

# Exodus 1:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

**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—Upon the stools** (על-האָבָנִים, al-ha'ovnayim, lit. "upon the stones/bricks") refers to the birthing stool, a seat with an opening used in ancient deliveries. The selective infanticide of males reflects Pharaoh's dual strategy: eliminate future warriors while preserving females who could be absorbed into Egyptian population. This satanic attack on the seed recalls Genesis 3:15's promise and anticipates Herod's slaughter (Matthew 2:16). God will preserve His deliverer (Moses) through ironic means—Pharaoh's own household (2:5-10).

## Historical Context

Birth stools (Hebrew ovnayim, dual form suggesting two bricks/stones for each foot) are depicted in Egyptian tomb reliefs. Female infanticide was rare in the ancient world; male infanticide served military and political purposes. This genocide sets up Moses' miraculous preservation as providentially ordained.

## Related Passages

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## **John 15:13 — Greatest form of love**

## Study Questions

1. How does Pharaoh's attack on Hebrew boys illuminate Satan's ongoing war against God's redemptive purposes?
2. What does this passage teach about the value God places on every human life, even when powerful forces seek destruction?

## Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	בְּלִדְקָן	אַת	בְּעֵבֶרְיָה וְתָ
<b>And he said</b>	<b>When ye do the office of a midwife</b>		<b>to the Hebrew women</b>
H559	H3205	H853	H5680
וְרִאֵיתָ	עַל	אִם	הָא
<b>and see</b>	<b>them upon the stools</b>	<b>בְּאָבִת יְמָם</b>	<b>בְּ  </b>
H5921	H70	H518	H1931
H7200		H1121	H4191
וְאַתָּה			
H853	H518	H1931	H2425
<b>him but if it be a daughter</b>	<b>then she shall live</b>		
H1323			

## Additional Cross-References

**Exodus 1:22** (Parallel theme): And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org