

Luke 23:42

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

Analysis

Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom (Κύριε, μνήσθητί μου ὅταν ἔλθῃς εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν σου)—In the Greek, *mnēsthēti* means 'remember,' but carries the Hebrew sense of covenant faithfulness and active intervention, not mere mental recall. This dying criminal, witnessing Jesus crucified as 'King of the Jews,' perceives the kingdom's reality beyond the cross.

Calling Jesus Kyrios (Lord) acknowledges divine authority. The thief's theology is stunning: while religious leaders mocked, this outcast grasped that Christ's kingdom would come after death, that crucifixion was the pathway to enthronement. His simple request—**remember me**—echoes Hannah (1 Samuel 1:11) and anticipates the New Covenant promise: 'their sins and iniquities will I remember no more' (Hebrews 10:17). Faith at its purest—no time for works, no religious credentials, just grace received.

Historical Context

Roman crucifixion was designed for maximum humiliation and deterrence. Victims were displayed at major roads or city gates, often with placards stating their crimes. Two thieves (Greek *lēstai*—'bandits' or insurrectionists, not petty criminals) flanked Jesus, fulfilling Isaiah 53:12 ('numbered with the transgressors'). One thief initially mocked (Matthew 27:44) but then repented—conversion in extremis.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What does the thief's faith reveal about the sufficiency of Christ's grace apart from religious works or credentials?
2. How does this criminal's recognition of Jesus's kingdom challenge your understanding of what it means to see Christ as King?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἔλεγεν τῷ Ἰησοῦ μνήσθητί μου Κύριε, ὅταν
And **he said** ^{G3588} **unto Jesus** **remember** **me** **Lord** **when**
G2532 G3004 G2424 G3415 G3450 G2962 G3752

ἔλθης ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου
thou comest **into** ^{G3588} **kingdom** **thy**
G2064 G1722 G932 G4675

Additional Cross-References

Acts 16:31 (References Jesus): And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Luke 12:8 (Parallel theme): Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:

Acts 20:21 (References Jesus): Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:1 (References Jesus): Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

Luke 18:13 (Parallel theme): And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

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