

Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of May 2, 2021
The Great Escape: Hidden Figures, Exodus 1:8-21
Pastor Deandre-Traditional Service, Pastor Hall-Contemporary Service

Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)

- Anything to share about personal events or faith experiences since you last met?
- Are there joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

Opening Discussion Question- A new sermon series, “The Great Escape” begins this week in the story of Moses and the exodus of the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt to freedom. While not everyone is a fan of studying history, why do you think it is important for history to be remembered in general?

Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the scriptures from this week’s sermon message and then discuss the questions which follow as time allows. There are more questions than you will have time for, so it is ok to be selective.

Exodus 1:8-22

⁶ Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died, ⁷ but the Israelites were exceedingly fruitful; they multiplied greatly, increased in numbers and became so numerous that the land was filled with them. ⁸ Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt. ⁹ “Look,” he said to his people, “the Israelites have become far too numerous for us. ¹⁰ Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country.” ¹¹ So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. ¹² But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites ¹³ and worked them ruthlessly. ¹⁴ They made their lives bitter with harsh labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their harsh labor the Egyptians worked them ruthlessly.

¹⁵ The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, ¹⁶ “When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the delivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live.” ¹⁷ The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. ¹⁸ Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, “Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?” ¹⁹ The midwives answered Pharaoh, “Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive.” ²⁰ So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. ²¹ And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own. ²² Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: “Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live.”

1. If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
2. A new king came to power who did not remember Joseph (verse 8). What should the king of Egypt know about Joseph and his descendants for the past 400 years? How had Joseph been a blessing to them? (Genesis 41:15-41)
3. What was the motivation behind the King's decree to oppress the Israelite people with ruthless slave labor conditions (verses 9-16) and eventually asking the mid-wives to murder the male babies?
4. How do you respond to this quote from John Wesley that Pastor Deandre shared- "When men deal wickedly it is common for them to imagine that they deal wisely, but the folly of sin will at last be manifested before all people." What wisdom was the King trying to use?
5. Shiphrah and Puah are the head mid-wives given this murderous task by their authority figure and are the first names recorded in the exodus story (verse 15-16). Yet, they "feared God" and let the boys live instead (verse 17). How would you describe the inner struggle they may have been faced with in this situation?
6. How did God honor their courage in choosing to protect the innocent at risk to themselves (verses 18-21)?
7. Do you believe God honors such acts of sacred resistance or "doing the right thing" with protection today? Why or why not?

Other Related Readings (10 min)

- Would a volunteer please read aloud Peter and Acts 5:25-33.
- Peter said that "We must obey God rather than human beings!" What was it that God had called Peter to do?
- What price was Peter willing to pay for his obedience to God?
- How had the Pentecost experience changed Peter such that he had such boldness?
- What similarities or differences do you see in Peter and Puah and Shiphrah and their situations?

Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)

- As you reflect upon the sermon and the scripture readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
- Pastor Deandre's message described Puah and Shiphrah's example of as one of fearing God, doing justice and choosing to bless someone else. How might the Lord be calling you to bless someone else this week?
- How do you see the motivations of the Pharaoh from this story at work in the world today?
- How does trust in the Lord and an awareness of history keep us from going down these dark paths?
- What would be an example of sacred resistance for the good today?

Witness and Closing (10 minutes)

- Is there a Puah or a Shiphrah (a behind the scenes hero with little recognition) whom we can encourage and demonstrate the love of Christ to this week? Who and how?
- A volunteer may conclude by leading the group in prayer about the joys and concerns shared earlier in the meeting