risked everything to obey God. Like so many in this deep faith tradition, they stood against their cultural norms and did not obey Pharaoh. Their direct orders were to kill all the son's of the Hebrews while the mothers were still on the birth stool. (Ex. 1.16) Pharaoh would have expected full obedience. The only problem for this wicked king was that Shiphrah and Puah feared God. In the next verse, we find that "the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live." (Ex. 1.17) Tremper Longman goes on to observe from this story, "Pharaoh's speech marks him as callous and blundering, while the midwives come across as intelligent and brave." [1]

We all will have moments when we will have to choose to obey God rather than man. Thankfully, we do have the scriptures and the invitation to be shaped by God. The Psalmist reminds us, "Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes; and I will keep it to the end. Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart." (Ps. 119.33-34) Just like these two heroic midwives in a foreign land, "We must obey God rather than men." (Acts 5.29)

[1] Tremper Longman III. How to Read Exodus.