

Τετέλεσται

“It is finished”

Passover

5781

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It Is Finished!

It is most frequent in the four Gospel accounts that, after Messiah Yeshua completes some particular action, for the author to state, *"this was done in order that it might fulfill what is written in the Scriptures."* Yeshua was sent into this world, having been clothed with flesh and blood, in order to fulfill His Father's will. This calling contained many different aspects, but primarily He was called to give His life as the only means for eternal redemption. It is very important for one to understand that the concept of redemption is a dominant theme throughout the Bible and this concept relates in an unique manner to the Passover. It is common when examining rabbinical writings for one to learn that Passover is called the Festival of Redemption.

When studying the Scriptures, one finds a connection between Passover and death. In the Torah, each family (house) had a choice, either slaughter (kill) the Passover lamb or experience the slaying (death) of the firstborn (both man and beast). In other words, every household at Passover would experience death. It is with this knowledge, that one can properly understand why the Gospels stated,

*"From then, Yeshua began to show to His disciples that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem and many (things) to suffer from the elders, chief priests, and scribes; **and to be put to death** and for the sake of the third day, be raised."*

Matthew 16:21

Paul stated the following to the Corinthians because Yeshua is the true Passover Lamb,

"...and for our Passover on behalf of us was slaughtered (the) Messiah."

1 Corinthians 5:7

Unfortunately, today many people are too casual and fail to pay close attention to how carefully Yeshua behaved to fulfill the Scriptures. This is certainly the case in regard to His death on the tree (cross). Prior to the Roman soldiers nailing His hands and ankles, Yeshua was offered a drink of sour wine mixed with gall **πιεῖν οἶνον μετὰ χολῆς μεμιγμένον**. The purpose of this drink was to sedate Him for a moment while they pounded the large nails through His flesh. At this time, Yeshua refused to drink. However, while on the cross a very different event occurred.

In John's Gospel, the reader is told something which is most significant and provides much information concerning Yeshua's thoughts while on the cross and approaching His death. The text is as follows,

Μετὰ τοῦτο εἰδὼς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἤδη πάντα τετέλεσται, ἵνα τελειωθῇ ἡ γραφή, λέγει, Διψῶ.

“After this, Yeshua knowing that now all things were accomplished (fulfilled), in order that the Scripture should be accomplished (fulfilled), says ‘I thirst’”. John 19:28

There are a few interesting aspects concerning this verse. The verb “knowing” is in the perfect tense. This grammatical condition reveals something that began in the past, is still happening at the present time, and will continue into the future. The use of the perfect tense informs the reader that Yeshua had known what needed to be accomplished and at this very moment suffering upon the cross, He was thinking about these things and that these things had a future relevance. The word ἤδη can mean “already” or “now”. There is a word that appears twice in this verse, **ΤΕΤΕΛΕΣΤΑΙ** and **ΤΕΛΕΙΩΘῆ**. This word conveys something that is “over”, “finished” “accomplished” or “fulfilled”. In other words, something which has reached its end or conclusion.

Normally, when one glances at this verse, it seems to say that Yeshua has already accomplished everything for which He was primarily sent into the world to do in regard to His First Coming. But upon reading the next few verses, one learns that there was indeed something else that needed to be fulfilled. For those who understand the Greek text, this fact could be expected from the use of the perfect tense also for the word **ΤΕΤΕΛΕΣΤΑΙ** “*were accomplished (fulfilled)*”. The perfect informs the reader that all things being accomplished is a process which does have a connection with the future. The appearance of the word ἤδη, best translated within this context as “*now*”, hints that at this time Yeshua was going to bring a completion or an end to the primary work for which He descended from the heavens.

The second appearance of the word previously discussed is found in regard to the Scripture being accomplished or fulfilled. In this occurrence, the verb is in the passive voice, which reveals that something or someone must cause the Scripture to be accomplished. This is what Yeshua is about ready to do; for at the end of the verse Yeshua states, **Διψῶ** “*I thirst!*”

Although there is no doubt that Yeshua would have been thirsty from a physical standpoint, His statement was not in regard to a physical need, but a strong desire to see every aspect fulfilled concerning the Passover. Biblically speaking (דאורייתא), there are three elements which must be consumed during the Passover meal. They are Unleavened Bread, Bitter herbs, and the Passover offering (the lamb). Yeshua is the Unleavened Bread as He was without sin and called the Bread of Life (John 6:35) and of course our Passover Lamb. However, there is nothing in the Bible that would suggest that Yeshua is related to that which is bitter.

In the book of Numbers chapter 9 and verse 11, it is stated,

בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי בְּאַרְבַּעָה עָשָׂר יוֹם בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים יַעֲשׂוּ אֹתוֹ עַל-מִצּוֹת וּמֵרִים יֹאכְלֶהוּ:

“In the second month, on the fourteenth day, at twilight, they will do it (the Passover sacrifice), with unleavened bread and bitter, they will eat it.”

The purpose of this verse is to reveal that it was a Biblical requirement for one to partake of these three elements together, the lamb, the unleavened bread, and the bitter. Although this specific verse deals with a commandment which is in regard to the second Passover (the Passover for those who could not keep the Passover in the first month), it was equally binding upon those who observed the Passover at its proper time in the first month.

After Yeshua cried out, *“I thirst”* the next verse reveals that there was a vessel full of **ὄξος** bitter wine. This was a type of wine mixed with bitter herbs which was given to Yeshua via a hyssop branch. It is a very important detail which John provides the readers when he includes the fact that a hyssop branch was used; as hyssop was also used in the Passover in Egypt,

וּלְקַחְתֶּם אֲגֵדַת אֲזוּב וּטְבַלְתֶּם בַּדָּם אֲשֶׁר-בַּסֶּף וְהִגַּעְתֶּם אֶל-הַמַּשְׁקוּף וְאֶל-שְׁתֵי הַמְּזוּזוֹת מִן-הַדָּם אֲשֶׁר בַּסֶּף וְאַתֶּם לֹא תֵצְאוּ אִישׁ מִפֶּתַח-בֵּיתוֹ עַד-בֹּקֶר:

“And you will take a bunch of hyssop and you will dip in blood which is in a basin and you will apply it to the lintel and the two doorposts from the blood which is in the basin and you will not go forth, a man from the door of his house, until morning.”

Exodus 12:22

After Yeshua received the bitter wine, He said, *“It is finished”* and gave up His spirit (died). The word translated *“It is finished”* is **ΤΕΤΕΛΕΣΤΑΙ** and it is the third time that this word appears in John 19:28-30. It is the same which was previously mentioned when studying verse 28 where stated,

“This word conveys something that is ‘over’, ‘finished’ ‘accomplished’ or ‘fulfilled’. In other words, something which has reached its end or conclusion.”

Therefore, when Yeshua stated, *“It is finished”*, He was revealing that everything for which He had been sent the first time into this world by His heavenly Father was accomplished or had been fulfilled. Once again, this verse, as with its first occurrence in verse 28, is in the perfect tense. This reveals that what Yeshua had fulfilled was a series of events which will have ongoing and future implications. The passive voice is used to convey that it was indeed Yeshua Who had accomplished the will of G-d. There is one more aspect of the word **τετέλεσται** which must be pointed out. Not only does this word convey something that is ‘over’, ‘finished’ ‘accomplished’ or ‘fulfilled’--in other words, something which has reached its end or conclusion--but

it also reflects something which has been accomplished in a manner which achieves it **perfectly**. Hence, when Yeshua stated "*It is finished*", one should properly understand that what Yeshua accomplished upon the cross was done perfectly and it completely fulfills the purposes of G-d. Because all of this was accomplished upon Passover, one should rightly conclude that what Yeshua had perfectly accomplished was the work of eternal redemption which one can freely receive by accepting Him as one's Passover offering that redeems perfectly and completely for all of his or her sins.