

STATIONS OF THE CROSS Reflections by Jenny Hawke

11.HOPE

Jesus found himself executed between two criminals. One joined in the taunting of the crowd – but the other recognized that Jesus didn't deserve to die. He asked Jesus for mercy even after his death.

Jesus hadn't spoken much about Paradise, except in pictures. But he had spoken about what he called The Kingdom of Heaven – the unshakeable hope that God's plan for the world will be fully realised. By promising the thief that he would be with him today, Jesus was indicating that there is hope beyond death, and that hope started there and then.

'One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." And he said to him, "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.'" Luke 23 v 39 – 43

This image for hope shows the ongoing path after the crucifixion. Jesus said to the thief that this for him was not the end. The journey, the hope, goes on. There is more than this barbaric end. There is the onward journey towards home. Jenny Hawke

From the Cross, Jesus spoke about something that was waiting on the other side of death. It's quite normal to sometimes doubt that there is life after death, or something called Heaven, but when you do wonder about it, remember the promise of Jesus to a thief who in his last moments, saw the truth.



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