

## Good Friday SML 2023

After this, aware that everything was now finished, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I thirst.” There was a vessel filled with common wine. So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to His mouth. When Jesus had taken the wine, He said, “Tetelestai.” And bowing His head, He handed over the spirit.

“It is finished” is His last word from the Cross.

Matthew, Mark and Luke record that Jesus actually shouted this. He shouted “It is finished!” It was not a cry of despair. It was a cry of victory.

When Jesus died on the cross, the Roman soldiers thought “We’re finished with this radical Who thought He could overthrow Rome. ‘It is finished?’ NO! He’s finished.”

When Jesus died on the cross, the religious leaders thought, “We’re finished with His competition. He’s dead and gone. We don’t have to be envious of the crowds He pulled because He was a lot more popular than we were. ‘It is finished?’ NO! He’s finished.”

When the disciples looked at Jesus' death on the cross. they thought, "The dream of the kingdom is finished." "It is finished?' NO! We're finished."

Even Satan, when he looked at the cross in glee, and that's hard to wrap our minds around because Satan can never be happy . . . in this moment, he's thinking, "The Son of God is finished!" It is finished? NO! You're finished."

But when Jesus said, "It is finished!" He was not saying "I am finished. He said, "It is finished." Big difference. Jesus did not say, I'm finished, because He wasn't finished. Three days later He came back to life. He's certainly not finished. But He says "It is finished." What was finished when Jesus said that? Obviously,

- ✓ His suffering was finished.
- ✓ His humiliation was finished.
- ✓ His pain was finished.
- ✓ His grief was finished.

I often preach at funerals that death packs a punch, and it does, every time. But there is so much more to unpack this Good Friday.

When Jesus said "It is finished," He said I finished the work I was sent to do.

The phrase “It is finished,” in Greek which the New Testament is written, is only one word: “Tetelestai.” When Jesus hung on the cross, He shouted out either in Greek “Tetelestai!” or in Aramaic, “Mashalem!” Tetelestai is used in different ways in the ancient Greek.

Tetelestai was used when an artist would be completing:

- ✓ a painting,
- ✓ a portrait,
- ✓ some kind of watercolor.

When they got to the very end and they made the last brush stroke they would say, “Tetelestai,” It is finished, meaning “The picture is perfect!”

When Jesus is dying on the cross He’s saying, “The picture is perfect. I’ve painted the last stroke. Every detail of this picture is perfect.”

To a servant the word “tetelestai” meant something different. To a servant, when you come in and report to your master that you had finished all the duties of the day you would say tetelestai. The work has been completed. That’s what it meant when Jesus was on the cross: I’ve completed the work that the Father gave me to do.

So there are actually a number of different angles we need to look at.

Here's the first one. When Jesus said it is finished, the first thing He finished ...

He fulfilled the Scripture. There are over 380 prophecies in the Old Testament where God, over hundreds and even thousands of years said, I'm going to let you know:

- ✓ Who the real Messiah is,
- ✓ when He's really Me,
- ✓ the true Savior,
- ✓ and not some fake, phony, rip off, knock off, I-claim-to be-god-but-I'm-not-really-god.

He says the way you'll know Me:

- ✓ the true Messiah will do this,
- ✓ the true Messiah will say this,
- ✓ the true Messiah will come from here,
- ✓ the true Messiah will have this happen in His life.

Over 380 of those prophecies, spread out over thousands of years.

Jesus fulfilled every one of those. But not only were there prophecies in the Old Testament, but there were promises. And God says here's what I promise to do.

- ✓ I'm going to send the Messiah.
- ✓ He's going to die for your sins.
- ✓ He's going to pave the way so that the sacrificial system that's just a symbol of the real deal will go away.
- ✓ You'll know that it's really Me.
- ✓ I'm going to fulfill the prophecies.
- ✓ I'm going to fulfill the promises.
- ✓ I'm going to paint the picture.
- ✓ And the picture will be perfect.

The second thing Jesus was saying when He says, "It is finished," is He satisfied the law. When he's saying "It is finished," He's saying "Justice has been served, the sentence has been completed. What the law required, I have done and did it for you." What does the law require? The scriptures say the penalty for sin is death.

The only person who has ever kept every law in the scriptures is Jesus.

- ✓ None of us have ever kept all those laws.
- ✓ None of us are perfect.
- ✓ We have all sinned.
- ✓ We have all fallen short.

Jesus is the only One who ever kept every single law. So all the Law did was condemn us. All the Law did was to show us how much we didn't measure up, that we're not perfect. The Law was never intended to save us. But the Bible says that Jesus came along, kept the Law perfectly and then He satisfied the law by paying for our sins.

Thirdly, He conquered sin and death. He broke:

- ✓ their hold on our lives,
- ✓ the fear of death,
- ✓ and the grip of sin,
- ✓ and their power over us.

So when He says "It is finished!" He is giving a shout of victory. Thus can St. Paul ask so confidently, "O Death, where is your victory? Where is your sting?"

The fourth thing He did - He defeated the devil. When Jesus said "It is finished," a cosmic war was being played out between Satan and the Son of God. From the human standpoint it looked like Satan had won. Here's Jesus on the cross:

- ✓ battered,
- ✓ bruised,
- ✓ beaten up,

- ✓ bleeding,
- ✓ dying.

It looks like Satan has won. Satan thought he won, that he destroyed the Son of God.

When Jesus said, “It is finished,” Satan goes uh-oh. What was I thinking? I thought I could destroy God! The arrogance! Three days later, Jesus arises from the grave, and Satan was finished.

Let me summarize this Good Friday. What did Jesus do when He died on the cross? What did He do when He accomplished what He accomplished? What was finished on the cross?

- ✓ He fulfilled the Scripture.
- ✓ He satisfied the law.
- ✓ He conquered sin and death.
- ✓ He defeated the devil.

That’s why we call this Friday Good!

What a God! What a Savior! That’s why “It is finished,” are the most important words you will ever hear in your life. And I’m sure that when Jesus ascended to heaven the Father

and said, “Tetelastai,” His Heavenly Father replied, “Well done My Son. Well done!”