

It Is Finished

Helpful Resources

Maps of Palestine and Jerusalem (p.47, 48), The Passion Week (p.53), The Disputed Section of Mark (p.55), Did Jesus Really Die on a Friday? (p.56), When God Was Silent (p.113)

Making Sense of It All

- The Big Picture

When Jesus prayed with His disciples in the upper room on their last night together, He said, "Father, I have glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do" (*John 17:4*). The Lord had been given an important assignment, and He was nearing its completion. The only thing left to do was the most difficult — drink the cup of God's wrath and judgment against sin by going to the cross. When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane later that night, He prayed, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done" (*Luke 22:42*). Despite His distress, He willingly embraced the Father's instructions and finished what He came to do. This week, everything fell into place for Jesus to finish His great work of redemption. In this review, we will look more closely at the most pivotal moment in history.

- The End

The last day of Christ's life on earth was marked by seven events.

1. **The Betrayal** (*Matt. 26:14-16; Lk. 22:3-6*): Satan enticed Judas, the son of perdition or destruction (*Jn. 17:12*), to deliver Jesus to His enemies. Judas later hanged himself.
2. **The Arrest** (*Mk. 14:43-52; Matt. 26:47-56; Lk. 22:47-53; Jn. 18:3-11*): Judas led a mob to arrest Jesus at night in Gethsemane. Though Jesus could've saved Himself and the others, He peacefully surrendered to the Father's will. Everyone else abandoned Him.
3. **The Trials** (*Jn. 18:12-19:16; Mk. 14:53-15:15; Matt. 26:57-27:26; Lk. 22:54-23:25*): Jesus endured six trials before Annas, Caiaphas, the Sanhedrin, Herod, and Pilate (twice). The trials were unjust, charging Jesus with blasphemy which was punishable by death.
4. **The Denials** (*Jn. 18:12-27; Mk. 14:53-72; Matt. 26:57-75; Lk. 22:54-71*): Though Peter boasted that he would die for Christ, he cowered under the pressure. Before the night was over, three times he denied that he even knew Jesus. Thus, Jesus suffered alone.
5. **The Scouring** (*Matt. 27:27-32; Mk. 15:16-21; Lk. 23:26-32*): Jesus endured physical abuse during the trials, which included getting flogged by the Roman soldiers (*Isa. 53*).
6. **The March to Calvary** (*Matt. 27:27-32; Mk. 15:16-21; Lk. 23:26-32*): After the scourging, Jesus needed help with His cross. Simon of Cyrene was forced to assist Him.
7. **The Crucifixion** (*Mt. 27:33-66; Mk. 15:22-47; Lk. 23:33-56; Jn. 19:16-42*): Jesus was crucified at Golgotha (9AM—3PM) with two criminals. Though none of His bones were broken, a soldier pierced His side with a spear to ensure He was dead.

- Comments on the Cross

Jesus made seven statements while on the cross, each of them noteworthy.

1. **"My God, My God! Why have You forsaken Me?"** (*Matt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34; Ps. 22:1*): Because our sin was placed on Christ, the Father could not look. Jesus bore it alone, so that we might be made righteous (*2 Cor. 5:21*). Read the poem, "When God Was Silent."
2. **"I thirst."** (*Jn. 19:28; Ps. 69:20, 21*): Rather than water, the soldiers gave Jesus sour wine (a sedative), but He refused to drink it. He bore the pain without any help.
3. **"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."** (*Lk. 23:34*): Those present at the crucifixion had no idea of the importance of the moment, but Jesus did. Even as He hung dying He forgave men their shortcomings.
4. **"Behold this woman. Woman, behold your son."** (*Jn. 19:26, 27; Jas. 1:27*): Jesus ensured that His earthly mother was cared for after His departure.
5. **"Today, you will be with Me in paradise."** (*Lk. 23:43*): One of the thieves believed that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus forgave His sins and took Him to heaven for eternity. Paul wrote, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord" (*2 Cor. 5:8*).
6. **"Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit."** (*Lk. 23:46*): Jesus was not forced to die. He was not killed accidentally. He surrendered to the Father's will and gladly embraced the cross. Just as Jesus, we too will commit our spirits to the Father's hands.
7. **"It is finished!"** (*Jn. 19:28*): Jesus came to earth to complete a task, a mission. In His brief time on earth, He completed all the work that the Father gave Him to do (*Jn. 17:4*).

What exactly did Jesus finish? First, this phrase is an accounting reference, meaning "paid in full." The ransom that He came to pay for sinners was fulfilled (*Mk. 10:45*). Our debt to sin was satisfied by His sacrifice. Second, by His death on the cross, Jesus fulfilled the first prophecy (*Gen. 3:15*). God promised Eve that one of her offspring would crush the serpent and end the curse of sin. Christ redeemed us from the curse (*Gal. 3:13*).

Third, Jesus obeyed the Father's will and drank the cup of His wrath and judgment for our sin (*Lk. 22:42*). He took everything that was meant for us upon Himself (*1 Pet. 3:18*). Fourth, when Jesus died, the Temple veil was torn. The inner veil to the Holy of Holies separated men from the presence of God. Only the High Priest could enter. Jesus, our Great High Priest, tore the veil, which means that we can come into the presence of God through Him (*Jn. 14:6; Heb. 10:19, 20*). Finally, in the sacrificial system, the priests' work was never finished. But, with Jesus' sacrifice, He was able to sit down at the right hand of the Father, having completed the work for all time (*Matt. 22:44; Acts 2:33*).

The Bottom Line

Jesus finished all the work that the Father had given Him to do.

Questions to Consider

1. What stood out this week as you read the end of Christ's earthly life and ministry?
2. Take a minute to thank the Lord for all that He did for you on that cross.

When God Was Silent

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The throne room was tense.
Unusual pressure dampened the mood of
usual praise and worship.
All discussion had ceased.
Not a foot was astir.
Not a voice was loosed in the air.
Heaven was silent,
And all eyes were on Him.

Through time and space,
Through the skies and through the clouds,
The events of earth opened before them all,
As they watched with focused eye Him who
was to be...
Crucified.

God the Father moved to the edge of His
throne,
Leaning quietly to get a closer look.
He watched every moment with great interest.
Each second seemed to unfold a new, more
painful agony.
The hosts of heaven stood beside Him in
magnificent, vibrant light,
Waiting in anticipation to act in full force,
Ready to give their lives to rescue the Son of
the Most High.
But God gave no command,
And no one moved.

Below, men on earth beat the Son with their
fists,
And the Father clenched His with every blow.
As soldiers slapped the face of His only child,
He and the thousands with Him winced in
sympathy.
Then, a crown of thorns was shoved into His
brow
As they spit in His face.
The hosts of heaven stirred in anger,
Excited to leap into action at a single word,
But the Father threw out His arms
And grabbed those whom He could
And said, "No! He must bear it alone."

Perplexed, indeed, were the holy ones of God,
For He had lately acted in the most unusual
manner.
Just before His Son's trial and sentencing, He
had called the messengers to Himself,
Called them to leave His Son alone and
vulnerable.
And on that very night,
After they had given Him one last fiber of
strength,

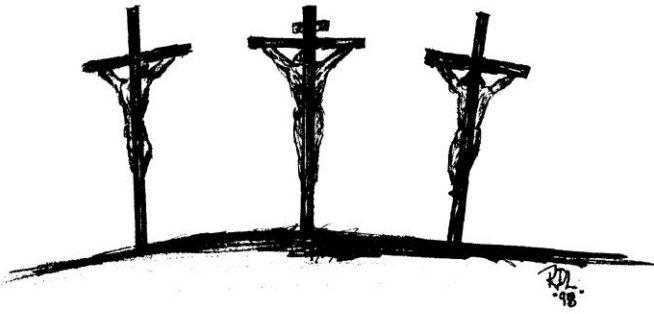
They were unable to minister to Him.
He begged His Father to change His mind,
And in His plea, He shed great drops of blood.

Oh, how the hosts of heaven
Hated to see their Master like this —
Beaten and bruised, alone and in agony.
They looked at the Father with grave concern,
And He returned their gaze with a stare of
inner purpose,
As if some great design was unfolding in these
moments.

Back to earth...
The beloved Son was stripped
And made to bear a rugged cross to a lonely
hill.
The heavenly hosts peered at one another in
unbelief,
Unwilling to believe that the Father would
allow such a tragedy to take place.
With every step towards His death,
The angels grew more edgy.
Wings began to flutter,
Expressions of inner turmoil,
Commanded to step aside and look on
helplessly.

Soon, the soldiers strapped the Son to the
cross,
Held His arms down,
And pounded a stake in each wrist.
Every ping of that mallet pierced the streets
of heaven
And resounded on the walls of the throne
room itself,
Unnerving those who stood and watched.

Cries and laments echoed after each swing of
that unholy hammer,
As the hosts were unable to control
themselves
And they loosed their emotions.
Heaven was astir once more with jittery wings.
The heart of every seraph burned with a fire
That seemed audible to the Lord,
As if to say "God, please, let us go!
Let us save Your Son!"
The Most High stood to His feet
And shook the heavens with His voice,
"Silence!
Please, be still."
Then, He paused and closed His eyes.
"He must bear it alone."



Angels longed to look into this plan
And know the mystery behind His words.
Why must He bear it alone?
What was the purpose?
What was happening to their God
Who had so soon before dispatched a throng
to usher in the birth of His Son,
But now was still at the scene of His death?
They did not know.
They had no answer,
But they surrendered their thoughts to the
Sovereignty of the King.
They released their anger
And watched again in silence.

The Son was now fastened to the cross.
His blood sprayed in the wind and dotted the
dust below.
Every gasp of breath was a struggle.
Every heartbeat drained His strength.
All the eyes of heaven were fixed.
No one blinked.
No one breathed.
Some began to bounce their view from the
Son to the King and from the King to the Son.
What was happening?
He was dying.

For the first time in heaven,
Time itself was introduced,
And it tarried there for a painful moment.
Those who had only known eternity
Now felt the dismal drip of ticking seconds.
Not one angel moved,
Nor did the Father, who was sitting again.
The only sound in those hallowed halls
Was the wheeze of the Son's waning breath.
It seemed to echo in the mind of each
spectator,
Wrenching the soul and wounding the spirit.

Soldiers stood in the foreground
And cursed His name.
Commoners stood in the background,
Taunting and testing His resolve.
Even a guilty thief cast abusive words at the
innocent Son.

Every word stole another breath.
Every cry drained another drop of blood.
"He saved others, but He cannot save
Himself."
A gasp, a drop.

"If You're the Messiah, then come down from
that cross!"
Another gasp, another drop.
"If You're the Son of God,
Then command the angels to save You!"

The host in heaven was now alive, ready for
the signal,
But the Father did not give it.
He held up His hands to restore the calm,
And silence ensued again.
A gasp and a drop.

Then, from the Son, in the midst of a gasp and
before the next drop,
There was weeping.
He ushered forth a final cry for help.
"Father. Father!"
All eyes were on the Son.
"Why have You forsaken Me?"

There it was, the big question,
And all of heaven wanted to know the answer.
Yes, God. Why? Tell us why!

Eyes were fixed and focused.
Ears tuned and ready for what the Father
might say,
Yet His words revealed a purpose they had not
heard before.
The mystery was explained as He spoke,
"O Son, I am still here,
But You must bear this alone.
For the sins of the world are upon You,
The foul stench of their depravity,
And the filthy stain of their wickedness
Are present in You now,
And I cannot bear to look."

At that moment, God the Father turned His
head
And averted His eyes.
It is certain that no vagabond amid midnight
desert dunes
Ever felt as alone as did the Son at that
moment.
One final gasp, then one last drop,
And finally, "Father, into Your hands I yield
My spirit."

Seraphim who once crowded near the throne
Stood at a distance with heads bowed
And with chests that bore the mystery with
resistance —
Torn, wrenched, and softened.
Then, in the still of the hall,
The Son was heard no more.
He was dead.

The Father slowly turned to face His Son
again,
To receive His spirit from the hell of that hill.
His body hung lifeless in the wind.
God the Father looked upon His Son with a
heavy heart.
Heaven's hosts echoed the Father's love
As their tears so timely graced the hill of that
cross.
Then, whispered from the throne,
A praise that few overheard.
The Father, with deepest respect,
Was heard saying, "Well done, My Son.
You bore it alone.
Well done."

Not one of the messengers understood these
things.
Not one of them knew God's mind,
But they knew that they were willing and able
To unleash such a force of might and majesty
As never before witnessed in the stead of their
King and His Son,
But God was silent,
And they knew not but to grieve.



