

Week 6: “Fair Weather Faith”

1. READ

Pastor Watley’s Scriptures: Exodus 14 : 29 – 31 New International Version (NIV)

²⁹ But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. ³⁰ That day the Lord saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. ³¹ And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.

Exodus 15 : 1 – 2 New International Version (NIV)

¹Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord:

“I will sing to the Lord,
for he is highly exalted.
Both horse and driver
he has hurled into the sea.

²“The Lord is my strength and my defense;
he has become my salvation.
He is my God, and I will praise him,
my father’s God, and I will exalt him.

Psalms 22 : 1 - 5 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

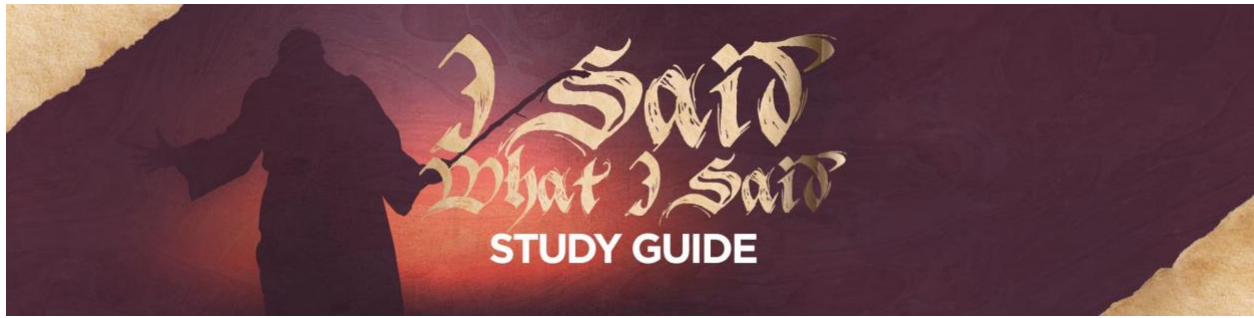
Why are you so far from saving me,
so far from my cries of anguish?

²My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,
by night, but I find no rest.

³Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;
you are the one Israel praises.

⁴In you our ancestors put their trust;
they trusted and you delivered them.

⁵To you they cried out and were saved;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.



2. REFLECT

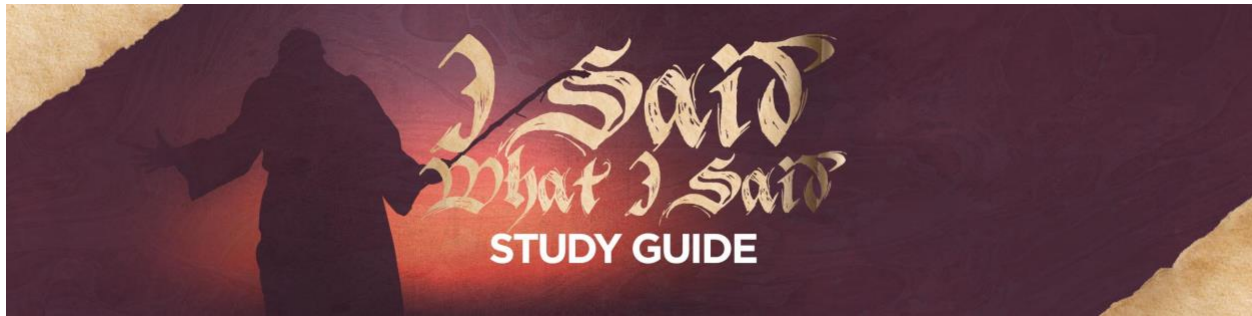
[Make sure to review this week's sermon!]



On this first Sunday in February, we are blessed to be able to take a moment to intentionally celebrate the rich history and legacy of African American people. Each week we have been learning about the life of Moses, and his legacy as the man who was instrumental in the liberation of the enslaved Israelites. Similarly, this month (and every month) we are blessed to honor and remember our ancestors that have overcome enslavement, oppression, and trauma by keeping their eyes fixed on the promised land.

Happy Black History Month Kingdom Fellowship!

This week, our Senior Pastor Rev. Matthew L. Watley continued his sermon series entitled “I Said What I Said.” Throughout this series, we have been exploring many of the defining moments that influenced Moses along his path. However, in our lesson for week six entitled “Fair Weather Faith,” Pastor Watley encourages us to also pay attention to the lessons we can learn from the Israelites. As they traversed land and sea, the Israelites had to demonstrate



tremendous faith amidst great uncertainty. And yet, this was not always easy for them to do!

In Pastor's selected scriptures for this week (Exodus 14:29-31 and Exodus 15:1-2), we find the Israelites at a celebratory moment in their faith journey. At this point, they had just been delivered out of bondage in Egypt, they were escorted through the Red Sea by the hand of God, *and* their Egyptian former enslavers were no longer going to be a threat to them. The Israelites were overjoyed by God's miracles and their faith matched their current circumstances. In fact, in chapter 14 verse 31, we are given a three-fold description of the nature of their faith. It says they: **1. Feared the Lord, 2. Put their trust in him, 3. And (trusted) in Moses his servant.**

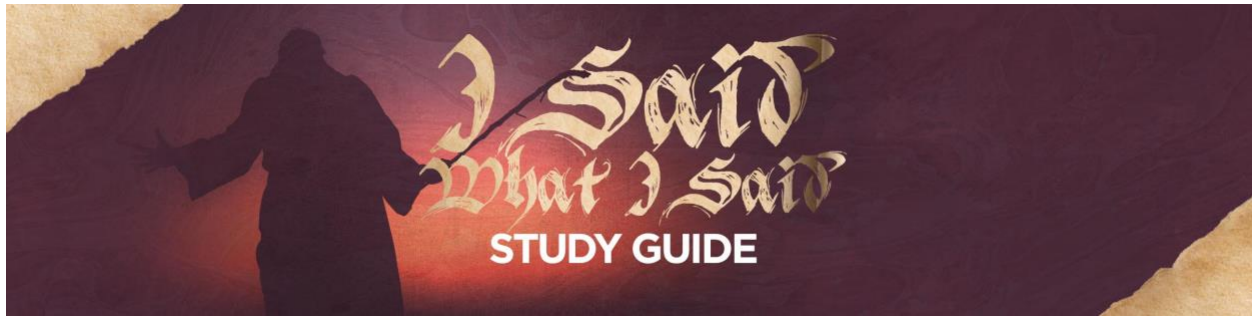
Chapter 15 continues with Moses and the Israelites singing praises to the Lord. They are cheerfully enjoying God's blessings and provision now that the conditions are favorable to them. However, as Pastor Watley reminds us, "some things are short lived." After a few verses of worship, the Israelites are again faced with conflict. Unfortunately, instead of responding to their adversity with faith, they groan and complain. In chapter 15 they encounter undrinkable, bitter water as they roam the desert. Their response is to "grumble against Moses" about their situation, only to have God use Moses to provide them with sweet water. God once again proved to the Israelites that He is faithful!

And yet, this did not cure the Israelites of their perpetual amnesia. In the very next chapter, the Israelites encounter another problem. They are now concerned with the lack of food in the desert. They quickly "grumble against Moses" again before they see that God was going to provide for them like He has done countless times before. God once again uses Moses to ensure their deliverance by sending manna and quail for them to eat. Believe it or not, the Israelites lose faith again shortly after. As we witness them go back and forth between faith and fear, Pastor Watley urges us to ask ourselves the important question: Do you have "fair weather faith?" Are you only able to truly have faith in God when everything is going in your favor?

It is important to note that the Israelites built a pattern of grumbling and complaining every time something went wrong. However, the problem is not that they expressed their concerns, the problem is that they *only* complained. As Pastor Watley points out, the Israelites did not move past their complaints to "express gratitude, confidence, adoration, or expectation in the power of God." Instead, they grumble and curse the very people that are going to help with their deliverance. This leads us to Pastor Watley's next important question:

Is your praise an expression of your feelings or is it an expression of your faith?

Faith and praise that is an expression of our feelings is always tied to our circumstances. However, we must root our faith and praise in the character of God that never fails!



3. RESPOND

Introspective Questions

- Do you have “fair weather faith?”
- Is your praise an expression of your feelings or is it an expression of your faith?

Discussion Questions

- Why do you think the Israelites chose to “grumble against Moses” instead of trusting God?
- How do you think Moses reacted to the Israelites’ fair weather faith?