

"It Is Finished, Part 2"

Our Outline Today: "It Is Finished, Part 2".

- ***What They Could Have Known Before the Cross***
- ***What They Came to Know After the Cross***
- ***What Difference Does It Make?***
- ***Our theme last time was simply "It Is Finished". But I asked and attempted to answer this question: "What was finished?" Now that is a pretty significant question, is it not, and a worthy one indeed?***
- ***What does Paul say about that? And what do the other authors of scripture say other than Paul? We will learn about that today and next time, Lord willing, as we primarily focus on the revelation given to Paul.***

Indeed, there is no other event in human history about which more is known than that which occurred on those critical days so long ago. And that is because the Bible gives us understanding that the authors of human history cannot do so truthfully and with the insight that only God can give. For in many ways, he is our heavenly historian! And he is not limited as human authors are, is he, for he always knows the rest of the story?

I. What They Could Have Known Before the Cross:

- ***First today we will be blessed by looking again at what we considered last time, what was happening on that critical day in human history from the perspective of what might have been known and perhaps even written in a newspaper article that was entirely true but complete with all of the necessary details, drawing heavily on what had already been written in God's word of truth, the Hebrew and Aramaic scriptures.***

We will limit ourselves to John's account of this history:

John 19:25-30

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

- *What was finished? Surely not everything was finished according to the Lord God's plan of redemption, everything that had been written in heaven's archive from even before the foundation of the world. So what do these words mean, "It is Finished?"*

Surely at that point in our Lord's short but eventful life much had already been accomplished. That is so clear. So very much. But more was yet to be accomplished as history would reveal and as we will enjoy considering today.

- *What was the context of those blessed words that day? The apostle John tells us that context here in his account and I am sure that his accounting is true and authentic as he writes under the control of the spirit of God. As he writes here again and again, in so many words, "... that the scripture might be fulfilled", we see that so much prophecy was being fulfilled just as it had been written a millennia or more earlier. The details of that are amazing and sometimes astounding as we shall be blessed to see today again.*

It says here in verse 28 that Jesus knew that much had already been accomplished in that wonderful plan of redemption, and that the next phase must now begin according to that plan. Of course, he knew that plan so well having been there when it was established in eternity past. And so he says, "I thirst" and the events detailed in Psalms 22 and 69 then unfolded exactly as written. Verse 30 brings the culmination with the words "It is finished". This is just one word in the original, "τετελεσται", or in English lettering, "tetelestai!" And then, after partaking of the vinegar offered to his parched lips in a sponge, our Lord then gives up his spirit willingly and obediently as he bows his head in death. Let's go on for there is much more here to see. You will remember the next words here in John's account:

John 19:31-37

31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day

was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. [See Ps. 34:20; Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12]

37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced. [Ps. 22:16-17; Zech. 12:10; Rev. 1:7]

- ***Last time we looked specifically at verse 34:*** “But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.” ***This is a reference back again to the Old Testament, to Ps. 22:14 in particular, but also to Deuteronomy 15.***

[READ] Ps. 22:14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

Deut. 15:19-23

19 All the firstling males that come of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt sanctify unto the LORD thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep.

20 Thou shalt eat *it* before the LORD thy God year by year in the place which the LORD shall choose, thou and thy household.

21 And if there be *any* blemish therein, *as if it be* lame, or blind, or have any ill blemish, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the LORD thy God.

22 Thou shalt eat it within thy gates: the unclean and the clean *person shall eat it* alike, as the roebuck, and as the hart.

23 Only thou shalt not eat the blood thereof; thou shalt pour it upon the ground as water.

- ***This is the Passover meal, of course, and a comment on the preparation of that meal.*** “Only thou shalt not eat the blood thereof; thou shalt pour it upon the ground as water.” ***Some of it had to be caught to be used in the sacrificial offerings by the***

priesthood. But the shedding of our Lord's blood was meant as a "flood" as hymn writers have expressed so well.

- *As I said last time, although there may also be a medically significant meaning here as well, we may need to enter heaven's glory to know more of it with certainty. And there' are other spiritual meanings too, no doubt, which we will not concern ourselves with today. But for John it was essential to identify scriptures that required fulfillment as God's plan revealed it. And that included no broken bones but a broken body indeed and perhaps even a broken heart as his pierced side revealed so dramatically.*
- *What a difference Christ's crucifixion made! For those mentioned next here in the following verses, Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus, and then Mary Magdalene and the disciples, especially Peter and John, it made all the difference in the world. What were they willing to sacrifice, if needed, we wonder? Perhaps everything near and dear in this life. And they took great risks accordingly. And then there was Thomas:*

John 20:24-31

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

- ***So be it. It stands written. Many scriptures were fulfilled and that constitutes what could have been known before the cross even occurred. It is comforting to know that what was required of the redemptive plan of God BEFORE Christ's death for sin and sinners was actually accomplished, even though Satan has always worked to thwart the work of Almighty God.***

But even more of that plan has now been accomplished due to Christ's death on our behalf and also through the work of God in and through his children AFTER the Cross. May this part of our study also be a comfort to us all now and next time as we dwell in what God's word reveals about the rest of his workings in and through us who are saved, through his abounding grace.

II. What They Came to Know After the Cross:

- ***Now we come to the REST OF THE STORY, to quote Paul Harvey. But the rest of the story is more than what any news reported living at that time might have known or written. For the revelation of Almighty God was given that the events of those days might be understood and put into the proper overall Biblical context. It is not only the "history" of what occurred but the meaning of it from God's point of view that should be most important for us believers today. And this we find revealed in the New Testament. But much had already been given by God in the Old Testament:***
- ***Interestingly, in the entire Old Testament the word "resurrection" is found no where in our English Bible, Old Testament. But the concept is revealed there by implication in many places. Some are identified by our Lord himself, as in his references to rebuilding the temple (of his body) in three days:***

[READ] John 2:18-22

18 Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

21 But he spake of the temple of his body.

22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

- ***So the scriptures give testimony to the resurrection and the timing of it! Paul also refers to the three days in reference to Christ's resurrection:***

[READ] 1 Cor. 15:1-4

1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

- ***But what scriptures was Christ referring to when he said these things or what was the apostle thinking of when we made that statement? There are several, one in reference to the coming redeemer's resurrection found in the Job testimony in chapter 19, and also by implication as far as the time in his deliverance from the great fish:***

[READ] Matt. 12:38-40

38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Gen. 22:4 "Then **on the third day** Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off."

[READ] Heb. 11:17-19

17 **By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac:** and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

- *And then there is the explicit reference in Job chapter 19:*

Job 19:23-26

23 Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book!

24 That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!

25 For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

26 And *though* after my skin worms destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

- *And, resurrection is implied in many other places, of course, for example in the words of Christ spoken before the Cross but referencing Old Testament scripture:*

[READ] Mark 12:10-12 (See Psalm 118 which Christ is quoting here)

10 And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:

11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

12 And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

III. What Difference Does It Make?

- *Does the knowing of it change anything for us?*
- *For the early believers, it meant persecutions and death for many. Their lives were changed for ever. How about us? Were you changed for ever?*
- *For some though the correct question is quite different: Have you been saved? Perhaps you are only religious and have never believed the gospel of the grace of God.*
- *But for us who are saved, the question is this? What difference does the resurrection of Christ make for us, personally, and individually?*

IT MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE, DOESN'T IT?

[READ] Col. 3:1-4

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.