

Not doing what
you're told!
Shiphrah & Puah
Exodus 1:15-22

Genocide

A new generation of Egyptians and Jews

Pharaoh fears these 'enemies within' (v8-9)

He plots to eliminate them – but subtly (v10)

Why?

Subtle genocide

- Dehumanise the victims
- Make them do 'socially useful work' – first for Pharaoh, then for the Egyptians (v11-14)
- When this fails – take more direct action (v15-16)

Who were they?

Either 'Hebrew midwives' (Israelites) or 'midwives to the Hebrews' (Egyptians)

Probably not the only midwives

Faced with a terrible choice (even harder if we assume they were Egyptian):

- 'Fear God' and say "No" to Pharaoh
- Say "Yes" to Pharaoh and have to account to God

What did they do...?

What did they do?

Pharaoh's policies shifted gradually...

- Maybe Shiphrah and Puah had already compromised their beliefs?

But their faith was strong enough for them to identify that a line was about to be crossed

They chose not to confront Pharaoh

- They came up with a plausible excuse
- Their disobedience didn't change the outcome - Pharaoh found a different way to commit genocide

What does this mean for us...?

How do we apply this?

We will face difficult choices...

Think like Jesus

- ‘...let God change the way you think. Then you will know how to do everything that is good and pleasing to Him.’ (Rom 12:2, CEV)

Act like Jesus

- ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ (Mark 12:31)

Be wise (not cynical)

- “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.” (Matt 10:16)