



The Awesome Book of Unusual Bible Heroes for Kids



Sandy Silverthorne



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Special Deliveries: The Egyptian Midwives

Exodus 1

Early in their history, God's people—the Israelites—lived in Egypt for about 400 years. At first there were just a few of them, but they kept growing and growing until there were more than one million. Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, started worrying that they might rebel and take over the country. To make sure that wouldn't happen, he issued a crazy order that he hoped would weaken the Hebrew people...



“Did you hear the order from Pharaoh?” Shiphrah said. “It says that if a Jewish woman gives birth to a little boy, we’re supposed to throw him in the river!”

“What! That’s horrible!” said Puah. These women were midwives. Their job was to help women deliver their babies and keep them healthy.

Shiphrah handed Puah a written copy of the official order. “We can’t do that!” Puah said after reading it. “What would God say?”

“I don’t think He’d like it.”

But Pharaoh was the king of Egypt, and his orders were to be followed—or *else*. He thought that too many Jewish people lived in his land, and he was afraid they would revolt, so he came up with his awful plan to kill all the newborn boys.

“What will we do?” one of the other midwives asked.

“Well, I don’t know about you, but I’m going to obey God rather than Pharaoh,” Shiphrah answered.

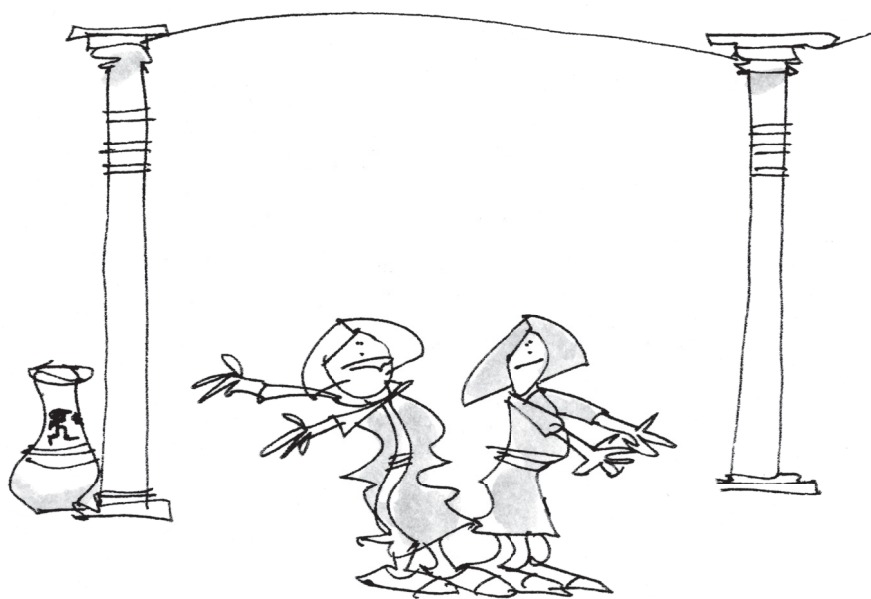
The other ladies agreed. “We will too. But how do we get away with it?”

Shiphrah scratched her head and thought. “I’ve got an idea. Mrs. Lowenstein down the block is due to have her baby any day. Watch what I do, and then you all do the same.”

Sure enough, the next day Mrs. Lowenstein’s 11-year-old daughter showed up at Shiphrah’s house. “My mom’s having the baby!” she said. “Come quick—we need your help to deliver it!”

Shiphrah and the little girl rushed down to the house where Mrs. Lowenstein lived with her husband, Herb, and their children. The midwife knelt down and spoke gently to Mrs. Lowenstein. “It’s okay...here he comes...everyone’s going to be just fine.”





And sure enough, after a little while, Mrs. Lowenstein was holding a beautiful baby boy.

“Let’s call him Obed Wan Kenherbert after his father. Or maybe just Glen,” Mrs. Lowenstein said.

“He sure came quick,” Shiphrah said. “Hmmm, this gives me an idea...”

That afternoon, as Shiphrah was relaxing on her veranda overlooking the Nile, a messenger from Pharaoh himself appeared on her doorstep. “Come with me,” he said. As they walked, he said, “Boy, are you in trouble. You delivered a baby boy and didn’t throw him in the river. Pharaoh won’t be happy you disobeyed his order. I sure wouldn’t want to be in your caftan.”

“Whatever,” Shiphrah said.



When she was escorted into Pharaoh's presence, she knelt down in honor of the famous ruler.

"What's this I hear about you not throwing the baby boy into the river as I ordered?" Pharaoh thundered. "I specifically said that if you deliver a boy, you are to throw him in."

Shiphrah took a deep breath and then began.

"Your honor—or Your Highness or whatever—I know the edict, and I know that you mean business. It's just that...well, these Hebrew women...they go into labor, and before I can even get to their houses, their babies are born!"

Just then Puah was brought in, and she confirmed what Shiphrah was saying. "Oh, she's right, Your Lordship. These kids pop

out like they're in a toaster! By the time I get there, they're already dressed and in the high chair!"

"These Hebrew women give birth so quick it makes your head spin," Shiprah agreed. "We'll try to do better—you know, throw more babies in the river—but I tell you, these kids look like they're being shot out of a cannon. One minute, labor, and the next minute—bang, zoom—there's the kid!"

Pharaoh was clearly ready for this conversation to be over. "Well, get there quicker next time," he said. "We can't have any more Hebrew boys born around here!"

"Oh yes, yes," the ladies said as they backed out and stepped into the outer hallway.

Shiprah smiled and winked at Puah as they walked down the marble hallway leading to the street. She knew that even after their stern warning, they wouldn't throw any babies into the river. These two little-known heroes of the Old Testament wanted to honor God more than Pharaoh.

The Big Picture

Have you ever done something you believed God wanted you to do even though it wasn't the popular thing to do? Maybe you were nice to a new kid at school when no one else was talking to him or her. Or maybe you followed a rule even when none of your friends did. These midwives risked everything to follow God, and as a result, Pharaoh's plan for the destruction of the Hebrew children was frustrated.