No Power on Earth can Alter God's Plan for His People!

Exodus 1:1-22

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I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND BIBLICAL CONTEXT

The Bible is filled with men and women of God who rose up in times of great crises in which their faith in God shone bright through extremely dangerous situations. Their **bold faith**, **courage under fire** and **spiritual resilience** made them *exemplary* in extremely difficult times. The **Hebrew Midwives** qualify as **Exemplary Women of Faith and Courage** in whom God was glorified! *We need such courageous believers in our time who maintain their faith in God!*

A. Historical Background

In Genesis Chapter 1, verse 28, the Bible says that God blessed Adam and Eve and said to them, "**Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it**; ..." This *divine blessing and decree* have continued to work *vigorously and effectively* throughout history until now and will continue until the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ! The **Divine Multiplication** of God's people cannot be undermined or stopped by evil people no matter how hard they try. This aspect is highlighted for our understanding in our text.

B. Biblical Context

God's Plan of Salvation for humanity began with an old couple known as Abram and Sarai who were planning to retire at 75 and 65, respectively. They were about done with life and awaiting death when God visited them. They didn't have children because Sarai was barren her entire life. But unknow to them, God had an exceedingly extraordinary divine plan for their lives which extended to Eternity! Hallelujah! Accordingly, God produced, Isaac, the Promised child, from the barren womb and declining bodies of the old couple! And God **multiplied** Isaac into the **12 Tribes of Israel**! You know the story! But Sin intervened and led the 11 Brothers of Israel to conspire against their own brother, Joseph! Initially, they planned to kill him because they saw how God and their father favored Joseph. But they changed their plan at the last minute and sold their own brother into slavery! You know the story! But God *reversed* Joseph's misfortune and made him the second most powerful leader under Pharaoh of Egypt! His brothers' evil plan for Joseph was for him to spend the rest of his life in slavery! But God raised him up to become their salvation! You know the story! What his brothers meant for evil, God meant it

for their own Good! But let us get something straight! This *reversal* of evil into good for the 12 Tribes of Israel was neither to condone their evil plans nor their wicked deeds against one of their own! **God did it because of His Plan of Salvation for humanity!** God also didn't let their evil deeds of Joseph's brothers to go unpunished! **That is why the Israelites found themselves as slaves after Josehp had died!** They remined in Egypt for 430 years before God decided to lead them back into Canaan! **Because they sold Joseph into slavery, God let them experience slavery in Egypt!**

II. THE LESSON: Extraordinary Women of Faith and Courage

The story of the Faithful and Courageous Hebrew Midwives happened during the times when the lives of the Israelites under slavery in Egypt gotten worse! Let us now examine the 22 verses in detail to understand the divine revelations for our time!

1. vv.1-5. Jocob's Families Numbered 70 When they Arrived in Egypt.

When Jacob and his entire family came to Egypt to join Joseph and his family, **their number was just 70**. It is important that we notice this small number of people to understand the **Divine Multiplication** under **God's Plan of Salvation**. God doesn't need large numbers of people to accomplish His Plan of Salvation! God always used small number of faithful, courage and obedient people to advance His Kingdom on Earth! Didn't I just tell you that God started His Plan of Salvation using 2 very old couple who were just awaiting death! **God's Vision for your life is much larger, richer and everlasting!** God's Vision for Humanity never depended on *our very limited age, knowledge or power!* ***And so it was during the time of the Hebrew Midwives!***

2. vv. 6-7. The Divine Multiplication Works Regardless of Your Situation!

What God ordained in the Beginning (Genesis 1:26-28) continues to work vigorously and effectively regardless of the times, places and circumstances of His people. This divine truth is also applicable for people who don't believe in God. What God wants us to see in these verses is that even though Joseph and his powerful influence and protection died with him, **God was still in control** as He is today! Is anybody glad that God is still in control regardless of who rules from the Whitehouse, Congress and the Supreme Court?

3. vv. 8-10. God Uses Numbers Radically Different than People.

To realize how God *sees* and *uses* numbers, we must understand God's Vision and Plan for Humanity! **God always sees great potentials, fruitfulness and prosperous possibilities in people regardless of their geographic locations, ethnicity, race, circumstances and limitations**. *That is always God's perspective based on His Vision and Plan for Humanity. As to numbers, God*

wants us to "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it." We must also understand that the God who created the Universe knows how **numbers** work in the context of His Plan. Let us now examine the verses:

a) Verses 8 & 9. **Let Us Deal with This Increasing Population**.

The Egyptians began to *see* the Israelites as a *threat* only after a **new king** came into the scene. *Transitional times can be dangerous!* **Evil rulers see threats where none exists!** Evil rulers try to find ways to *manufacture fear* among people *to create uncertainty* which they can exploit for their own political gains! So, the new Egyptian king decided to play the "numbers game" to create political instability that he can exploit! The Israelites were few in number compared to the Egyptian population. But the new king had to create the perception that they posed a threat to them! Beware of new rulers who **manipulate numbers** to *sow division* among people! **It is an old divide and conquer strategy!**

b) Verse 10. **Let Us Deal Shrewdly with Them**

We must pay attention to the words "shrewd" and "them." The definition of the word shrewd is (i) evil; bad; (ii) dangerous, (iii) mischievous; cunning. The new Egyptian king after the death of Joseph decided to implement a "**shrewd**" policy which is going to be "evil, dangerous, mischievous and cunning" toward the Israelites who were increasing in number. Recall that the Israelites had lived in Egypt for 430 years in peace by this time. Recall also that the Israelites were in Egypt legally and were part of the society. Recall that Joseph had saved the whole of Egypt from destruction during the 7 years of famine! The new Egyptian king decided to promote the "**Us**" and "**Them**" politics to create division among the people! Beware of "shrewd" politicians who *propagate* division among the people with the "**Us**" and "**Them**" divide and rule strategy!

Whereas evil rulers are threatened by the increase of certain racial/ethnic groups of people, God sees them as the source of prosperity for the entire country! Whereas evil rulers gauge their political power by comparing the number of people according to the color of their skin, ethnic origin, political maps and numbers, God know how His Plan is going to play out in the end!

4. **vv. 11-14**. **The Divine Multiplication at Work!**

The Bible says, "But the more they were oppressed, **the more they multiplied and spread**; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites and worked them ruthlessly." Hallelujah! Evil rulers have always devised, schemed and planned ways to oppress, exploit and destroy people, but God had His own Plan how things turn out! The Egyptians thought by enslaving the Israelites unjustly, they would control the number! But **God's Divine Multiplication** works

radically different! We have seen that happen in our own history! God always has a way of flipping the script of the enemy!

5. **vv. 15 – 17. The Faithful and Courageous Midwives Against Evil.**

Evil powers will not stop at nothing to achieve their wicked goals! There is no limit to how far and low they are willing to go in their quest for power over people. When they saw their wicked efforts to stem the **increasing population** of the Israelites despite their cruel and hard labor they imposed upon them, they resorted to killing their children at birth! So, the **shrewd** Egyptian king issued a decree of extermination of the sons of the Israelites in the hands of the Hebrew Midwives. **What a devious plan!** *But the Hebrew Midwives called* ***Shiphrah*** *and* ***Puah*** *courageously stopped his wicked schemes from taking place!* Understand the Hebrew Midwives found themselves caught between God and the command of the Egyptian king with their faith and lives on the balance! They decided to go against the idol worshipping Egyptian king because **"they feared God and let the boys live!"** What an extraordinary stance of faith in the Fear of God! ***They refused to kill the babies they were entrusted to deliver at the risk of losing their own lives!*** At a time when the world has found so many ways of getting rid of babies, these Hebrew Midwives stand as an **Eternal Memorial of Morality and Ethics**! There will come a time when every believer has to choose between Good and Evil! **Shiphrah** and **Pauh** remind us how we should make decisions based on our **Faith** and not **Fear**! The Hebrew Midwives lived at a time when tyranny, uncertainty, and fear dominated their lives! But they chose to honor God by their **faith** rather than submit to **fear** due to the threat of the tyrannical ruler!

6. **vv. 18-22. God Showed Favor to the Faithful & Courageous Midwives.**

Because of the Faithfulness and Courageous acts of the Hebrew Midwives, God's Divine Multiplication even increased! God was so impressed by their **Moral and Ethical stance** displayed in the face of danger to their lives that He even increased the pace of **His Divine Multiplication**! We need more **Shiphrah** and **Pauh** in our time! Not only **God's Favor** worked on behalf of the Israelites, but multiplied the Hebrew Midwives by giving them their own families! God chose for me to teach about the Faithful and Courageous Midwives to encourage us to trust His Vision and Plan for our lives! In this time of political transitions and uncertainty, God wants us to remain Faithful and Courageous in Christ! God's Favor works for those who will not compromise their spiritual, moral and ethical standards based on the "shrewd" politics of our time!

III. CONCLUSION: Keep on trusting God!

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