And they saw…
Rabbi Dan Moskovitz – January 21, 2017

- When the book opens we are reminded how the Israelites ended up in Egypt to begin with. That if they didn't go down they would die of famine in the land. But it all goes wrong, Jacob's whole family 70 strong come down to Egypt and Joseph is alive and a big shot.
- But first Jacob dies, then the brothers, then Joseph then the whole generation then in one verse
- Vayakam melech hadash – and a new king arose who didn't know Joseph.
- To not know something in torah has moral valance to not no something is not to just not understand but to be disconnected to turn away.
    - Rashi – says it's not he didn't meet him. This new king intentionally tried to forget Joseph, willful ignorance, fueled by an agenda.
    - Pharaoh our new King actively erases the memory our people and its contribution. He doesn't know from Joseph who saved the land of Egypt and out people is erased and seen worthy of fear. He erases the memory of the immigrants who built the pyramids, and fans a fear of foreigners.
    - Lets deal with them with hochma, with wisdom, lets fool them, lets be strategic and outwit them lest they become the majority and displace us Lets put Egypt FIRST at all costs.
- New Pharoah goes further and initiates a system that will support his nefarious nacricism, lets

through every first born Hebrew male in to the Nile.

- Were they Hebrews or Egyptians, the commentators are not sure.
- Either way they risk it all and will give their lives to save these children.
- But Pharoah's decree is still working. But one couple has the Audacity of Hope and put their child not into the river but into a basket.

- Enter heroin #3 Pharoah's daughter.
  - She sees the basket – first
  - She sees it is a child, a boy crying
    - She must know it is a Hebrew child
  - She has compassion
  - Ocular empathy, compassionate gaze
  - When we arrive at Moses in the story later, one verse teaches us who he was. Vayigdal a yeled, and he grew up, Vayetzeei he left, Vayar – he saw.
  - His mother Saw, the Hebrew Mid wives they saw. Moses Saw.
  - Zorenberg says – Moses sees in a way that allows him to be affected. His seeing is an act of empathy. Pharoah's seeing is an act of dominance.
  - He saw their suffering and he went out to them.
  - In this context we better understand who moses is and what leadership means in the Torah.

- None of us know what the new King who has arisen will bring, but we have seen much, and heard much that should be alarming.
- David Brooks
    - Our new king is no Moses
    - But this is not the end
    - Because I know that the vast majority of Americans see with eyes that are trained to see and feel the cries of others.
    - Because I know that more people voted against him than voted for him. And that many of those that voted for him, did not vote for hatred or racism, they voted because they felt unseen, unheard. They too felt that America has forgotten Joseph
    - Because I know that just as three remarkable women put themselves on the line for life in Torah – so too women, and men will always risk, will always fight for what is right, and just and needs protecting.
    - This is not the end…Because I know that we have been here before, we have been in the narrowness of Egypt, we have been under the lash of an indifferent Pharoah
        - And we were redeemed
        - Our Torah was written out of that experience. Our Judaism was shaped and continues to be shaped through the lens of having been slaves and strangers ourselves.
    - This is not the end… Rather like, Shifra, like Puah, Like Bat Pharoah, like Moses it must be the beginning of our seeing.