



SIEBENQUELL

Heaven so close



Many Christians are no longer familiar with the liturgical seasons of the year - a pity, because they harbour treasures for our souls. Let us look at the past 40 days: we tried to explore what resurrection means based on the stories of the people of the first hour, who repeatedly had surprising encounters with the Living One. We recognised how even our heads and hearts are only slowly and sometimes very tentatively able to absorb the message of resurrected, transformed life. Willi Bruners once put this into words many years ago:

easterly

*secured graves
but he leaves
traces in the dust
that show the way
into the open*

*the shared bread
tastes like
new beginnings
even if
its appearance*

is limited

w.bruners 5/2011

This is written in our hearts, as it was once written in the hearts of the disciples, that we can discover traces of the Risen One that entice us onto new paths, that we can share bread with one another and sense the dawning - no more, but also no less!

And today we are told:

»So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it. « (Mk 16, 19-20)

For many years, this sounded to me like farewell, like distance, and the powerful songs that accompanied it intensified this feeling.

Today I am going to delve deeper into the Bible's account of Jesus being taken up to heaven. In the Acts of the Apostles, it says that Jesus was lifted up before the eyes of the disciples and a cloud drew him away from their gaze. And while they could not take their eyes off him, 'two men stood by them in white robes and said, »Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven?« Although Jesus now leaves the disciples behind, he does not leave them alone or without purpose and direction for life. It is not heaven, but the earth that is our living space, where we create what is possible. And Jesus entrusts us with this earth, a task for which we are ideally equipped. The Easter experiences that W. Bruners so delicately puts into words are and remain within us.

The ascension of Jesus speaks of closeness, not distance. How wonderful the last words of the Gospel of Matthew sound:

»And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.« And Luke describes Jesus' ascension as follows: »Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and [q] returned to Jerusalem with great joy.« No pain of parting, but emotion and then great joy! They returned blessed - heaven is within them. From now on, they no longer see Jesus as they knew him before, but they find him in so many ways and still bear witness to him today.

I wish this blessing for all of us: that we do not stare at the heavens, but experience the blessing of his presence in our everyday lives. That is what each of us longs for when we get up in the morning and must navigate the sea of our lives anew. Because waves of worries and fears are crashing around us, stability and orientation are hard to find, relationships are haemorrhaging and power games are spoiling the joy of work, solidarity is far away and so is peace. I hope that we can then become silent and feel the blessing of the Risen One, who is incomprehensibly close to us as the Heavenly One, in us, that we experience him here on earth in the footsteps we follow, the soft sounds that reach our ears and in gentle touches that give life. »And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.«

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