

“It Is Finished”—John 19:30a

John 19:30 says: *When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished.”*

Have you ever experienced the satisfaction of a project completely finished? If so, then you’ve had the privilege of experiencing a number of dynamics ranging anywhere from relief that “it’s finally done” to the joy of actually seeing the results of your efforts come to fruition.

One activity which has come to fill a lot of time for many people these days may be putting puzzles together. When putting together a jigsaw puzzle you usually know the goal. You have all the pieces laid out before you, fragments of a larger picture. You may prop up the box cover to keep your goal in clear sight and compare pieces with the cover to determine where they should be placed. You can get a general idea of which piece goes where and, as you persevere in your endeavor, you can eventually create a picture which looks like the one on the box. It is finished.

When Jesus spoke these words on the cross after receiving the drink of *sour wine to fulfill the Scriptures* (cf. John 19:28-30), it was kind of like seeing the complete picture of your salvation come together from all the pieces of God’s salvation history. The difference is that it happened on

God's terms, by God's power, not yours.

God puts your salvation puzzle together differently. He doesn't give you all the pieces at once and He certainly doesn't give a full view of the completed picture. Instead, He works by giving only one piece at a time, and even then it's not always clear how they all fit together. Let's take a glimpse at some of those pieces which came together in Jesus' words on the cross, *It is finished!*

- After Adam and Eve gave into the devil's temptation and sinned, God gave His creation the first piece of His plan of redemption in Genesis 3:15. While speaking to the devil He said, *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her Offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel*. In many respects it is a rather vague puzzle piece. Maybe their focus at this moment was having had the "picture perfect" life in the Garden of Eden (i.e. Paradise) and then losing it in one moment. Yet, it is a promise of what **Yahweh will do**.
- Another piece of God's "promise puzzle" came in the choice of a nation through which this *Offspring* would come. The LORD told Abraham in Genesis 12:2-3 → *I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you . . . so that you will be a blessing . . . and **in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed***. Abraham and his

offspring became a part of God's salvation puzzle, the piecing together of which confused him, the piecing together of which confused him, as we see him trying to figure out how to make the puzzle come together by his own efforts throughout his life. Yet, it is a promise of what **Yahweh will do**.

- More pieces of the puzzle were revealed through Moses as Yahweh redeemed His *great nation* from slavery to Egypt. By faith they placed the blood of a *lamb . . . without blemish* on the doorframes of their houses and partook in a meal instituted by God called the Passover (cf. Exodus 12:3-11). Through Moses He gave the Law, the tabernacle, the priesthood and the sacrifices for worship of Yahweh as He carried His people through the wilderness. Again, all foreshadowing what **Yahweh will do**.
- Receiving the Promised Land and eventually establishing the dynasty of King David, whose throne the LORD promised would *be established forever* (cf. 2 Samuel 7:16), brought more pieces to the puzzle. Throughout hundreds of years struggling in the midst of sin and idolatry the prophets brought word that Yahweh would one day act to redeem them again with the promise of the Messiah. More pieces of the puzzle based upon **what Yahweh will do**.

The picture keeps coming together piece by piece as the plan moves

forward while God continues to perform His work.

Notice God didn't put His puzzle together the way you would do so. He doesn't give all the pieces at once and He certainly doesn't give a full view of the completed picture. No, instead He works by giving only one piece at a time, and even then it's not always clear how they all fit together. Even the witness of Scripture during the earthly ministry of Jesus doesn't seem to fit in the grand scheme of it all. The One Who could heal the sick, raise the dead, command nature and overcome the powers of demons . . . now hangs on a cross at the hands of some wimpy men? A few days later it caused two men to declare, *we had hoped that He was the one to redeem Israel* (cf. Luke 24:21). *It is finished!* seemed to many like words filled with hopelessness and despair.

But why? Why doesn't Yahweh just give you the whole picture at once so you don't have to struggle with the puzzle so much? Throughout the history of His people time and again you hear of Him revealing His will to people up to a certain point and then leaving them hanging. Even these words of Jesus spoken almost two thousand years ago leave you hanging because it certainly doesn't feel like it is finished. You still have to deal with your sin and the sin of others. You still have to struggle with your presence in a world which certainly is not "picture perfect." It is finished? How?

Jesus had *finished* doing all that was completely necessary to fulfill

God's plan to redeem us helpless sinners from the power of the devil, sin and even death. Romans 5:6 says: *While we were still helpless, **at the right time** Christ died for the ungodly.* (NASB) Only God can bring the pieces of this puzzle together, not you. *God has done what the law, weakened by our sinful flesh, could not do. By sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law **might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*** (cf. Romans 8:3-4) Only Jesus could say *It is finished!* so God can say, "You are forgiven."

Your salvation from eternal damnation in hell is not based upon your ability to put the puzzle pieces together. They've been put together for you by God. They come together into a complete picture by God's grace which you see by faith, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Corinthians 2:9-14; 12:3). By faith you look at the cross and view everything coming together rightly according to God's plan. In faith you repent of your sins and cling to the atoning work of Jesus finished for the forgiveness of your sins. By faith you receive the promises of what Jesus will do when He comes again on the Last Day.

So . . . while it is finished, it's not over. There is more to come on that day when *the dwelling place of God will be with man* again and He wipes away every tear from our eyes, and death shall be no more, neither . .

. *mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore*, when Jesus makes *all things new* and says, *“It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.”* (cf. Revelation 21:3-6) Then you will receive the “picture perfect” life in Paradise restored. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding,  
keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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