

Week 2: “Unscheduled Interventions”

1. READ

Pastor Watley’s Scriptures: Exodus 1 : 8 – 17 New King James Version (NKJV)

⁸ Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. ⁹ And he said to his people, “Look, the people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier than we; ¹⁰ come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and it happen, in the event of war, that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and *so* go up out of the land.” ¹¹ Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh supply cities, Pithom and Raamses. ¹² But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were in dread of the children of Israel. ¹³ So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor. ¹⁴ And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage—in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field. All their service in which they made them serve *was* with rigor. ¹⁵ Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one *was* Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; ¹⁶ and he said, “When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see *them* on the birthstools, if it *is* a son, then you shall kill him; but if it *is* a daughter, then she shall live.” ¹⁷ But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.

Further Reading: Psalm 90 : 1 – 4 and 12 – 17 New International Version (NIV)

A prayer of Moses the man of God.

¹ Lord, you have been our dwelling place
throughout all generations.

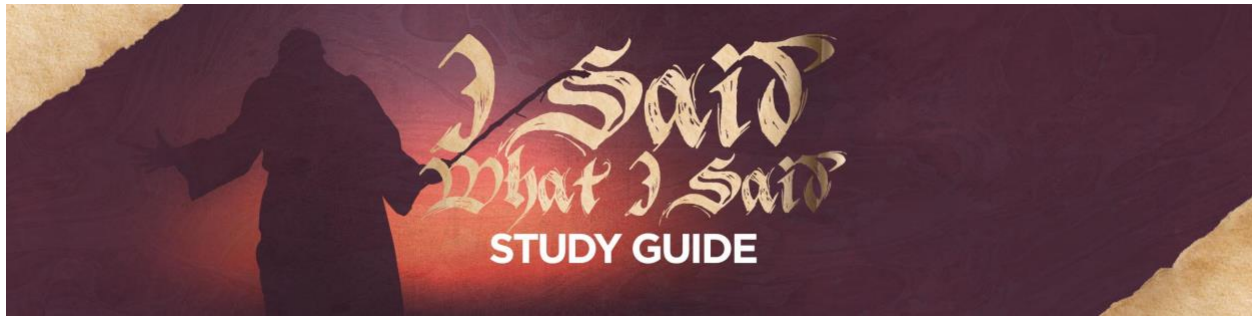
² Before the mountains were born
or you brought forth the whole world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

³ You turn people back to dust,
saying, “Return to dust, you mortals.”

⁴ A thousand years in your sight
are like a day that has just gone by,
or like a watch in the night.

¹² Teach us to number our days,
that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

¹³ Relent, Lord! How long will it be?
Have compassion on your servants.



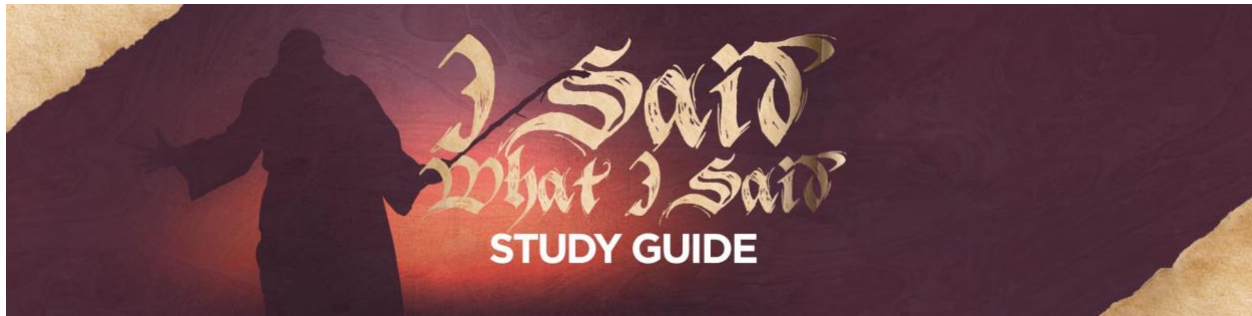
- 14 Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love,
that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.
- 15 Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us,
for as many years as we have seen trouble.
- 16 May your deeds be shown to your servants,
your splendor to their children.
- 17 May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us;
establish the work of our hands for us—
yes, establish the work of our hands.

2. REFLECT

[Click the image to go to our YouTube page for more content!]



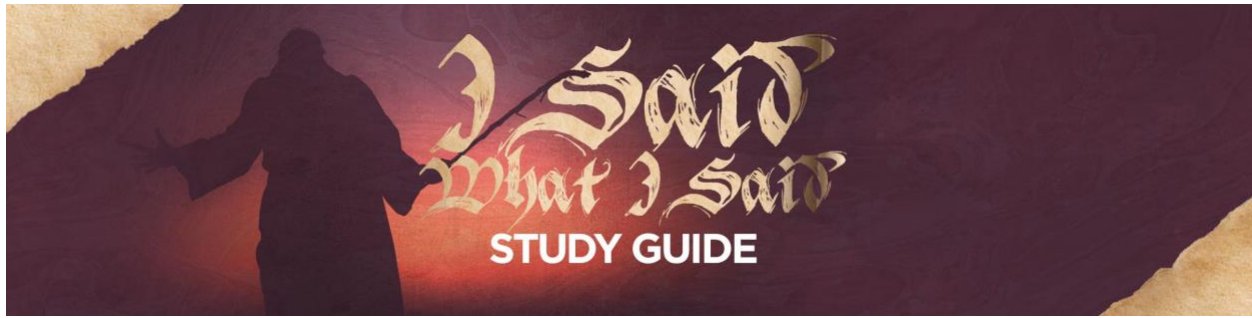
As a country, we have certainly experienced a difficult past four years. However, this past week has taken our country and our democracy to new highs, and new lows. Whether it was the historic and triumphant Democratic wins in Georgia, or the barbaric pro-Trump rioters scaling the walls of the capitol, we were once again able to witness the severity of the divide in this nation. And yet, we are still able to celebrate the various ways that God continues to show us that His truth and justice will always prevail!



This week our Senior Pastor Rev. Matthew L. Watley addressed the divide we witnessed and some of the systemic issues that caused it, as he continued his sermon series entitled, “I Said What I Said.” During this series, we are discussing the life, legacy, mission, and ministry of a biblical figure that knows all too well about injustice and a nation divided. We are studying Moses! One of the most prominent aspects of Moses’ life was when he stood up to a tyrannic ruler and system of oppression by liberating a population of people that had been enslaved and exploited for so long. And yet, just as they started to gain their God-given freedom and reap the blessings that God was bestowing on them, Pharaoh encouraged his men to go after them and try to undermine the monumental progress that they were making. *Does that sound familiar?*

In our lesson for this week entitled, “*Unscheduled Interventions*,” Pastor Watley reminds us that even in the midst of great opposition, God is able to intervene on our behalf in ways that we don’t even anticipate. In fact, oftentimes God uses moments when we are the underdog, underrated, and overlooked to intervene and demonstrate His sovereignty in our lives. For example, chaos ensued this week as our country continued to buckle under the perpetual weight of fascism, nationalism, and racism, to name a few. However, God intervened on the seemingly endless “Trumpism” by continuing to elevate a population that has historically been considered the underdog, underrated and overlooked. Not only did we see the confirmation of Kamala Harris as the Vice President Elect, the election of Raphael Warnock, and Georgia vote along Democratic party lines; but we also saw Stacy Abrams who was overlooked in 2018 when she ran for Governor in Georgia, turn around and be celebrated for helping to make this election season possible through her voter registration efforts.

This leads us to an important point that Pastor Watley urges us to consider: “Even if people don’t understand, don’t appreciate, or don’t agree with what you’re doing, know that the **God of Justice** will vindicate you in the end!” We also see this premise at work in our scripture for this week (Exodus 1:8-17). In this scripture, we find the new Pharaoh intentionally oppressing the Israelites because of **power, exploitation, and insecurity**. In verse 9 Pharaoh tells his people: “Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come, let us deal shrewdly with them.” He then devises a plan to kill all of the sons of Israel to make their tribe smaller. However the God of Justice makes an unscheduled intervention and comes to their aid. Verse 12 says, “But the more [the Egyptians] afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And [the Egyptians] were in dread of the children of Israel.” The more the external environment tried to diminish their existence, the more God elevated them. In addition to that, God used the midwives to help save Israel. Verse 17 says, “But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.” This was the same idea Moses’ mother Jochebed had when she put her son in a basket instead of letting him be killed. As Pastor mentions, she was a “Basket Case Believer” who was willing to fiercely protect God’s blessing by exhibiting her tremendous faith, determination, and obedience to God!



3. RESPOND

Introspective Questions

- What is this passage of scripture saying to you?
- Are you a “Basket Case Believer”? Are you willing to fiercely protect what God is birthing inside of you?

Discussion Questions

- How do you think the Egyptians felt when the Israelites continued to grow?
- Why do you think the midwives decided not to obey Pharaoh and kill the Israelite sons?