

Exodus 1:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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 (כָּל־הַבֵּן הַלּוֹד הַיָּאֵרָה וְתַשְׁלִיכֶהוּ, kol-haben hayilod haye'orah tashlikhuhu)—Pharaoh escalates from secret midwife-executed genocide to public, nation-wide infanticide. **Charged all his people** makes every Egyptian complicit in the murder of Hebrew boys. **Cast into the river**—the Nile, Egypt's lifeline and divine symbol, becomes an instrument of death. The tragic irony: the river meant to destroy Moses will become his salvation (2:3), and later the Nile will be turned to blood (7:20). This decree sets up Moses' birth narrative and God's poetic justice—Pharaoh's own daughter will adopt the deliverer (2:5-10).

Historical Context

This public decree suggests Pharaoh's frustration with the failure of previous measures. Commanding all Egyptians implies either popular support for genocide or at least passive compliance. The Nile's religious significance (associated with gods like Hapi and Sobek) adds theological dimension—Pharaoh conscripts Egypt's sacred river for mass murder, which God will judge.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do you resist cultural complicity with evil when society normalizes injustice?
2. What does God's transformation of death waters (Nile) into salvation waters (for Moses) teach about His ability to redeem even instruments of evil?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּצַּח	וַיִּצַּח	וַיִּצַּח	וַיִּצַּח	וַיִּצַּח	וַיִּצַּח	וַיִּצַּח
charged	And Pharaoh	H3605	all his people	saying	H3605	Every son
H6680	H6547		H5971	H559		H1121
וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה
that is born	into the river	ye shall cast	H3605	and every daughter		
H3209	H2975	H7993		H1323		
וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה	וְהָיָה
ye shall save alive						
H2421						

Additional Cross-References

Acts 7:19 (Parallel theme): The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.

Proverbs 1:16 (Parallel theme): For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

Psalms 105:25 (Parallel theme): He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal subtilly with his servants.

Proverbs 4:16 (Parallel theme): For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.

Exodus 1:16 (Parallel theme): 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.

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