

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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“It is finished”

(Jerry Fite)

Immediately prior to His death, Jesus said, “*It is finished*’ and He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit” (John 19:30). What did Jesus mean by saying, “it is finished”?

It cannot mean that the Divine plan to redeem man from sin was finished, because the resurrection had not yet occurred. Paul writes, “*and if Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins*” (I Corinthians 15:17). Yes, Jesus died for our sins, but He was “*raised for our justification*” (Romans 4:25). If Jesus had merely died, we would still be in our sins and not be justified before God.

Jesus “*knowing that all things are now finished, that the scripture might be accomplished, saith ‘I thirst’*” (John 19:28). Was Jesus saying that in His statement of “*I thirst*” He was finishing fulfilled prophecy regarding himself (cf. Psalm 69:11)? Fulfilled prophecy was not finished at the cross, for another prophecy in Psalms regarding Jesus was still ahead: “*For thou wilt not leave my soul to*

Sheol: neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption” (Psalm 16:16, Acts 2:37).

What was “now finished” was all of Jesus’ suffering. His back had been slashed to bloody fleshly ribbons at the scourging post. His ears had passively endured the personal blasphemy verbally directed toward Him, while personally feeling excruciating pain. His pierced hands and feet had sent pain messages to His brain, only confirming the horror of the anticipatory message His eyes sent to the brain when seeing the nails and hammer. This painful experience connected with Jesus being the sacrifice for sin as the Lamb of God was now finished.

Jesus endured the cross and looked down upon the shame associated with the cross willingly. Jesus earlier testified, “*No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself*” (John 10:18). Is it not ironic that Jesus said “*the Son of man hath not where to lay his head*” (Luke 9:58), but at his death he did “bow” or lay his head upon the cross! He had fin-

ished this painful portion of redeeming man, while entering the glorious portion of the resurrection. In victory He could say “*it is finished*” and then willingly “*give up His spirit*” in death.

Some take Jesus’ statement as meaning that our redemption has been completed in the death of Christ, and therefore all men are saved by “*grace only*.” We know this is erroneous because scripture testifies that “*by grace have ye been saved through faith*” (Ephesians 2:8). God’s plan of redemption is divided into two parts. God has established the foundation for our salvation: *Jesus’ death and resurrection*, while demanding man connect with that saving foundation “*through faith*” if any will be saved.

This faith requires one hear the word of Christ to have faith (Romans 10:17); confess Jesus as Lord (Romans 10:9-10); and repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Jesus endured and finished suffering on the cross so you could live. How will you respond to such love?