

Weekly Bible Study group – March 31, 2010

Reflection by Bob Zurinsky (bob@spu.edu)

Psalm 22

Welcome to Spring Quarter! As you know, each quarter at group we study one book of the Bible. We're doing this so that, over time, we learn how to truly find our place in the big story of redemption that God is writing in the world. When we dwell in the text like this, it begins to slowly shape the ways that we think and act. How exciting.

This quarter we'll be focusing on the book of Psalms. This is a little bit different for us at group – for the last two quarters our texts (John and Revelation) have been more like stories that you can tell from beginning to end. But Psalms is different...it's not a story so much as a *song book*. Actually, that's exactly what it is. The book of Psalms was the "hymn book" that was compiled by the Israelite people a couple thousand years ago. Every psalm in this book is actually a song that was written to be sung in worship services, on special feast days, etc. Even though the melodies of these psalms have been lost somewhere in history, the words have survived. And what we find here is a group of songs that deeply embraces all aspects of human life. There are songs that talk about feeling lost, lonely, abused, joyful, thankful, hopeful – the whole range of what it means to be a human being trying to live a faithful life in a complicated world.

And that is why we're focusing on this particular text now: because we've already learned the big story about how God has conquered death and will one day return to restore our world. But as people caught "in between" those times, after Christ but before God's final victory, we live our lives as a mixture of fear, love, hope, distress, all of it. And in the book of Psalms we see that it's fine to feel and express it all before God. Because even though we're living in a sometimes painful and grey world, we can live faithfully with a hope that is bigger than all the crap we face. **And with tonight's text, Psalm 22, we see that Jesus did the same.**