

Victory over Death, Ps 22:19-21; "It is finished!": the Intensive Perfect of *Teleō*: Sin Judged in the Past with Permanent Results, Jn 19:30; Program of the Resurrections, 1 Cor 15:20-24

- 48) The next three verses refer to divine deliverance of Messiah through physical death and resurrection:

Psalm 22:19 - But you, O Jehovah, be not far from Me, You Who are My Strength, hurry to My aid.

v. 20 - Deliver My soul from the sword, Your uniquely-born Son from the power of the dog.

v. 21 - Deliver Me from the lion's mouth. For You have answered Me from the horns of the wild oxen.

- 49) Once Messiah concludes paying for the sins of the world He is again restored to fellowship with the Father and can plead for help.

- 50) Deliverance from the sword is physical death which precedes the thrust of the soldier's spear tip:

John 19:34 - One of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear [λόγχη, *lonchē*: a spearhead], and immediately blood and water came out [indicating physical death].

- 51) "The power of the dog" refers to the kind of burial, or lack of it, that was afforded non-Romans. Details about the Empire's disposal of the dead are found in:

Lockyer, Herbert. *All the Messianic Prophecies of the Bible.* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1973), 157:

The Roman custom in disposing of the corpses of those crucified was to throw them to the wild, roaming dogs. Hence, David's phrases in Psalm 22:16, 20. But Jesus did not share the fate of his companions, the two thieves, whose mangled bodies were fed to the hungry dogs. Joseph of Arimathea, a secret disciple of Jesus, begged Pilate for the body of Jesus, and receiving permission, Joseph, along with Nicodemus, took His body, washed, anointed, and clothed it, and buried it in the grave Joseph had prepared for himself. (Matthew 27:57-61)

- 52) As we noted in our commentary on Psalm 22:13, the Bashan bulls and the roaring lions are used metaphorically for the imputation of mankind's sins to Messiah and their judgment.

- 53) Once the sacrificial ordeal was over the prophecy was answered and recognized by the Lord's proclamation in:

John 19:30 - When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" [Τετέλεσται, *Tetelestai*, the perfect passive indicative of τελέω, teleō].

- perfect: Intensive: The impact of this tense on the doctrines of the spiritual death of Christ, the figurative phrase the "blood of Christ," salvation, and eternal security is revealed by several Greek grammarians:

Summers, Ray. *Essentials of New Testament Greek.* Revised by Thomas Sawyer. (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1995), 114:

Stands for perfected action (action which has been completed and stands completed in the present). The perfect tense conveys three ideas: action which has occurred in the past, which has come to a culmination, and which stands as a completed result. (- - - • | ---->)

Wallace, Daniel B. *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 574-75:

The perfect may be used to *emphasize* the results or present state produced by a past action. (p. 574)

Use of the perfect does not exclude the notion of a completed act; rather, it *focuses* on the resultant state. (p. 575)

Dana, H. E. and Julius R. Mantey. *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*. (Toronto: The Macmillan Co., 1955), 202:

The tense places emphasis upon existing results, for it is the tense of the “finished product.” When special attention is thus directed to the results of the action, stress upon the existing fact is intensified. This is the emphatic method in Greek of presenting a fact or a condition ... the strong way of saying that a thing is.

Yeagar, Randolph O. *The Renaissance New Testament*. (Gretna, La.: Pelican Publishing Co., 1982), 8:458:

The intensive perfect passive in *Τετέλεσται* points backward to an accomplished task, completed in full at a time prior to the time of speaking. Therefore it also indicates a present state/condition as a result of the past completion. Thus we have Jesus, still alive in the physical sense, yet pointing to His work of redemption as an accomplished fact in the past, the past, in this case, being the immediately previous three hours—since noon, during the time that darkness covered the earth. His physical death was not something that was required for payment of a sin debt which had now been paid in full.

Thieme, R. B., Jr. *The Blood of Christ*. 5th ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2002), 23:

Jesus Christ’s separation from God the father—His spiritual death, the most excruciating pain that will ever occur—was *the judgment* for sin, *the cost* of atonement.

After the judgment of sin was completed Jesus Christ shouted, “*Τετέλεσται*” (*tetelestai*), “It is finished!” In the perfect tense *tetelestai* means “finished in the past with results that go on forever!” What had Christ finished that would have eternal results? *The work of salvation!*

Our Lord said, “It is finished” to indicate that His work was completed. Note that He spoke these words *before* He died physically. Since He was still alive on the cross *after* the work of salvation was completed, His subsequent physical death could not be the payment for sin. Therefore, it is Jesus Christ’s *substitutionary spiritual death* alone that is efficacious for our salvation.

The Lord’s use of the single Greek word *tetelestai* not only nails down the fact that the work of salvation was an accomplished fact at that point but in the intensive perfect tense it also confirms that the sacrificial penalty for the sins of the world was completed *prior* to the physical death of Christ.

passive: The subject is *acted upon* or *receives the action* expressed by the verb. Here the subject, “It,” refers to the saving work of Christ on the cross and its status as a completed, finished act.

indicative: Declarative; presents an assertion as an unqualified statement. Technical details of this mood further emphasize the certainty of the Lord's completed work of salvation. When *He* makes a declarative statement it *is* true since He cannot lie. We again consult:

Wallace, *Beyond the Basics*, 448:

The indicative mood is the mood of assertion, or *presentation of certainty*. It is not correct to say that it is the mood of certainty or reality. This belongs to the presentation (i.e., the indicative may *present* something as being certain or real, though the speaker might not believe it). To call the indicative mood the mood of certainty or fact would imply (1) that one cannot lie in the indicative (but cf. Acts 6:13), and (2) that one cannot be mistaken in the indicative (but cf. Luke 7:39). Thus it is more accurate to state that the indicative mood is the mood of assertion, or *presentation of certainty*.

- 54) Deliverance from the bulls' horns and the lions' jaws was the propitiation of the Father Who accepted as efficacious the work of Christ as full payment for humanity's sins.
- 55) Deliverance from the death of the grave was provided by physical death itself, followed three days and three nights later by the resurrection of our Lord.
- 56) The resurrection of Christ is itself a prophecy of the resurrections yet to come. Paul provides the program of the resurrections in:

1 Corinthians 15:20 - But now Christ is risen from the dead [intensive perfect passive indicative of ἐγείρω, *egeirō*: His resurrection is a completed action in the past with the result He will remain alive forever in resurrection body], and becomes the first fruits [the first product of a harvest] of those who sleep [believers who have died].

It is important to understand the significance of Christ being designated as "the first fruits of those who sleep." A brief description is provided by:

Howard, Kevin and Marvin Rosenthal. *The Feasts of the Lord*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1997), 75:

Firstfruits marked the beginning of the cereal grain harvests in Israel. Barley was the first grain to ripen of those sown in the winter months. For firstfruits, a sheaf of barley was harvested and brought to the Temple as a thanksgiving offering to the Lord of the harvest. It was representative of the barley harvest as whole and served as a pledge or guarantee that the remainder of the harvest would be realized in the days that followed.

Jesus Christ was resurrected on the Feast of First Fruits and thus became the "pledge or guarantee that the remainder of the harvest would be realized." Paul designates the resurrected Christ as "first fruits of those who sleep." Jesus was God's first-fruits offering and as "God of the harvest" will in turn resurrect all who believe that Jesus is the Christ. Each resurrection occurs at the end of its respective dispensation.

1 Corinthians 15:21 - For through a man [Adam] came death [spiritual death], so also through a Man [Christ] came the resurrection of the dead [believers].

v. 22 - For as in Adam all die [spiritual death at physical birth], so also in Christ [those who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit and possess top-circle assets including eternal life] shall all be made alive [resurrection body at the Rapture].

v. 23 - But every man in his own order [τάγμα, *tagma*: a unit of soldiers, e.g., a company]: Christ the first fruits [Company A]. Afterwards those who are Christ's at His coming [Rapture of Company B: Church Age believers],

v. 24 - then comes the end [of the Tribulation & the dispensation of Israel at the Second Advent] when He hands over the kingdom [resurrection of Company C: Old Testament saints plus those of the Tribulation] to the God even the Father, when He shall have put down all rule [Lucifer removed as ruler of this world], and all delegated authority [Lucifer's lieutenants, e.g. Beelzebub, Abaddon & possibly, Raphael and Uriel] and all power [the demon army].

- 57) This final verse is Paul's confirmation of the Lord's arrival to establish His millennial kingdom at the close of the dispensation of Israel which occurs at the end of the seven-year Tribulation. Daniel was the first among the Hebrew prophets to report it in detail through direct revelation from Jesus Christ in Daniel 12:1-4.