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Jesus' Last Days on Earth

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The Promise of Jesus

Jesus clearly stated, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me will live, even though they die."²³ This is a new existence which will never end. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, God's plan to save humankind was complete. Now and forevermore, as Jesus repeatedly emphasized, all glory, honour and praise be to God on High. Amen.

23. John 11:25

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**Historical facts
-check them out!**

Jesus' death and resurrection were amazing. God directed that eye witnesses would record all these events. They are written in the Bible and are documented in other historical works of that era. God declares that Jesus is the only way for people to reach him.²¹ By repentance and accepting Jesus' sacrifice, the punishment for my sin is paid.²² Finding forgiveness, I can receive new life from God and live a new and holy life by the power of Almighty God.

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Who is Jesus?

Have you ever wondered who Jesus was? Have you been fascinated by the accounts of him: his miracles, healings & bringing the dead back to life again? Since you know that he is alive in heaven now, are you looking forward to his return to earth one day? Have you ever thought about his last days of life on earth? This booklet briefly sets out the events of 2000 years ago. They are accurately retold from the Bible.

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Jesus completes his service

Jesus set off for Jerusalem. He knew that in a few days his enemies would kill him there. He was 33 years old. For the last three years he had served the people, preached repentance and taught about the Kingdom of God. He showed his authority as he cast out demons, healed all kinds of diseases, and even raised the dead. But now he had one final job to do...

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Jesus goes back to heaven

Jesus led a group of followers out of Jerusalem. He told them to go to all the people of the world. They must explain his death and resurrection to them. Lifting up his hands he blessed them. As they watched, he was taken up and a cloud hid him from their sight. Two angels came and told the followers, "This same Jesus will come back again, just as you have seen him go."²⁰

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Eyewitness accounts

For 40 days Jesus showed himself to hundreds of people. He ate, drank and talked with them. His resurrected body was similar, yet different from his first body. He taught them many more important things. God had appointed him king over the whole world to judge all people. "All those who do not know God and do not obey Jesus will be punished with eternal destruction."¹⁹

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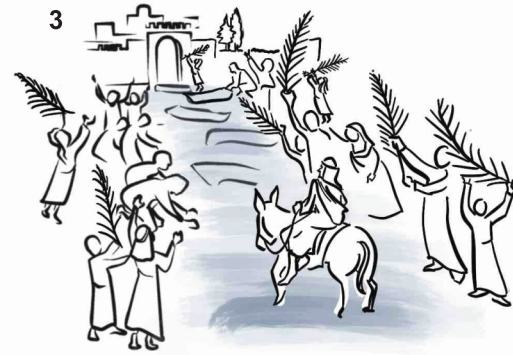
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A royal welcome

Jesus chose a donkey's colt to ride on. He rode the little donkey into the city. Crowds went out to meet him. Joyously they waved palm branches and threw their cloaks down for the donkey to walk on. Over and over they chanted, "Save us, save us."¹ Jesus was about to save them, but in a surprising way - according to God's plan.

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God's desire and plan

Jesus knew all the ancient holy scriptures: the revelations of God in the Torah, Prophets and Psalms. According to the prophecies, God planned to send a saviour. He would take the punishment for people's sins, and would also become king over the whole world. Jesus claimed to be this special person that God sent from heaven for all the people of the world. Jesus would fulfil prophecies, not abrogate them.

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Understanding God's plan

Then Jesus opened their minds to understand. They had made a big mistake. They thought Jesus would become a political king. But he had come to earth to set up God's kingdom in people's hearts. Through his death people could receive these things:

- (1) Forgiveness from God
- (2) Relationship with God, ie closeness
- (3) God's power to stop sinning.

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Jesus appears to his disciples

The disciples were gathered in a locked room. Suddenly Jesus appeared in their midst. "Peace be with you,"¹⁸ he said. They were startled and frightened. They thought they saw a ghost. Jesus said to them, "Why do you doubt? Look at my hands and feet. Touch me and see. A ghost does not have flesh and bones."

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Jesus' last meal

Jesus and his disciples were eating the Passover meal. Jesus showed his disciples what was about to happen. He broke the bread, tore it and said, "This is my body." Then he took the cup and said, "This is my blood, shed for many for the forgiveness of sins."² This was now the fourth time Jesus foretold his death. He told when, how, where and why he would die, and also that after his death he would come back to life.

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Jesus' enemies

Many religious leaders were against Jesus. They were jealous of his power and popularity. His teaching was different and they didn't want their religion corrupted. They loved their religion and customs above God. In their hatred they made plans to kill him. Judas, one of Jesus' disciples, became greedy for money. He went to the religious leaders. They gave him money to betray Jesus.

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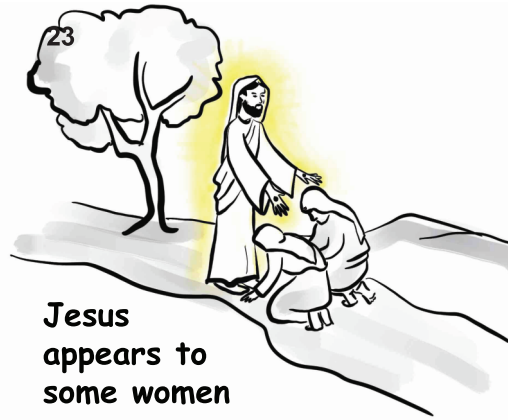
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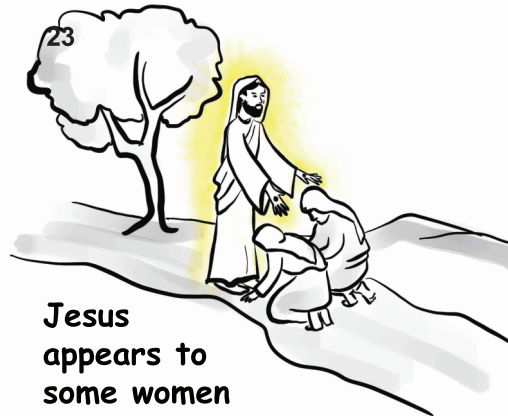
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Jesus appears to some women

Jesus had risen! All his words were true! This was beyond these women's imagination. They hurried away to tell others. Suddenly, Jesus appeared and greeted them. They clasped his feet and worshipped him. "Don't be afraid," he said to them. "Go, tell my disciples."¹⁷

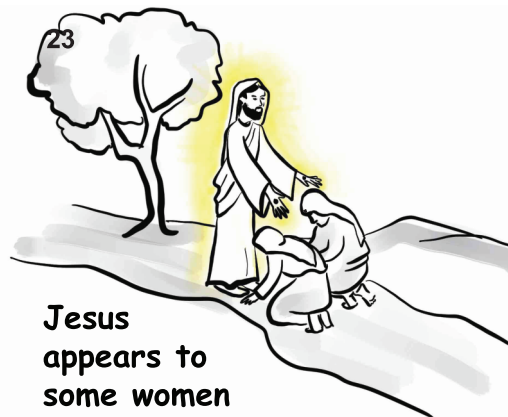
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**Grave clothes intact
but the body gone!**

Some women came to the tomb to put spices on his body. On arrival they saw two angels sitting inside. One angel said to them, "Don't be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here. He has risen, just as he said. Come and see."¹⁶ They saw the place where he had been lying. Inside were the linen cloths, bound, but very empty.

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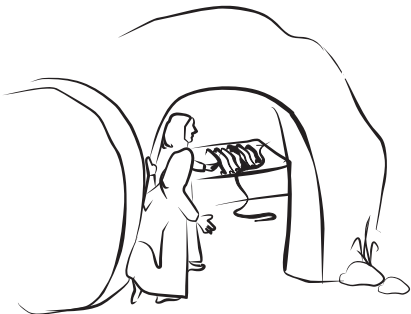


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Healing his enemy

During the night Jesus was praying in a garden. Judas led a group of soldiers there. With swords and clubs they came to arrest him. Another one of Jesus' disciples tried to defend Jesus. He drew his sword and cut off the religious leader's servant's ear. Jesus touched the servant's ear, healed him, and rebuked the disciple, "Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword."³

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In the religious court

The soldiers took Jesus to the religious court. The religious leaders couldn't find a single fault with him. He had never been cruel to anyone or deceived them. Rather, he only used his power for the good of others. Everyone knew he was a perfect man. Finally the high priest charged him under oath and said, "Are you the Christ, the Son of God?" Jesus said, "Yes, I am."⁴

4. Matthew 26:63-64

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An angel rolls the stone away

On the third day, very early in the morning, God's mighty power raised Jesus back to life. God had accepted his sacrifice. Another terrible earthquake shook the land. A mighty angel came to roll the stone away so that people could enter and see the empty tomb. The angel looked like flashing lightning.¹⁵ His clothes were brilliant white. In fear, the guards shook and fell like dead men.

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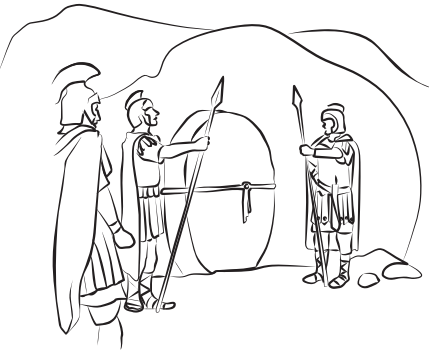


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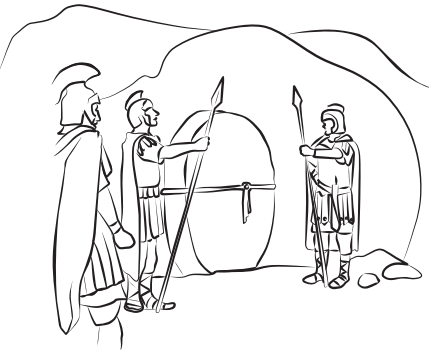


Guards stationed at the tomb

Jesus' enemies had not forgotten his promise, that he would be raised back to life on the third day. So they made his grave very secure. They sealed the stone entrance. Guards were stationed outside the tomb.¹⁴ No one could enter or exit.

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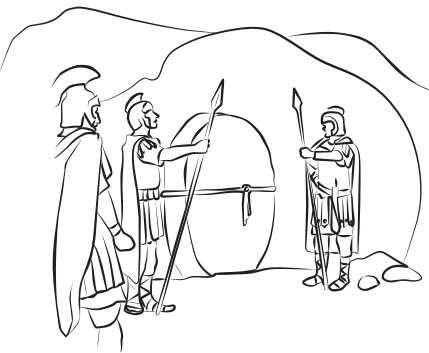


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Prophecy to be king and judge

Jesus went on to say more interesting things: in the future they would see him again. He would be sitting at the right hand of God Almighty and coming on the clouds of heaven. Jesus was claiming to be the special king whom many prophets had written about, the one whom God had appointed to rule the whole world, whose kingdom would never end.

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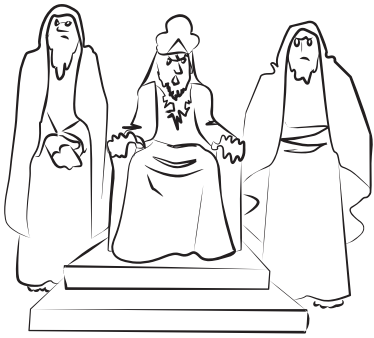
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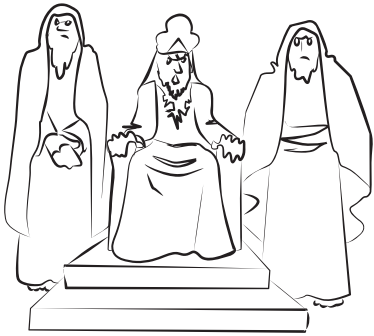


Blasphemy!

Hearing this, the high priest tore his clothes in rage and said, "Blasphemy! He is worthy of death!"⁵ They spat on his face and mocked him. They struck him with their fists. But Jesus kept silent. Things were happening just as Jesus said they would. Things were happening just as God had said through the prophets. God was working out a special plan.

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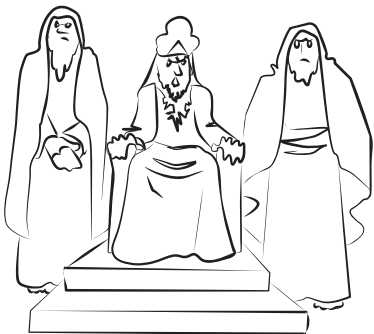


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Burying the body

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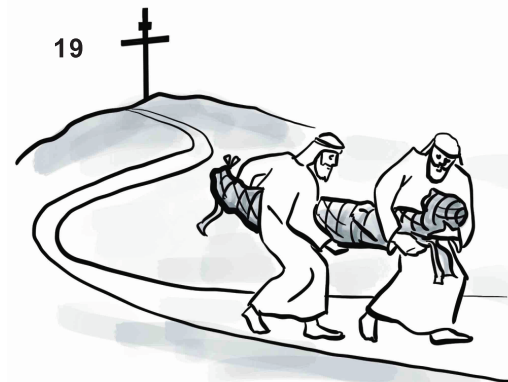
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Jesus' special mission completed



At that moment a terrible earthquake shook the ground. The rocks split and tombs broke open. Terrified, the guards exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God."¹³ The bystanders beat their chests and went away. Experienced soldiers confirmed his death. They pierced his side with a sharp spear. Out came blood and water. His enemies were completely satisfied that he was dead.

13. Matthew 27:54



Innocent but condemned!

Next they took him to the government court. Pilate, the judge, found Jesus completely innocent. But the angry crowd repeatedly shouted, "Crucify him!"⁶ Pilate was afraid of a riot. Compromising, he gave the death sentence. Roman soldiers carried out the orders. They gave him 39 lashes and put a crown on his head - but it was made of thorns.

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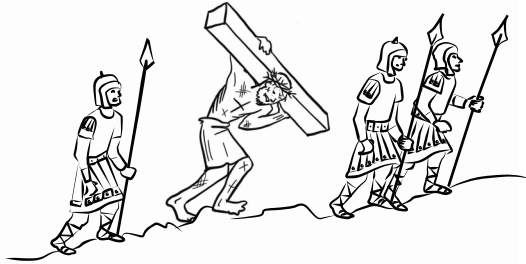


Innocent but condemned!

Next they took him to the government court. Pilate, the judge, found Jesus completely innocent. But the angry crowd repeatedly shouted, "Crucify him!"⁶ Pilate was afraid of a riot. Compromising, he gave the death sentence. Roman soldiers carried out the orders. They gave him 39 lashes and put a crown on his head - but it was made of thorns.

6. Matthew 27:20-23

12

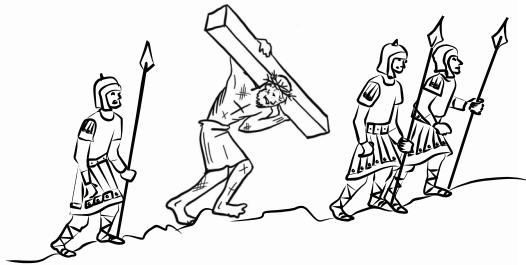


"Father, forgive them"

Jesus had to carry part of his own heavy cross. The soldiers led him to a place called 'The Skull'. They nailed his hands and feet to the wooden cross. Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them for they don't know what they are doing."⁷ Many people watched as the soldiers lifted him up to die. His own mother, Mary, was very close by. He spoke to her. A mother knows her son.

7. Luke 23:34

12

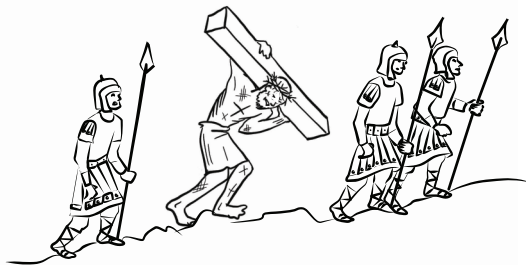


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God sent a complete sacrifice

God's plan was that Jesus would be the Saviour. God sent him from heaven to earth and gave him a body. He lived a completely perfect life, like no other. He gave his body to be a sacrifice for sin. He paid the price to redeem people. Finally, at 3pm, he cried out, "It is finished."¹¹ Father, into your hands I commit my spirit."¹² Then he gave up his life.

11. John 19:30; 12. Luke 23:46

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Animal sacrifice is insufficient

God warns that the wages of sin is death. His principle is that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. That's why sacrifice is necessary. An animal dies in our place. But killing an animal does not give us closeness with God. Animal sacrifice is insufficient; thus it is repeated over and over again. We need a perfect sacrifice that can bring us close to God. There's not a perfect sacrifice in the whole world. Where can we find a perfect sacrifice?

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Between two robbers

Two robbers were crucified with him: one on his right side, the other on his left. They were mocking Jesus with the crowd. Then one thief realised who Jesus really was. He stopped mocking and said, "Remember me when you come into your kingdom."⁸

Jesus gave him a wonderful promise, "Today, you will be with me in paradise."⁹

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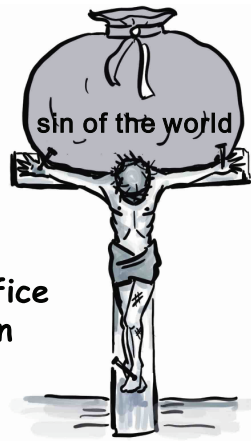
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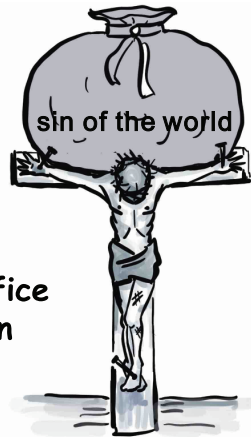


**Sacrifice
for sin**

Jesus was hung on the cross at 9 in the morning. From noon to 3 in the afternoon darkness was over the land. In agony, Jesus cried out, "My God, why have you forsaken me?"¹⁰ He was taking all the sin of the world on himself. According to God's plan and purpose, Jesus was bearing the punishment for sin. He was not dying for his own sin. He willingly gave his own life as a sacrifice for you and me.

10. Matthew 27:46

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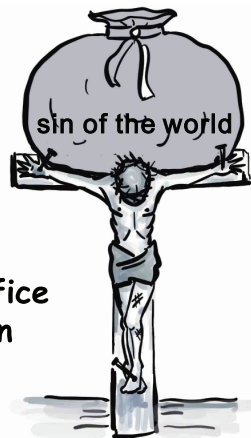


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- to receive forgiveness

Sacrifice is meant to give us closeness: closeness with whom? God, our creator. Why are we not close to the holy God? It is because of sin deep in our hearts. Our good works and religious duties never take our sin away. God commanded animal sacrifice to show us what is needed. In sacrifice a substitute dies in place of the sinner. The substitute takes the punishment for our sin so that God can forgive us.

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