

What Is Finished?

John 19:28-30

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.*

1. Introduction

1. Last words have lasting impact. I remember the last words my dad spoke to me before he passed away. It was in fact the day before Easter in 2014.
2. I called him to check on him and report how our family was doing. However, soon into that conversation I realized that his hearing loss was going to make this difficult.

Thankfully his caller ID let him know it was me, so after I shouted a few greetings to him, interrupted me as though he hadn't heard what I said.

3. But I'll always remember his last words spoken to me.
4. He said, "Anthony, I'm sure you will be preaching a good sermon tomorrow for Easter."
5. He was not one to express love or praise in words, so that meant something to me that I can remember and cherish as his final words to me.
6. Today we focus on this date in history in 30AD when Jesus' death on the cross was followed by His victory over death when He rose alive on Resurrection Sunday.

7. When the women at the tomb heard the angel ask:

Luke 24:5-6

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto

*them, **Why seek ye the living among the dead?***

*6 He is not here, **but is risen**: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,*

8. But this morning I want to look back and focus on the last words Jesus spoke before He died and consider what it means to us: **It is finished.**
9. Have you ever stopped to wonder what Jesus meant by “It is finished?”
10. What is finished?
- II. Definition
 1. Jesus said, “It is finished,” which is one word in Greek, tetelestai, which means (Abbott-Smith NT:5055)
 - a. To bring to an end, complete, finish
 - b. To execute, perform, complete, fulfil
 - c. To pay what one owes, one’s dues
 2. If Jesus’s final words were tetelestai, said, It is finished. What is finished?

3. The only other time that word was used in the gospel of John was in verse 28:
*John 19:28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things **were** now **accomplished**, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.*
4. Jesus had accomplished something and breathed His last. What had He accomplished? What was now finished?
What is finished?

- III. Daniel's prayer for forgiveness
 - A. Problem of sin in Israel
 1. To understand what was finished, I want to take you back to Daniel 9, a chapter we have been praying through since January.
 2. The first 19 verses are a prayer of repentance that Daniel prayed for himself, the city of Jerusalem, and the nation of Israel.
 3. Their nation was in a sad shape because of many sins they had committed against God.
*Dan 9:5 We have **sinned**, and have*

committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:

4. Daniel's prayer was brutally honest about their nation. His people had rejected the words of the prophets, they didn't obey the law of Moses, and their present exile was a judgment for their sins.

5. Daniel ended his long confession with this request of God:

*Dan 9:19 O Lord, **hear**; O Lord, **forgive**; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.*

6. As we have been studying this chapter lately, I noticed several similarities to where we are today in our nation today.
7. We should cry out in repentance for our **national sins, despair, judgments, and destructions.**

8. And Daniel's hope is also our hope. No matter how large the need is, for an individual, or a nation, God has the answer for those who will humble themselves before Him to pray and seek His face.

B. Prayer answered

1. When Daniel prayed for forgiveness and restoration, God sent the angel Gabriel to Daniel with an answer.

2. It was a puzzling answer because the angel revealed to Daniel what God was going to do for Israel over the next 2500 years in what Bible teachers call "**the 70 Weeks of Daniel.**"

3. Daniel asked for forgiveness and God gave him this picture of 70 weeks, which as you read it is 70 periods of 7 years.

4. We certainly don't have time to deal with a full explanation of the 70 Weeks of Daniel, because there is a lot of prophetic detail wrapped up these few verses.

5. **We will focus on how it was an answer to Daniel's request for forgiveness.**
6. Sin was the problem that Daniel prayed for, and sin is a problem now for us.
- c. Problem of sin in Clay County, and our world
 1. In case you need help seeing how sin is a problem, just last Sunday night I read from a report produced in Clay County that reflected that during 2020, there were 251 drug related arrests in Clay County involving alcohol, meth, marijuana, and possession of a controlled substance.
 2. And of course, many of those arrests involved child removals from homes due to the parents being involved in these cases. And the report noted that in our county, people with those problems have limited options for help.
 3. Maybe drugs haven't caused problems in your home, but another problem for

families is how desperation is showing up through self-harm, cutting themselves, burning themselves, pulling out hair, self-bruising, piercing themselves.

4. Our land suffers from emotional stressors that are causing anxiety, loss of enjoyment of life, and sometimes causing people to withdraw from others, and withdraw from life itself through suicide.
5. Yes, sin is a problem for us in Clay County Indiana as it was for Daniel's day and it needs a solution.
6. What if sin and its consequences were remedied?
7. What if forgiveness and restoration to joy were available?
- D. Finished, ended
1. Continue in Daniel 9:
Dan 9:24 Seventy weeks [490 years] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to

make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

2. This was a prediction of the coming Messiah who would:
 - a. finish the transgression and
 - b. make an end of sins,
 - c. make reconciliation for iniquity.
3. As you read that, you will see that God had a much bigger answer in mind than forgiveness just for Daniel's contemporaries.
4. God's answer would **finish the transgression, make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity.**
5. In the scripture, the words transgression, trespass, sin, and iniquity are generally interchangeable synonyms, with each emphasizing some particular aspect of sin.

- a. **Transgression** refers to rebelling against a rule,
 - b. **Trespass** refers to crossing a boundary,
 - c. **Sin** refers to missing the mark, and
 - d. **Iniquity** refers to the guilt of wrongdoing.
6. So Daniel got a whole lot of answer to his prayer for forgiveness for the sins of his people.
 7. Recall how Daniel started the prayer:
*Dan 9:5 We have **sinned**, and have **committed iniquity**, and have **done wickedly**, and have **rebelled**, even by **departing** from thy precepts and from thy judgments:*
 8. God revealed His plan to make an **end** of sins; **reconcile** iniquity, and **finish** transgressions.
 9. And even better, He will bring everlasting righteousness!
 10. And how did God plan to manage that?

- E. Messiah the Prince is the Answer
- 1. Messiah the Prince will be the answer:
*Dan 9:25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the **Messiah the Prince** shall be **seven weeks**, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*
- 2. The 70 weeks would begin to be counted at the time of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, which King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra in Ezra 7:11, an event which took place in 457 BC.
- 3. **[chart Daniel 70 weeks]**
- 4. Following that 62-week period, the Messiah would be cut off:
*Dan 9:26 And after threescore and two weeks **shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself [Jesus' crucifixion]:** and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary **[beginning of***

church age and destruction of Jerusalem and beginning of Gentile gap period]; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

5. The precise timing of this prophecy made a clear prediction of when the Messiah would come. Daniel had been given the secret to the timing of the coming of the Messiah down to the month and year of Him being cut off.
6. And of course, do you remember that Daniel was part of a group called “the wise men of Babylon” (Dan 2:24).
7. It is interesting that wise men from the east were able to anticipate the birth of this Messiah and arrived in Jerusalem and Bethlehem to find the Baby.
8. We have got to get back to our message title: **What is Finished?** Recall the scripture we began with:

John 19:30 When Jesus therefore had

*received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished:** and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*

- F. When sin is finished
- 1. *Dan 9:24 Seventy weeks [490 years] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to **finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.***
- 2. **If we could see into the hidden causes of the troubles affecting us personally, our families, our cities, and our nation, the root cause would often connect to transgression, sins, and iniquity, and a lack of righteousness.**
- 3. And what Jesus finished on the cross was heal those very things.

4. What we know from history, is that when desperate people turn to God, they find that God can finish transgression, make an end of sins, and bring reconciliation.
5. We can look at our own nation's foundation, where church affiliation of the early 1700s in this land had significantly dropped, a spiritual coldness and materialism was growing, along with the consequences of sin.
6. But then came "**The Great Awakening**" of the 1730s where revivals began to spread Christianity, repentance, and a desire for personal piety and purity.
7. Jonathan Edwards and George Whitfield preached among the colonies, offering repentance and salvation in Jesus.
8. The number of churches doubled between 1740 to 1780 and church membership surged, especially among young men. The

colonies were transformed at a crucial time for this nation.¹

9. This spirit of repentance and revival changed the course of our nation at the time it was being founded, which had a profound impact for years.
10. And the **Second Great Awakening** took hold in the south 1790s, where new churches formed, and church attendance expanded.²
11. When Jesus said, “It is finished,” He was talking about the domination that sin had been holding on people, but now, it is finished.
12. That was true in the first century when Jesus died on the cross, it was true throughout the ages into the 1700s, and it was true in the 1900s when the **Azusa Street revival** swept the world.
13. And it is true today in 2021.

¹ Faragher, Buhle, Czitrom, Armitage, “Out of Many,” 5th Edition, Volume I, Pearson, New Jersey, 2009, p. 120-121.

² Ibid. p. 250.

14. That means, Jesus brought sin's stronghold to an end because He fulfilled the requirements of the sinless sacrifice for sin, paying in full what was due from sin.
15. What we must understand, is that sin brings forth death when it is finished:
James 1:14-15
14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.
15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.
16. That is a warning for us to avoid temptation, lust, and sin, because what it will do to us.
17. But do you see what Jesus did when He died for sin? Now sin is finished!
- G. It is finished on me
1. When we reach the place where we decide we are done with sin's domination over us,

we just need to look to Jesus' words, "It is finished!", and say:

- a. My temptation to lust...it is finished.
 - b. My bondage to anger...it is finished.
 - c. My slavery to fear, depression and despair...it is finished.
 - d. My addiction to drugs...it is finished.
2. When Jesus gave His life on the cross, He finished the transgression, He made an end of sin, He reconciled us from iniquity.
 3. That means all my rebellion, all my crossing God's boundaries, all my missing the mark, all my guilt—it is finished!
 4. In place of all that, Jesus brings everlasting righteousness.

IV. Closing

1. I encourage you to believe the promise that sin is finished.
2. If you are not so sure about that today, there was a day you believed it. Just because the effects of sin have built up over

- the years does not mean Jesus' words, "it is finished," can't apply to you today.
3. Repentance coupled with faith will make "It is finished" work for you.
 4. Perhaps you are thinking, "I'm not so sure church is my thing."
 5. Perhaps you still have a few God-substitutes on your list you want to try first. But I assure you, when you reach the bottom of that list, you will discover as everyone else has, that life apart from God is pretty miserable.
 6. Are the alternatives and substitutes for God filling the emptiness in your soul? Do they give real purpose to your life?
 7. No. You still have a hunger for God and that little voice within cannot be silenced.
 8. Our souls cry out in desperation, "Give me with something greater than me, outside of me, stronger than me."

9. Entertainment and pleasure cannot silence that cry of the soul. It only cries out even louder.
10. We remain restless until we rest in Him (John Calvin).
11. Jesus said, It is finished!
*Dan 9:24 Seventy weeks [490 years] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to **finish the transgression**, and to **make an end of sins**, and to **make reconciliation for iniquity**, and to **bring in everlasting righteousness**, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*