



# FACES OF OUR FAITH

LEARNING FROM BOLD + UNTOLD STORIES

## STUDY JOURNAL

OCTOBER 5 SERMON

SHIPHRAH & PUAH



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There are many heroes of the faith, people we admire and wish to be. However, there are even more ordinary people of faith—those doing what they can with what they have to make a difference. We’ve selected 16 bold stories of those often overlooked in our biblical narratives. Using visual art and prompts for reflection, we hope to dig deep into the worlds of these characters, entering their stories with curiosity and openness to what they might teach us.

We have arranged the stories so that they have a narrative arc beginning with Genesis and the Hebrew stories, moving to the minor characters in the backdrop of Jesus’ birth and death, and concluding with the apostles and Christians who emerged in the years after the resurrection. We invite you to complete this journal at the pace and order that suits you. You may wish to ponder the reflections and prompts individually or with others. We have designed this journal so that it might be used as a personal devotional or as the curriculum for a group study series.

As we journey with these characters, may they remind us that we all play a role in shaping God’s story of redemption and grace. May they awaken us to the faces of our faith in our world today. May they encourage us to know that no action is ever too small to make a difference.

Artfully yours,

**The Sanctified Art Creative Team**

Lisle Gwynn Garrity  
Sarah Are  
Hannah Garrity  
Lauren Wright Pittman



As you journey with the biblical characters in this series, we invite you to name the faces of your own faith and reflect on how they have impacted you. You may wish to name friends, family members, mentors, pastors, public figures, strangers—consider anyone and everyone who has made a lasting impact on your faith.

face of my faith:

impact\_\_\_\_\_

face of my faith:

impact\_\_\_\_\_





They Said No | Lisle Gwynn Garrity





# FACES OF OUR FAITH

## SHIPHRAH & PUAH

**read** EXODUS 1:8-22

from the artist | LISLE GWYNN GARRITY

Pharaoh's plan is a clever one. In an attempt to obliterate the Hebrews, he enlists midwives to pull a quick-handed maneuver by smothering any Hebrew baby boys seconds after birth so that their mothers will believe they are stillborn. The more this happens, the more the Hebrew people will believe that their fertility—their life-force—is diminished. Progeny was everything, for the ability to procreate determined the survival, legacy, and strength of a tribe. Pharaoh doesn't just want them dead, he wants to eradicate their identity, their resilience.

But, instead, two gutsy women throw a wrench in his plans. Shiphrah and Puah are the only women in this story to be named, which we know is a rarity in scripture, so when it happens, it's as if the author is flashing blinking lights on the page that say, "Pay attention to them!" What we see is the first known instance of civil disobedience in recorded history. They say no.

These midwives, these lowest-of-the-low-status-women who likely had no husbands, who were simply glorified servants, who, themselves, may have been deemed infertile and therefore useless to a family system, risk everything to say no.

Through this simple but mighty act, they change the course of history so that, many, many years later, another baby boy born into a dark world of genocide might also survive and flourish and grow up to redeem the world.

In this painting, these hands represent the women's resistance. They are the hands that said no to a power-hungry ruler but yes to a God of justice—to a God who transforms a story of massacre into one of liberation. The impact of their actions, like the waters of the Nile, ripples out far beyond them.





## look

Take a few moments to gaze upon the artwork. Sit still in quiet meditation as you observe the visual qualities of what you see: color, line, texture, movement, shape, form. Now take a deeper look. What parts of the image are your eyes most drawn to? What parts of the image did you overlook? Now engage your imagination. If you were to place yourself in this scene, where would you be and how would you interact with what surrounds you?

## reflect

- Imagine this story from the perspectives of Shiphrah and Puah. What did they have to give up by disobeying Pharaoh? What did they gain?
- We live in a culture that generally praises obedience and loyalty to elders and those in positions of power. Name instances that merit disobedience. How do you determine if you should comply or resist? How do you discern God's will in these situations?
- Can you name other figures throughout time who have taken a stand against unjust rulers or governments? What has been the impact of their actions?



 write

The midwives are two of five women (including Moses' mother, sister, and Pharaoh's daughter) whose actions ultimately keep Moses alive, which leads to the liberation of the Israelites. The role of the midwife is to empower, facilitate, and support birth. Reflect on a way you might act as a midwife in your own life, by supporting the well-being of another or enabling the birth of something new.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

 pray

May I, like the Hebrew midwives, have the courage to say  
no to injustice and yes to you, O God. Amen





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@sanctifiedart | sanctifiedart.org | lisle@sanctifiedart.org