



## **IHL Devotionals 2024-25: Semis**

### **Bible story: The men on the crosses**

*As we approach Easter, we're taking a look at part of the scripture that precedes Jesus' resurrection. As we read this text, try to put yourself in the shoes of the other men in the story.*

#### **Luke 23:32-43 (NIV)**

32 Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. 33 When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. 34 Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

35 The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.”

36 The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar 37 and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.”

38 There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

40 But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? 41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

42 Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

43 Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

#### **Takeaway**

We are sinners who are saved by Jesus’ willing acceptance of death on the cross.

#### **Questions**

1. We know that Jesus performed numerous miracles. We've reflected on several this season. With his power, he could have come down from the cross. But Jesus chose not to. Why do you think that was?
2. One of the men on a cross acknowledges that he committed crimes, and that being crucified is a just condemnation for his deeds (v.41). Yet, Jesus tells the criminal that he will join him in paradise. What does this reveal to us about salvation, and God's mercy?
3. Let's reflect on the other men in the story. What differentiated the two of them? Perhaps we also might have done things in the past we aren't proud of. If criminals who were literally crucified weren't unworthy of God's grace, none of us are too far gone, either.

### **Closing and prayer requests**

Lord, thank you for being merciful. You see our sins and imperfections and offer us eternity with you anyway. Help us flee from our sinful ways. Amen.