

## Accomplished Plan of Salvation (4)

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果たされた救いの計画 4

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### Matthew

27:45 From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon.

27:46 About three o'clock, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eli, eli, lema sabachthani?", which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

27:47 When some of the people standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling for Elijah."

27:48 So one of the men ran off at once, took a sponge, and soaked it in some sour wine. Then he put it on a stick and offered Jesus a drink.

27:49 But the others kept saying, "Wait! Let's see if Elijah will come and save him."

27:50 Then Jesus cried out with a loud voice again and died.

27:51 Suddenly, the curtain in the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom, the earth shook, rocks were split open,

27:52 tombs were opened, and many saints who had died were brought back to life.

27:53 After his resurrection, they came out of their tombs and went into the Holy City and appeared to many people.

27:54 When the centurion and those guarding Jesus with him saw the earthquake and the other things that were taking place, they were terrified and said, "This man certainly was the Son of God!"

[International Standard Version]

### Luke

24:13 On the same day, two of Jesus' followers were walking to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.

24:14 They were talking with each other about all these things that had taken place.

24:15 While they were discussing and analyzing what had happened, Jesus himself approached and began to walk with them,

24:16 but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him.

24:17 He asked them, "What are you discussing with each other as you're walking along?" They stood still and looked gloomy.

24:18 The one whose name was Cleopas answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who doesn't know what happened there in the past few days?"

24:19 He asked them, "What things?" They answered him, "The events involving Jesus of

Nazareth, who was a prophet, mighty in what he said and did before God and all the people, 24:20 and how our high priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and had him crucified.

24:21 But we kept hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel. What is more, this is now the third day since these things occurred.

24:22 Even some of our women have startled us by what they told us. They were at the tomb early this morning

24:23 and didn't find his body there, so they came back and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who were saying that he was alive.

24:24 Then some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said. However, they didn't see him."

24:25 Then Jesus told them, "O, how foolish you are! How slow you are to believe everything the prophets said!

24:26 The Messiah had to suffer these things and then enter his glory, didn't he?"

24:27 Then, beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them all the passages of Scripture about himself.

24:28 As they came near the village where the two men were headed, Jesus acted as though he were going farther.

24:29 But they strongly urged him, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the daylight is nearly gone." So he went in to stay with them.

24:30 While he was at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed it, broke it in pieces, and gave it to them.

24:31 Then their eyes were opened, and they knew who he was. And he vanished from them.

Jesus is the one who guides us from darkness to light, from slavery to liberation and from death to life.

### Acts

2:32 It was this very Jesus whom God raised, and of that we are all witnesses.

There are a number of miracles recorded in the Bible. However, the greatest miracle of all is, needless to say, the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus is the most significant incident that happened throughout the history of the world.

The resurrection of Jesus is the greatest proof that Jesus is the only way to get to salvation. The resurrection of Jesus is the most magnificent revelation of the Lord God. Of course, it is the greatest and the most important truth of the Gospel.

For us believers, the resurrection of Jesus is more important than anything. Jesus talked about his death to his disciples repeatedly. And when he did, he never forgot to refer to his resurrection too.

**Matthew**

16:21 From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he would have to go to Jerusalem and suffer a great deal because of the elders, the high priests, and the scribes. Then he would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised.

Disciples could not imagine these things would happen. They did not want to believe it. However, it was not just that he was going to be killed, but he also told them that he would absolutely come back to life three days later.

Unfortunately, disciples did not believe it. What if they knew that they were going to see him again three days after he was killed? What if they had a conviction that they would see him again in just two days, in one day or even a few hours? However, none of them could believe that.

Nevertheless, Jesus resurrected. He is still alive. It was only Jesus who came back to life from death. The Lord truly resurrected, as the people of those days joyously confessed.

"It was this very Jesus whom God raised, and of that we are all witnesses." More than 500 people met Jesus after the resurrection. In most cases, just one or two witnesses are enough to prove that something is true. Then if we have more than 500 witnesses, there can be no reason to doubt it.

Jesus has resurrected. Period. While Jesus was in this world, he clearly stated that he was the promised savior, the son of God. And as the son of God, Jesus has accomplished a powerful task which could only be performed by God the Creator.

However, Pharisees and religious leaders of those days could not even imagine that Jesus was son of God and they refused to believe it. They asked for evidence that Jesus was truly the promised savior. Jesus answered them with these words;

**Matthew**

12:39 But he replied to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves a sign. Yet no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah,

12:40 because just as Jonah was in the stomach of the sea creature for three days and three nights, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights."

This was the answer Jesus gave to them. After all, Jesus said that if he resurrected, it would prove that he was the promised God of salvation. As he clearly predicted in these words, his resurrection itself was the proof of his being the promised savior, son of God.

And Jesus actually came back to life. How could he? Because he was the son of God. The resurrection of Jesus was also the proof that he bore all our sins. If Jesus did not resurrect, it would have made him a liar, who died because of his own sin after all and there would have been no salvation for us.

The resurrection of Jesus was, at the same time, the victory over death. Because Jesus committed no sin at all, death had no power over him. Paul wrote to believers of those days;

"If Jesus has not been raised, our preaching is worthless and so is our faith. If Jesus has not resurrected, your faith is absolutely meaningless and you are still imprisoned by your sins. If so, even those who have died believing in Jesus are lost. If we have set our hopes on the Messiah in this life only, we deserve more pity than any other people." Paul sent these words to his fellow believers.

However, Jesus came back from death. This is our joy, foundation and strength. I would like to discuss with you briefly the evidences of the resurrection of Jesus. There are 12 facts recorded in the Bible that prove the resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus can be supported by testimonies of those who witnessed Jesus after he came back to life.

Let us begin with the first evidence. Jesus showed himself to a woman, Mary Magdalene, who was once possessed by evil spirits.

**Mark**

16:9 After Jesus had risen early on the first day of that week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had driven out seven demons.

It is not hard to imagine how much she grieved and despaired when Jesus was crucified and died. She lost the hope to live and must have felt so desperate and lonely. However, she restored her hope once again through an encounter with the resurrected Jesus. She felt truly thankful to him.

Second Evidence. Again in Jerusalem, he showed himself to some other women.

**Matthew**

28:8 So they quickly left the tomb, terrified but also ecstatic, and ran to tell Jesus' disciples.

28:9 Suddenly, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" They went up to him, took hold of his feet, and worshiped him.

Evidence three. Peter saw Jesus. It is briefly explained in the chapter 15 of the First Corinthians, which is also known as the book of resurrection.

Evidence four. Two disciples met Jesus in Emmaus. This wonderful incident is described from the verse

15 of Luke, chapter 24, as we read at the beginning of this meeting.

Luke

24:31 Then their eyes were opened, and they knew who he was.

Fifthly, Jesus appeared to ten disciples excluding Thomas again in Jerusalem.

John

20:19 It was the evening of the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Jesus came and stood among them. He told them, "Peace be with you."

20:24 Thomas, one of the Twelve (called the Twin), wasn't with them when Jesus came.

Sixthly, Jesus showed himself in front of 11 disciples now including Thomas.

John

20:26 A week later, his disciples were again inside, and Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were shut, Jesus came, stood among them, and said, "Peace be with you."

20:27 Then he told Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Take your hand, and put it into my side. Stop doubting, but believe."

20:28 Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

20:29 Jesus told him, "Is it because you have seen me that you have believed? How blessed are those who have never seen me and yet have believed!"

Evidence seven. The resurrected Jesus appeared to seven disciples while they were fishing in the lake of Galilee. This encounter is explained in detail in chapter 21 of John, verses 1 to 24.

Evidence eight. He appeared to 11 disciples on top of the hill in Galilee.

Matthew

28:16 The eleven disciples went into Galilee to the hillside to which Jesus had directed them.

28:17 When they saw him, they worshiped him, though some had doubts.

28:18 Then Jesus came up and told them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Evidence nine. Jesus appeared to more than 500 brothers. We don't need more evidence if we have more than 500 witnesses, do we?

1 Corinthians

15:6 After that, he was seen by more than 500 brothers at one time.

Evidence ten. Jesus then met James.

1 Corinthians

15:7 Next he was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

Eleven. Jesus lived with his 11 disciples for a while before he was raised to heaven.

Acts

1:3 After he had suffered, he had shown himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during a period of 40 days and telling them about the kingdom of God.

1:4 While he was meeting with them, he ordered them, "Don't leave Jerusalem. Instead, wait for what the Father has promised, about which you heard me speak.

1:5 For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit a few days from now."

1:6 Now those who had gathered together began to ask Jesus, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?"

1:7 He answered them, "It is not for you to know what times or periods the Father has fixed by his own authority.

1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

1:9 After saying this, Jesus was taken up while those who had gathered together were watching, and a cloud took him out of their sight.

Evidence 12. Jesus later appeared to Paul too.

Acts

9:1 Meanwhile, still spewing death threats against the Lord's disciples, Saul went to the high priest.

9:2 He asked him for letters to take with him to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any men or women belonging to the Way, he might bring them in chains to Jerusalem.

9:3 As Saul traveled along and was approaching Damascus, a light from heaven suddenly flashed around him.

9:4 He dropped to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

9:5 He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The voice said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.

How much was he astonished by the word in the last verse? What did he feel? It cannot be expressed in language. It was far beyond his imagination that Jesus was still alive.

The people I mentioned in this sermon are strong witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus. However, there is something even more encouraging; each one of the saved people living today has experienced the power of resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Each one of us is the living proof of the resurrection of Jesus. Those who confessed their arrogance to Jesus and obtained the forgiveness of their sins from Jesus, not only believe in the resurrection of Jesus but also serve as witnesses of the resurrection.

To believe in Jesus is to accept Jesus. All those who have accepted Jesus will be allowed to confess this way; "The Lord is alive. He listens to my prayer. I can entrust anything to him. Jesus is all in all to me." This should be our testimony.

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