

still waters

home church studies

Psalm 22.23-31

[Worship]

23 You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him; stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel! 24 For he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted; he did not hide his face from me, but heard when I cried to him. 25 From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear him. 26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD. May your hearts live forever! 27 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him. 28 For dominion belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations. 29 To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him. 30 Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord, 31 and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

Consider:

[Words]

There is an awesome inevitability about the cross for Jesus. Mark's gospel has offered a raft of Jesus' encounters with the authorities where he has declared for justice over against injustice, demonstrating that through exorcism, miracle, and story. Predicting his condemnation, trial, and judicial murder at the hands of the authorities he has challenged, Jesus nevertheless presages the triumph of God's saving justice by announcing that after three days he will rise again (Mark 8:31).

Few who had witnessed Roman executions could do anything but turn cold at the thought of crucifixion. Peter's scolding

reaction is as much born out of horror and fear as anything else. Jesus cannot now softpedal; he has asked the disciples for their perception of who he is (Mark 8:27-30); he has revealed the implication of being identified as the Son of Man, the figure in apocalyptic literature who will overthrow the powers (Daniel 7). Now, he must test who is for him—who will follow.

Calling the disciples and the crowds to listen, he publicly spells out the costliness of choosing the path of declaring the justice of God: deny yourself, take up your cross, follow me. The remainder of the gospel is an account of how this choice was to impact upon Jesus—his refusal to compromise with the imperial and religious authorities; his loyalty to the call to seek first the rule of God and God's saving justice (Matthew 6:33). Here is one who has not despised or disregarded the poverty of the poor, nor turned away his face, but has listened to the cry for help (Psalm 22:24).



[Scripture]

Mark 8.31-38

31 Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32 He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things." 34 He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. 36 For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? 37 Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? 38 Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."