

Exodus 1:8-2:10

8 Now a new king arose over Egypt,
who did not know Joseph.

⁹He said to his people,
'Look, the Israelite people
are more numerous
and more powerful
than we.

¹⁰Come,
let us deal shrewdly with them,
or they will increase and,
in the event of war,
join our enemies
and fight against us
and escape from the land.'

¹¹Therefore
they set taskmasters over them
to oppress them with forced labour.

They built supply cities,
Pithom and Rameses,
for Pharaoh.

¹²But the more they were oppressed,
the more they multiplied and spread,
so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites.

¹³The Egyptians became ruthless
in imposing tasks on the Israelites,

¹⁴and made their lives bitter
with hard service in mortar and brick
and in every kind of field labour.

They were ruthless
in all the tasks
that they imposed on them.

¹⁵The king of Egypt said
to the Hebrew midwives,
one of whom was named Shiphrah
and the other Puah,

¹⁶'When you act as midwives
to the Hebrew women,
and see them on the birthstool,
if it is a boy, kill him;
but if it is a girl, she shall live.'

¹⁷But the midwives feared God;
they did not do
as the king of Egypt commanded them,
but they let the boys live.

¹⁸So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives
and said to them,
'Why have you done this,
and allowed the boys to live?'

¹⁹The midwives said to Pharaoh,
'Because the Hebrew women
are not like the Egyptian women;
for they are vigorous
and give birth
before the midwife comes to them.'

²⁰So God dealt well with the midwives;
and the people multiplied
and became very strong.

²¹And because the midwives feared God,
he gave them families.

²²Then Pharaoh commanded all his people,
‘Every boy that is born to the Hebrews
you shall throw into the Nile,
but you shall let every girl live.’

Now a man from the house of Levi went
and married a Levite woman.

²The woman conceived and bore a son;
and when she saw that he was a fine baby,
she hid him for three months.

³When she could hide him no longer
she got a papyrus basket for him,
and plastered it with bitumen and pitch;
she put the child in it
and placed it among the reeds
on the bank of the river.

⁴His sister stood at a distance,
to see what would happen to him.

⁵ The daughter of Pharaoh came down
to bathe
at the river,
while her attendants walked
beside the river.

She saw the basket
among the reeds
and sent her maid
to bring it.

⁶When she opened it,
she saw the child.

He was crying,
and she took pity on him.

‘This must be one of the Hebrews’ children,’
she said.

⁷Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter,
‘Shall I go and get you a nurse
from the Hebrew women
to nurse the child for you?’

⁸Pharaoh’s daughter said to her,
‘Yes.’

So the girl went
and called the child’s mother.

⁹Pharaoh’s daughter said to her
, ‘Take this child and nurse it for me,
and I will give you your wages.’

So the woman took the child
and nursed it.

¹⁰When the child grew up,
she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter,
and she took him as her son.

She named him Moses,
‘because’, she said,
‘I drew him out* of the water.’

Matthew 16:13-20

¹³ Now when Jesus came
into the district of Caesarea Philippi,
he asked his disciples,

‘Who do people say
that the Son of Man is?’

¹⁴ And they said,
‘Some say John the Baptist,
but others Elijah,
and still others Jeremiah
or one of the prophets.’

¹⁵ He said to them,
‘But who do you say that I am?’

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered,
‘You are the Messiah,
the Son of the living God.’

¹⁷ And Jesus answered him,
‘Blessed are you,
Simon son of Jonah!

For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you,
but my Father in heaven.

¹⁸ And I tell you,
you are Peter,
and on this rock
I will build my church,
and the gates of Hades
will not prevail against it.

¹⁹ I will give you the keys
of the kingdom of heaven,
and whatever you bind on earth
will be bound in heaven,
and whatever you loose on earth
will be loosed in heaven.’

²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples
not to tell anyone
that he was the Messiah.

Reading Torah This Week

The lectionary moves on from Genesis to Exodus
skimming the surface with narrative selections –
here, transitioning from Joseph to Moses tales

I encourage you in this season to revisit the whole book
I last posted it as a chapter-a-day in Lent 2022
'Wrecking and Remaking Normal':

<http://www.hereticslikeus.com/2022/02/slavery-in-egypt-exodus-01-04.html>

A new king in Egypt, who did not know Joseph
imagine if rulers had no memory of our treaty history
and from '70' who came to Goshen, many more,
once powerless, now threatening

In a verbal echo of leaving Eden: 'labour'
both as work of slaves,
and as birthing by women

A framing of 'secondary' roles:
'collaborator' taskmasters – Hebrew men
'subversive' midwives - Hebrew women

An introduction of Moses:
Born a Levite into genocide, saved in an ark by his sister,
Adopted by Pharaoh's daughter, nursed by his own mother

Between the great heroes and villains –
the lesser complicities, the modest subversions
'wrecking and remaking normal'

Torah may be assembled for the 'united monarchy' century
providing a national narrative of origins in a first temple
but it's edited and polished in exile and restoration of a second

Reading Gospel This Week

We get Peter's confession of Jesus as Messiah
(Mark 8:27-33, Luke 9:18-22, sim Jn 6:68-69)
but not the passion prediction which follows

We're left with the culmination of Galilee ministry
without the beginning of the road to the cross
Just the 'messianic secret' in v20

How do we categorize Jesus' role and job
if he's *sui generis*, in a class of his own, *huion tou anthropou*
'Son of Man', comparing and contrasting prophet types?

What's the modern or post-modern equivalent
'Jesus was a nice guy, smart guy, great guy...'
different in degree, not kind, from any religious hero?

Peter voices a bigger claim:
Christos, ho huion tou Theou tou zontos

Matthew's difference is amplifying Peter's role:
Simon son of Jonah – sign of Jonah Mt 12:38-45, 16:4)
divinely inspired – not second hand from people
Petros – Rocky – on this rock, *ecclesion* church

Finally, shared with John 20:22-23, Peter/our role/job:
the role of binding and loosing on earth and in heavens
Peter first, then the church... gatekeepers?

Broadly, what you confess for Jesus
sets up your role in response...
Most of us stick with 'one of the prophets',
functionally Unitarian, Bahai, Muslim, secular...
Most of us reject the exclusivity of messianic claims,
and haven't sorted out the uniqueness of Jesus...