

“It is finished”. That’s what Jesus said before He gave up His spirit. Before He died on the cross He said “It is finished.”

There are a lot of things He could have been referring to.

Ever wonder just what He was talking about? Was it His life on earth? Was it what He came to do? Was He talking about the law with its 613 rules and regulations? Was it trying to attain righteousness by one’s own actions? Was it being separated from God?

What was He talking about? And what was finished? Was it something temporary or was something permanent? Was it something finished for Him? Or was it something finished for you and me?

So many things it could have been. Was He talking about one specific event or one specific subject?

Or was He referring to a number of events and subjects?

What do **you** think Jesus meant? Did you ever think about that? Have you reached a conclusion about what He meant?

We’re going to read this particular passage in the gospels.

I thought the words “It is finished” would’ve been recorded in each of the gospels. But I didn’t find them in Matthew, Mark, or Luke. Only in John. But then I remember the relationship John had with Jesus so I’m not kind of surprised that John was the only one that put that in there.

John 19:28-30 “After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.” A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “**It is finished**,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.”

There are several things in these verses that are interesting when taken in context with something else.

We read the these verses in the ESV and it said “After this.” But after what? What just happened? What had just been said?

If we want to understand this, we need to read the verses just before. Then we'll find what the scripture is talking about. And what the scripture means.

John 19:25-27 (I'm reading from the NET bible this time), "Now standing beside Jesus' cross were His mother, His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene. So when Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing there, He said to His mother, "Woman, look, here is your son!" He then said to His disciple, "Look, here is your mother!" From that very time the disciple took her into his own home."

So, it was **after** Jesus told John to look after His mother the gospel says, "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished..."

In vs. 25 the women mentioned are Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene. One bible note I read said Mary's sister was Mary, the wife of Cleopas. That means there were three women named Mary. Another note I read said Mary's sister was actually Salome. The note also said to have two sisters, both named Mary, would be highly unlikely.

When Jesus had been in the Garden of Gethsemane He had felt totally abandoned by God His Father. You can learn more about this when you listen to the podcast *If It IS Possible...If It's NOT Possible*.

So here we have Jesus hanging on the cross. He had been abandoned by almost everyone He knew. John, the apostle "who Jesus loved" was there as well as the three Mary's and Salome.

Jesus felt very alone. He said to His mother, "Woman, look, here is your son!" He then said to John, "Look, here is your mother." And then it says, "From that very time the disciple took her into his own home".

Jesus had been totally abandoned by His Father. And then He gave away His mother to John. Now He was without His Father. And He was without His mother.

He was alone! Now totally alone!

And then vs. 28 says, "After this..." After He had been abandoned by His Father, after He had given away His mother, He then said, "I am thirsty".

Is “I am thirsty” significant? It might be. Maybe we don’t realize how much. How could it be significant? All Jesus was saying was He was thirsty.

That’s what I thought in the past anyway. But I believe the Lord has revealed something to me.

Let’s look at what the gospels are saying about this incident.

Matt. 27:48 “Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to Him to drink”.

Mark 15:36 “Then someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to Him to drink...”

Luke 23:36 “The soldiers also mocked Him, coming up and offering Him sour wine”.

John 19:28-29 “Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so the scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, ‘I am thirsty.’ A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips.”

The four gospels are saying He was offered sour wine. Did He drink the sour wine? We would think He did. And why not? He had said He was thirsty.

They lifted a sponge of sour wine up to Him. But did He drink of it?

We need to read the scriptures to find out.

Matthew 27:46-47, 49 “About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out with a loud voice, ‘Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?’ (which means ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’) When some of those standing there heard this, they said, ‘He’s calling Elijah.’” But the others said, ‘Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him.’”

Mark 15:37 “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take Him down.”

Luke 23 Interesting. It doesn’t say He said anything after He was offered the sour wine.

John 19:30 “When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished,’ and He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.”

When we look up the Greek word for “received” we find it doesn’t mean Jesus drank the wine. He had been offered the wine but we don’t know if He drank it or not.

Jesus had said He was thirsty. He was most likely wanting and needing water. After the beating and all He had gone through He was probably dehydrated.

Water was what He needed. Sour wine was not. I think when the sponge touched His lips he turned His head away. He didn’t want the sour wine.

There are two reasons why I think this: First, sour wine had a stupefying effect. Second, it would have clouded His faculties.

Jesus knew He was but one breath away from dying. If He had have drank the wine His body may have tried to live a little longer. And if He had lived a little longer, He then might have slipped quietly from life to death. Life would have been TAKEN from Him. Instead He refused the wine knowing He was about to die. Jesus didn’t want to have His life TAKEN from Him; He was going to GIVE UP His life.

What was Jesus aware of at this point?

Everything He came down from heaven to do on earth, He had done.
Everything prophesied He was going to do on earth, He had done.
Everything He had been born to accomplish on earth, He had done.
Every detail of His betrayal, arrest, beating, and crucifixion on earth, had been done.

He had completed the assignment laid out for Him to do. There was only one thing He hadn’t done. Only one thing left to do.

And that was to die. To die on that cross.

The NIV says, “When He had received the sour wine, Jesus said, ‘It is finished!’. With that He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.”

He had finished what He came to do. Let's look up the Greek to see what the word "finished" means.

In the Strong's Concordance the Greek word for finished is *teleo*. It means, and I quote, "to bring to a close, to finish, to end; to perform, execute, complete, fulfill; with special reference to the subject matter, to carry out the contents of a command; with reference also to the form, to do just as commanded, and generally speaking involving the notion of time; to perform the last act which completes a process, to accomplish, to fulfil." Unquote.

Strong's notes also say, "Christ satisfied God's justice by dying for all to pay for the sins of the elect. These sins can never be punished again since that would violate God's justice. Sins can only be punished once, either by a substitute or by yourself." Unquote.

There's a lot of meaning in that one word "finished".

Jesus died for all your sins so **you** would not have to. And since He died for all your sins you **could not** die for them. He satisfied God's justice; you didn't.

What He came to do, He did. He brought it to a close. He finished. He ended. He completed.

And with respect to time, the process was completed. That is very significant. It is very important. We miss the implications of this in almost every translation.

Why? Because the English language does not do justice to the Greek language.

We read Jesus' last words, "It is finished" in the NIV. This is basically what about sixty other translations also say. But all **they** are doing is translating a manuscript. They are not expanding the Greek to give us a better understanding of what a particular word means.

In *The New Testament: An Expanded Translation* by Dr. Kenneth Wuest we find it that it does expand a word. He was professor of Greek at Moody Bible Institute so he knew what he was doing.

The Expanded Translation says, "Then when Jesus received the sour wine He said, 'It **has** been finished **and stands complete**'.

“It **has** been finished **and stands complete.**”

You might wonder what this means. Allow me to illustrate.

My wife is a seamstress. When she has done some alterations she tells her client, “It is finished.” The alterations have been completed. Now she could still perform more alterations. And she could return the garment to its former condition.

When a cook speaks about dinner and says, “It’s finished”, they mean it does not need any more cooking. Now you could still cook it more. And overcook it as well.

When your mother used to say to you, “Have you finished your dinner?” she meant had it all been eaten. That there was nothing left on your plate to eat.

See the difference between “finished” in altering a garment, cooking a meal, and eating a meal? The first two hold the possibility of something more being done. The last one does not. The third one is saying, “It is finished.” It has been finished and it stands complete.

That’s how it was when Jesus said, “It is finished”. He was saying everything has been finished and stands complete. There is nothing left to do.

Let’s understand this, Jesus was saying, “It has been done in the past, there is nothing more to do in the present. And there never will be anything to do in the future!”

You might wonder if that is an accurate understanding of what Jesus was saying.

We saw what the Greek word *teleo* means. But there is more to it. What we did not look at are three very important aspects of that word.

There is the Tense of the verb - it can be the past, the present, the future, the perfect, the imperfect, the pluperfect, or what they call the aorist.

Then there’s the Voice - is it passive, active or what they call middle?

And then finally there’s the Mood - is it inductive, imperative, subjunctive or optative.

Without getting complicated, let’s have a quick look at the aspects of *teleo*.

The tense is the Perfect tense. This means, and I am quoting from Strong's Concordance, "The perfect tense in Greek corresponds to the perfect tense in English, and describes an action which is viewed as having been **completed** in the past, once and for all, not needing to be completed again."

Let me repeat that. "The perfect tense in Greek corresponds to the perfect tense in English, and describes an action which is viewed as having been **completed** in the past, once and for all, not needing to be completed again."

Jesus said, "It is finished". He was saying by dying on the cross for our sins, He completed it "in the past, once and for all, and not needing to be completed again."

The Voice is passive. This simply means someone received the action. In order for all sins to be forgiven once, and for all time, someone had to have the action done to them. And Jesus did.

The Mood? The Mood is the Indicative. Quote, "The indicative mood is a simple statement of fact. If an action really has occurred, does occur, or will occur, it will be rendered in the indicative mood".

The action Jesus did was done, it is being done, and it will be done for ever.

All this is saying is what Jesus did, He did once in time past, and the results persist through the present time, and they persist into the future.

In other words, what Jesus did you **cannot** undo.

We can miss this importance of this tense, the voice and the mood when the Greek is translated to the English. The idea of an action, having been finished, or completed, in the past, not being able to be undone, is very important.

We can find this in at least two other scriptures. But we will look at these in another podcast.

So what Jesus said, "It is finished", speaks of an action done in the past that has implications for the present, and continues into the future.

We are going to end this podcast listening to the end of the song *It Is Finished* by the Christian group, Petra. And remember, if you have any questions, if want a transcript, please go to our web site www.truthministries.ca

If you have enjoyed A Pinch of Salt, let someone else know. And encourage them to listen in and be blessed also.

God bless you. See you next time.