

What Jesus Accomplished on the Cross

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Date: 01 December 2024

Preacher: Nathan Rambeck

[0 : 0 0] I can go ahead and, oh, dismiss the kids, but go ahead and I'll go ahead and dismiss the kids, but I did want to pitch a book this morning. A few, I think we had about eight or ten of these donated, and we're making them available out on our little book display.

But this is a book called The Lie by Ken Ham. It's actually written, I don't know how many years ago, a few dozen years ago. It's quite a while ago, but this is a renewed and updated version. And what is the lie anyway?

The Lie, it says, Unraveling the Myth, Evolution in Millions of Years. And so, as many of you may know, Ken Ham runs a ministry called Answers in Genesis.

They have the Creation Museum down just south of Cincinnati, and even further south, the Ark, which we just went to. We went to a show out there just a couple of weeks ago. But the big thrust of his ministry is to basically promote what God's Word says, the Bible specifically, what it says in Genesis, about the origins of where we came from.

And kind of pushing back against the lie of evolution and millions of years. You know, evolution is something that has been an idea for not too long, just a couple hundred years.

[1 : 1 5] But it has really taken off, if you will. And a lot of people have taken up this lie. And really, it has been an impediment to people looking to what the Bible has to say about our need.

Because if we evolved from bacteria, from single-celled organisms, and we weren't created by God, then what is the Bible, how relevant is the Bible to my life, right?

And if the Bible, how it says that we originated is just a bunch of fairy stories, then what we're studying about today, the death of Jesus Christ, how is that relevant to me if the origins are not relevant?

And so, there's a lot of talk the last few years about fake news. And this whole idea of evolution has been fake news for a good 200 years.

But you might say, well, there's so much evidence for it. Well, is there really? Not when you take a closer look. There's a lot of promotional material, a lot of, I might call it propaganda marketing, if you will, around it.

[2 : 3 1] But when you really look closely, you'll find that it is not all it's cracked up to be. And so, if you're interested in finding out more about that topic, if you're interested in, grab a copy of the book out on the bookshelf there.

All right, I think that's it. Let's open up to Mark. We're in the Gospel of Mark, chapter 15. We've been focused on the last week of Jesus' life, and he's actually where we ended off last week.

He's on the cross. You know, if I had done a better job of, you know, some people plan out their sermons, you know, a year or two ahead of time. I'm lucky if I get two or three weeks ahead of time.

But, you know, we're in the Christmas season where we're thinking about the birth of Jesus. But right now, where we're at in the Gospels, we're looking at his death.

But that's okay. But we've been looking at Jesus on the cross. Today, in fact, the plan was to look at both Jesus' death and his burial after spending time working on this message.

[3 : 52] I think today we'll probably won't get to his burial. We'll look at that next week. But let's go ahead and read through this passage together, starting in verse 33, Mark 15, verse 33.

And then we'll go verse by verse teaching through it. So, Mark 15, 33. Now, when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani, which is translated, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Some of those who stood by when they heard that said, look, he is calling for Elijah. Then someone ran and filled a sponge full of sour wine.

They put it on a reed and offered it to him to drink, saying, let him alone. Let us see if Elijah will come to take him down. And Jesus cried out with a loud voice and breathed his last.

[4 : 54] Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. So when the centurion who stood opposite him saw that he cried out like this and breathed his last, he said, truly, this man was the son of God.

There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, the less, and Joses, and Salome, who also followed him and ministered to him when he was in Galilee, and many other women who came up with him from Jerusalem.

We'll stop there and just look at these passages this morning. Now, Jesus is on the cross. We saw that he was put up on the cross on the third hour. Now it says it is the sixth hour.

And like we mentioned last week or a couple of weeks ago, the mention of the third hour, the sixth hour, and the ninth hour really references to quadrants of time. You have the morning, you have the late morning, and you have the early afternoon, and then you have the late afternoon.

And so at the sixth hour, six hours, it's about six hours past the morning time when the sun rises, so it's about noon. And it says that at this sixth hour, now Jesus has already been on the cross for about three hours, about three hours suffering.

[6 : 17] And at around noon, about three hours in, it says there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And what's going on here, this darkness for about three hours?

It says it was over the whole land, so we don't know for sure what part of the land. Was it just over Jerusalem? Was it over Judea? Was it something that covered the whole earth?

There's actually, I think it's in Luke where it mentions this, it actually uses that terminology, over the whole earth, which sometimes can mean over the whole world, but it also can mean just over the region.

And so it's not totally clear how far this darkness spread. It's also not clear. It doesn't really say what was the cause. We know, you know, we're sure that it was something that was divine in origin, that it was caused by God.

But usually there's some kind of means, right? And so some have said, well, maybe this was an eclipse. And it certainly wouldn't be a natural eclipse if it was.

[7 : 31] One reason why that's the case is because if you're familiar with how eclipses work, an eclipse, you have the earth and then you have the moon and the sun, and the moon is blocking the sun.

We know that there's many things involved in kind of celestial bodies, at least around us. So our earth is rotating around the sun, right? And then we have the moon and it's rotating around the earth.

And then at the same time we have the earth is spinning. And it causes all kinds of things that we see in the heavenlies. And so we talk about the sun rising, but does the sun really rise? Well, no, that's just the earth rotating.

And we also see the moon rising. It's going throughout the sky and moving. So there's a lot of things going on. But when it came to the Passover event, the Passover event was actually based on a lunar calendar.

The Jewish calendar was a lunar calendar. And every 30 days, the moon, or about 30 days, it's actually I think 29 and a half, the moon goes through these phases, right?

[8 : 32] You have the new moon, the full moon, half moon, crescent moon. You have these waning and waxing phases of the moon. Well, a solar eclipse can only happen when you have a new moon.

And you have a new moon where you really can't see the light of the moon. The light of the moon is just the reflection of the sun. And so you only have a solar eclipse when the moon is between the earth and the sun.

And that is during a new moon. Well, not the Sabbath, the Passover was to happen during a full moon. So when the moon was opposite the earth and the sun.

Or the opposite side of the earth from the sun, I should say. And so if this was some kind of eclipse, it certainly was not the moon. And so what could it have been?

Well, some people said, well, maybe it was just a bunch of dark clouds, right? Dark clouds can certainly cause the light to dim. It could be dust, something like that.

[9 : 38] We don't know for sure. But I think the important thing, the most important thing, is the symbolism of what's involved here. Now, the Bible doesn't really tell us what this meant, but it certainly meant something.

You know, one of the things that the Bible teaches about Jesus is that he is the light of the world, right?

He said, I am the light of the world. Jesus said that about himself. And I think as a symbol of the darkening, as Jesus is up on the cross, and his life is, sometimes we call it, we might use the term fading away, right?

His life is fading away on the cross as he is suffering. I think that light fading, that darkness coming over the whole land, would represent the light of the world fading into darkness.

You know, speaking of Jesus being in the light of the world, the Bible indicates that in the future, there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

[10 : 45] The Bible says that this city will come down from heaven, a city called the New Jerusalem. And there will be light in that city, but the light won't be the light of the sun.

Here's what it says in Revelation 21, verse 23. It says, The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it. It doesn't say that there wasn't a sun, or that there wasn't a moon, but it said there was no need for the sun or the moon to shine in it.

It says this, For the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. And so in the future, Jesus himself will be, his glory anyway, will be the light that shines throughout that city, that new city, that new Jerusalem.

But here at this moment, that light is fading. And the darkness that covers the land is symbolizing that. Verse 34, And at the ninth hour, so this is three hours later, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani, which is translated, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

What Jesus, this phrase that Jesus cries out is Aramaic. It's very close to Hebrew. It's in the same kind of language family as Hebrew is.

[12 : 10] But Mark here actually gives us the translation of what it means. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And this is basically a direct quote from a Psalm of David.

And it's a Psalm of David that we've actually mentioned several times as we've gone through this account, looking at Jesus and his last day, his crucifixion.

If you actually turn there, Psalm 22, we'll look at this passage. But Psalm 22 is just filled with references to the death of Jesus.

But it actually starts out with this phrase that Jesus cries out. Psalm 22, verse 1, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me? And from the words of my groaning, Oh my God, I cry in the daytime, but you do not hear.

[13 : 20] And in the night season, and am not silent. There are references in here too. And again, this is David speaking, of course, by inspiration from the Spirit, by inspiration from the Spirit, about him being reproached and ridiculed and mocked, about people shooting out their lip and shaking their heads at him.

In verse 8, it mentions, and again, we read this, I think, last week, He trusted in the Lord. Let him rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him.

And so, if you go through this whole psalm, there are many references that, that we can see in, in Jesus' final hours here, on the cross.

But, Jesus says this for a reason. What he says here, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And just like when Jesus was in the garden, praying, and he was asking a question, Lord, if it's possible, can you deliver me from this, this hour?

And, it's, it's not necessarily a, a, a real question. I mean, it is a question. It's phrased, uh, in that way.

[14 : 37] But, Jesus knows the answer. Um, why have you forsaken me? He knows why he needs to go through this. But, it's an indication of his suffering. Just like, David was asking God, why have you forsaken me?

My enemies are attacking me. And, you're just letting this happen? In the same way, Jesus, from the cross, why have you forsaken me?

Jesus is the righteous one. He's the holy one. He hasn't done anything wrong. Certainly wasn't guilty, according to men's laws. He, he wasn't guilty, according to any of God's, laws.

He was the righteous one. Why, should he be forsaken, by both men, and also, by God? And so, in what way was Jesus forsaken? And, well, the Lord didn't rescue him.

Just like, the Lord didn't rescue, David, from all of his trouble. You know, even for us, right? God doesn't rescue us, from all of our suffering. We might ask the same question.

[15 : 42] God, why will you not rescue me, from this suffering, from this pain? But for Jesus, his death, him being forsaken, by the Father, had a purpose.

The Bible says, in Isaiah, chapter 53, verse 6, about that suffering servant, that so many people, had questions. Who was that suffering servant, in any way? But in Isaiah 53, verse 6, it says, that the Lord, laid on him, laid on Jesus, the iniquity, of us all.

And so, our sin, was somehow, in some kind of way, laid on him. Some people, will ask the question, when Jesus cried out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Was there some kind of, a way in which, the Father forsake the Son, in a spiritual sense? And, you know, I don't know that I have, the answer to that question, but, when, when our sin was, our sins, the Bible says, separates us, from God, right?

The Bible says, our sins, separate us, from God. And so, when our sin, was laid on Jesus, was there some kind of sense, in which Jesus, God the Son, was separated, in some kind of way, from God the Father.

[17 : 09] And maybe that, was also part of his suffering, beyond just his physical suffering. Maybe. Verse 35, some of those who stood by, when they heard that, they heard Jesus crying that out, they said, look, he is calling for Elijah.

Now, why would they say that? Well, the word, the name Elijah, is actually very similar, to the word for God. And so, Eli, Eli, or Eloï, Eloï, is very, is very similar.

So, maybe, they were Jews, who misunderstood, or maybe they were, Romans, who were saying that, who didn't understand Aramaic. They just spoke Greek. And were maybe thinking, they were talking about, the prophet Elijah.

But then it says, then some, someone ran, and they filled a sponge, full of sour wine, put it on a reed, and offered it to him to drink, saying, let him alone. Let us see if Elijah will come, and take him down.

He was crying out to Elijah, let's see if Elijah comes to rescue him. Mocking him, even to the very end of his life. And then it says this, in verse 37, And Jesus cried out, with a loud voice, and he breathed his last.

[18 : 24] Just such a short sentence. What a short sentence, with a lot in it, describing the last moments, before Jesus gave up his life.

That final cry, and we'll talk about this more in a second, because there's, the centurion that is, kind of overseeing Jesus' execution, makes an observation, with Jesus' final cry.

But it's more than just, the normal cry of suffering. It has more weight to it, that caused that centurion, to realize that Jesus, was not just any man.

But it says this, let's focus on that, it says he breathed his last. He breathed his last. The King James Version, actually translates it this way, it says, he gave up the ghost.

Why would it say that? Well, ghost, you know, we don't really use that term, outside of, you know, Halloween, and kind of more mystical things, but, that's just a term, that means spirit, a spirit.

[19 : 30] And God is spirit, but also, we are spirits. And so, in many languages, including Greek, including Aramaic, including Hebrew, the word for spirit, is also the same as wind, or breath.

They have similar, root words, anyway. And so, that phrase, to expel your last breath, is actually, similar to, giving up, or expelling your own, spirit.

And just like us, we are, spirit beings, with physical bodies. Jesus also, was, a spirit being, still is, who took on flesh.

The Bible says, that the word, became flesh. He took on, a body of flesh, just like, us. But in his death, breath, he breathed out, that last breath, and his, body gave up, his spirit.

That spirit, his spirit, different from ours, our spirit, comes from, the breath of God. You know, in Genesis 2, 7, it says this, and the Lord God, formed man, of the dust of the ground.

[20 : 43] So he, he made our bodies, from the earth, same material, same molecules, as from the earth. And it says this, and he breathed, into his nostrils, the breath, of life.

And man became, a living being. Our bodies, are just houses, but our bodies, are animated. They are alive, because, we are spirit beings.

Spirits that, are originated, from the very breath, of God. In, Luke, Luke's account, of this, these last moments, of Jesus' life, he says this, or, this is how it describes it, and Jesus' final words, a little bit different, a little bit additional information, Luke 23, 46, and when Jesus, had cried out, with a loud voice, he said, Father, into your hands, I commit, my spirit.

And having said this, he breathed, his last. So this is Jesus, indicating, that, his spirit, he's giving up. and he's giving up, into, safe hands, the hands, of the Father.

This is actually, if you, in my Bible, in the New King James Version, that scripture, is in capitals, which is an indication, that it's a, reference to another verse, it's actually, comes from Psalm, 31, 5.

[22 : 08] But I just want to point out, that, this whole time, Jesus is suffering, he's being killed, by the Romans, under the, oversight, or, request really, of the, the Jewish leaders.

But Jesus, is always in control, of his own life. Did you know that? Jesus, gave up his own life, willingly. He said this, in John 10, 17.

Therefore, my father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one, takes it from me, but I lay it down, of myself.

I have power, to lay it down, and I have power, to take it again. This command, I have received, from my father. See, nobody took, Jesus' life, without his own, willingness, to give it up.

And here, we see, with Jesus' final breath, his willingness, to expel, to commit, his spirit, into the hands, of God, through the death, of his mortal body.

[23 : 21] Verse 38, says this, then the veil, of the temple, was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now this is, quite tremendous, so, a little bit of, explanation here, backstory.

The temple, is a building, there's a huge courtyard, at this time, anyway, with the temple, that was, many football fields, in size. But in the center, of this courtyard, was a building, a fairly small building, compared to the size, of the rest, of the courtyard.

But there were, two sections, the holy place, and then, inside of the holy place, was another, smaller, room, if you will, called, the holy, of holies.

And that room, was separated, by this huge curtain. And that curtain, was, not just a sheet, like you would think of, about a bed sheet, or maybe one of our curtains, like you would see here.

These curtains, were, quite thick. In fact, there's a, an old testament, commentary, by the Jews, called the Mishnah.

[24 : 28] And in the Mishnah, it describes, a little bit, about this veil, that separated, the holy of holies, from the holy place. And it's mentioned, in one place, that the thickness, of this veil, was about the, the breadth, of a man's hand.

About four inches, you might say. That's pretty thick. We don't really have, anything that I'm aware of, I can't think of anything, that we would equate that to. We have things like, tapestries, or comforters, or different things, that have a fair bit, of thickness, but nothing, quite like that.

I'm sure it was, layer upon layer, upon layer, and took, lots to make. There's also a mention, in the Mishnah, that when it came to, handling, this veil, that it took, 82 priests, 82 young priests, in order to, handle, this thing.

This was no, simple, sheet. But the Bible says, that it was, ripped, in half. Now that, in and of itself, is miraculous. There's also a mention, in the Mishnah, that even if you took, two horses, and tried to, tear this veil, the two horses, trying to pull it apart, could not, do it.

And so, this is not something, that somebody could, do in secret, tear this thing, in secret, and, attribute it, to some miracle.

[25 : 58] This was, a miracle, from heaven. And interestingly enough, torn from top, to bottom. Not, from bottom to top, which typically, a man would do.

But really, looking at its, divine origin, God, from the heavens, tearing, that veil, in two. And how would, anybody know, that, that this thing was, torn, from top to bottom, anyway?

You would either, one, have to see it, right? Watch it tear, in half. And that probably, did happen. Did you know that, there are people, constantly, working, there are priests, constantly working, in this temple.

They were constantly, doing the, the different, temple services, in there. So there were, likely, priests in there, who actually, were there, when it tore, in half. Saw it happen.

But then, there's also, indicators, you know, when you see a, torn cloth, you can typically, just by examining it, see which end, the tore, or the tear started, and where it ended.

[27 : 10] At the end, when we get to the end, of this passage, I'm going to talk more, about the meaning, of this tear. But for now, let's go on, to verse 39. So when the centurion, who stood opposite him, saw that he cried out, like this, and breathed his last, he said, truly, this man, was the son of God.

Now this is a Gentile, a Roman, a centurion. He was, the one overseeing, the execution, of these, these three prisoners, including Jesus.

And there was something, in that cry, and in Jesus' final breath, that told him, there was something more, to this, this man, than the other prisoners, that we, the other, the other criminals, that we have, executed on these crosses, here on this hill.

When it says, that Jesus cried out, there's no indication, that there were any, specific words, spoken. Now it says, that he spoke, other things.

Earlier he cried out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? It says in, John, no sorry, Luke, Father into your hands, I commit my spirit.

[28 : 31] And in the book of John, let me see, if I wrote it down, what does he say? He says, it is finished. So there are a few words of Jesus. But, in that cry, it doesn't seem like, there was any words.

It was just, a wordless, cry. We tend to think of, communication as using words, right? Whether they're written words, or spoken words.

Where we have, you know, symbolic tokens, and every language is different, everyone uses a different language, but they mean things. But, you know, that we communicate in, in ways other than words, right?

A lot of people will point out, our body language communicates things, right? You, you put your arms like this, and it communicates something, the way that you stand. Also, we could use our voice without words, to communicate things.

For example, a heavy sigh, or, a short giggle, or weeping, or, groanings. These are expressions, a lot of time, that are able to express things, that words, cannot express.

[29 : 45] Have you ever been there, where you've, been in a situation, where you've, wanted to express something, but words, couldn't express them, and so you needed to express them, in a different way?

Paul, in Romans, talks about this, explicitly. He says in Romans 8, 22, talking about our suffering, as, as people, as human beings, and even as believers.

Romans 8, 22, for we know, that the whole creation, groans, and labors, with birth pangs, together, until now. Not only that, but we also, who have the first fruits, of the spirit, even, we ourselves, groan, within ourselves, eagerly waiting, for the adoption, the redemption, of our bodies.

There is a groaning, where we groan, under the sufferings, of life, and we're, we're waiting, for something. We're waiting, for relief, from that suffering.

And, in this passage, in Romans 8, Paul is talking, about a time, in which we will be relieved. When that adoption, is finalized, when our redemption, is complete, through the redemption, of our bodies.

[30 : 58] But verse 26, says this, likewise, the spirit, also helps, in our weaknesses, for we do not know, what we should pray for, as we ought. We pray, and we don't know, the words to say, when we're suffering.

But the spirit himself, makes intercession, for us, with groanings, which cannot be uttered. Or really, maybe another way, to say that, with groanings, that cannot be articulated, in words.

And so, some cries, of the heart, just cannot be, articulated, with words. They can't say, enough. I think that is, what happened here, with Jesus, on the cross.

Jesus cried, out, with a groaning, that could not be, articulated, that could not articulate, in words, the depths, of his suffering.

And that groaning, shook, the centurion, to his core. It was a cry, that echoed in his heart, and pierced, his soul. To where he, he said to himself, or I guess out loud, truly, this man, was the son of God.

[32 : 16] It says this, in verse 40, there were also women, looking on from afar, among whom were, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, the less, and of, Joseph, and Salome, who also followed him, and ministered to him, when he was in Galilee, and many other women, who came up with him, to Jerusalem.

So who were these women, anyway? A lot of Marys, you'll find that there are a lot of Marys in the Bible, though the name Mary, is a very common name, or was a very common name at the time. Really, just like it is, I don't know so much now, but I think, in the recent past, Mary has been a very popular name.

But especially so, during this time, in Israel. So, a lot of Marys running around. So, Mary Magdalene, if you may recall, was a prostitute, who had been ministered to by Jesus.

Demons were cast out of her, and she, participated in the ministry of Jesus, as it mentions here, while he was up ministering in Galilee. Who's Mary, the mother of James, the less, and Joseph?

Well, Joseph, by the way, is just a, a rendition of the name Joseph. But James, the less, who is that? Well, there are many, also many Jameses in the Bible, but one of the Jameses, is the James, that was the disciple of Jesus.

[33 : 35] And we call him, James the greater, because he was a disciple of Jesus. James the less, is actually, the brother, of Jesus. His, biological brother, if you will.

Son of his mother, and his father, Joseph. And so, and it, apparently, reading from here, he also had a brother, whose name was Joseph.

And that's pretty common, right? To be named after your, your father. And so, Mary, the mother of James, the less, and of Joseph, is his own mother, Mary. And then it says, and Salome.

And who is Salome? Well, there's a little hint, because in, um, Matthew 27, verse 56, where it's giving the same account, about these women, looking on, it mentions three women as well, but gives a little bit of a different name.

It says, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons. And so there, it mentions three women, but the last one, is the mother of Zebedee's sons.

[34 : 40] That's the, uh, James and, and John. And so, evidently, the mother of James and John, her name is Salome. Which, by the way, is, does that sound familiar, to another Hebrew word?

Shalom, right? What does that mean? Peace. Peace. I'm sure that was a popular name as well. And these three women, would play a crucial, it says that there were other women, by the way, not just these three, but I'm sure these three, were the most, um, recognizable, and so, their names are mentioned.

But, um, these women would play a crucial role, in the resurrection story, which we will look at, next week. I'm gonna stop there, but I wanna go back, and just, look, a little bit more closely, at, this event that happened, with, this veil, this huge, epic veil, that's so thick, that separated, this holy place, from the holy of holies, or, what was also, you might, is also translated, the most, holy, place.

And really, this gets to the question, of what did Jesus, accomplish, on the cross. You know, to those who were watching, Jesus didn't accomplish anything.

To his disciples, to these women looking on, to the Romans, to the Jewish leaders, he was just a guy, suffering. It seemed, to even his disciples, that this Messiah, had failed.

[36 : 21] You know, there's many references, to, the cross, to what Jesus accomplished, on the cross, in the Old Testament. But, one thing we notice, about those, references, is that they're, they're heavily veiled.

They're, very mysterious. There's this, suffering servant, that's talked about, in Isaiah chapter 53. We actually see this, in the book of Acts, there was a, a man, from Ethiopia, who was reading, Isaiah 53, and he asked, Philip, he said, who is this man, that it's talking about, here in Isaiah 53?

I don't know. And, many people asked that question, at that time, and throughout the history, of the Jewish scriptures. Who is this, suffering servant? And so, these references, to what would happen, in the future, with Jesus, dying on the cross, were, were veiled.

But, the mysteries of the cross, are later, revealed. And, especially in the book, of Hebrews. We'll look at a few, scripture references here.

Really, most of the rest, of the New Testament, outside the Gospels, is dedicated, a huge section, Paul's epistles, Hebrews, Peter, John, even in Revelation.

[37 : 43] There are, there's revelation, about what Jesus, accomplished, on the cross. One of the things, that Jesus said, right before he died, and I mentioned this, just a bit ago, it was in John, chapter 19, verse 30, it says this, so when Jesus, had received the sour wine, he said, it is finished.

And bowing his head, he gave up his spirit. He committed his spirit, into the hands of the father. And so, he said that phrase, it is finished.

What is he talking about? What, is finished? Well, the veil, points, to that, which was finished. Inside, of this, holy, of holies, were a few things.

There was the, ark of the covenant. It was this ark, that was carried around, by Israel, during the time, they were in the wilderness. And inside of that ark, were three things. There was the ten commandments, those tablets of stone.

There was Aaron's, rod, that budded. And then there was manna. And, you know, what is this manna? This is that miraculous food, that God provided to the people.

[38 : 55] But, on the top of this, ark of the covenant, was something called, the mercy seat. There were two, cherubim, over the top of the mercy seat, with wings.

And, really, that mercy seat, represented both, an altar, but also a throne. A seat for the Lord. Leviticus chapter 16, actually talks about, the day of atonement, and it was the day of atonement, was the day in which, the high priest, and only the high priest, was to, do a bunch of, ritual things, but just once a year, to offer a sacrifice, for the sins, of the people.

He was the only one, allowed to enter, and only allowed to enter, at that specific day, and after doing, some very specific things. And if he did otherwise, what was the outcome?

He would drop dead. I don't know if, you'd be interested in that job, I think I might hesitate. But once per year, on the day of atonement, that high priest, would go through, these rituals, they would do, some ritual washings, put on some, some, special garments.

And then, there were a few, different sacrifices. One of the sacrifices, was for himself, and for his household. And he would, sacrifice a bull, for himself.

[40 : 21] And then there was, another sacrifice, of goats. There was actually, two goats. One, and they were, there was lots cast, to see which one was which. But one would be, sacrificed, and his blood, would be sprinkled, and the other one, would be released, out into the wilderness.

And the sins of the people, would be, metaphorically, or symbolically, placed on top of, of that, that goat. But when he did, these sacrifices, he was to go inside, of the Holy of Holies, and sprinkle the blood, of the bull, and the goat, on the mercy seat.

And it describes there, how at least, on the day of atonement, that the presence of God, would be over top, the mercy seat, in the form of a cloud.

But this sacrifice, was for the sins of the people, through the blood of bulls, and goats. But in Hebrews, the author of Hebrews, we're not sure, exactly who that was, but talks about, this, these types and shadows, of what happened, during the Old Testament period, each year.

And how it pointed, to something, a future reality, which would be accomplished, by Jesus. Hebrews chapter 9, verse 11. If you want to turn there, Hebrews chapter 9, verse 11. Almost all the way, to the end of the Bible.

[41 : 54] Bible. talking about a heavenly sanctuary, verse 11, but Christ came, as high priest, of the good things, to come, with the greater, and more perfect, tabernacle, not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.

So he's saying, there is this temple, that was made, with Jewish hands, but it represented, something else. A heavenly, temple, a heavenly abode, one not made, with human hands.

Christ came, as a high priest, just like, the Jewish high priest. It says this, in verse 12, not with the blood, of goats, and calves, but with his own blood, he entered, the most holy place, once for all, having obtained, eternal redemption.

Skip a few verses, down to verse 23, just for the sake of time, though all of this, is so good. Therefore, it was necessary, that the copies, of the things, in the heavens, should be purified, with these, but the heavenly, things themselves, with better, sacrifices, than these.

So the copies, the temple, the ark of the covenant, the holy of holies, these were copies, of things, that were in the heavens. And the blood, of bulls and goats, would purify, those things.

[43 : 33] But in heaven, there was something, more needed, than the blood, of bulls and goats. Verse 24, for Christ, has not entered, the holy, places, made with hands, which are copies, of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear, in the presence of God, for us.

Not that he should, offer himself often, as the high priest, enters the most holy place, every year, with blood of another. He then, would have had, to suffer often, since the foundation, of the world.

But now, once, at the end of the ages, he has appeared, to put away sin, by the sacrifice, of himself.

And so that tearing, of the curtain, symbolized something. That this thing, this sacrifice, this ritual sacrifice, that was done, once a year, over, and over, and over, again, in order to atone, for the sins, of the people, that was done with.

That curtain, that separated, that holy place, that place, dedicated unto God, symbolized, that this, ritual, was no longer needed.

[44 : 55] The shadows, the types, the symbols, could be done away with, because the real, sacrifice, the final sacrifice, the one done, once and for all, had been accomplished.

When Jesus said, it is finished, this, is what he was talking about. But then there's another thing, another part of it, that I'd like to talk about, with this curtain.

I mentioned that, the presence of God, would hover over, the, that mercy seat, inside the holy of holies.

And we see references, to this throughout the Bible. Remember in the wilderness, they didn't have a temple, at that time, which is a permanent structure, but they had a tent, a huge tent, they called it the tabernacle. But as they would travel, throughout the wilderness, there were two symbols, of the presence of God.

One at night, and one during the day. And what were they? The pillar of fire at night, and the pillar of cloud, by day. That was a symbol, of God's presence.

[45 : 59] And then later on, when Solomon actually, builds the temple, and it's dedicated, remember the day of dedication, and what happened? There were priests, standing to minister to the Lord, during that dedication.

And it says that, the glory of God, filled the temple. And those priests, could not even stand up, because of the presence of God, in that temple. And so, all the way from the beginning, with the tabernacle, in the wilderness, even to this day, the temple, represented God's house.

It was actually called, the house of the Lord. This is where God lived. Now there are other places, other passages, in which, in which the scriptures indicate, that God is not housed, in a building made by hands.

And so, there are, there's a sense, in which this is God's house, this is where his presence lives. But there's also a sense, in which, you know, God inhabits the whole, of the earth, and the universe even.

But it's a very important sense, in which, this is God's house, where he lives. And this is a holy place. And the holiest, of the holy places, is where, he lives.

[47 : 14] And notice, that nobody else, is allowed to go there. Just, that high priest, once, and he had to do all these rituals, cleansing himself, sacrificing for his own sins, before he could go in there, on behalf of the people.

And so, that veil, between, the holy place, and the holy of holies, symbolized, a separation. A separation, between man, and God.

And when that veil, was torn in two, it showed, that that separation, is taken away, through the death, of Jesus.

That separation, between a holy God, and a sinful, and a defiled people, is no more, for those who are willing, to partake, of that sacrifice. If you turn, just one chapter over, to Hebrews chapter 10, we'll read, about, about that.

Romans, or excuse me, Hebrews chapter 10, verse 19. Therefore, brethren, having boldness, to enter the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new, and living way, which he consecrated, for us, through the veil, that is his flesh, and having a high priest, over the house of God, let us draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance, of faith, having our hearts, sprinkled, from an evil conscience, and our bodies, washed, with pure, water.

[48 : 52] Because of what, Jesus accomplished, there is no more, separation, between sinful man, and God. For those, who have been washed, and what does it take, to be washed, by the blood of Jesus?

What does it take, to take advantage, of what Jesus accomplished, for us? Just trust him, just believe, put your faith in him, believe that what he accomplished, he accomplished, for you, and that washing, will be completed, for you.

And there is no longer, any separation. Just like, that temple, right, in that holy of holy place, had to be, cleansed through, the blood of bulls, and goats, Jesus has cleansed, that temple, and what is that temple, today anyway?

Where is the temple of God? Well, there is the heavens, right? But there is also, another place, at least for now, it is our bodies, our hearts.

The Bible says, that God lives in our hearts, he lives in our bodies, he lives in us, and that we, are the temple, of God. And that temple, has been washed, it's been cleansed, by the blood, of Jesus.

[50 : 14] And so we have access, to God. We are in him, he is in us, the Bible says, and we can draw near, to him, at any time. Going back to Hebrews, Hebrews chapter, 10, 22, let us draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance, of faith.

Having our hearts, sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed, with pure water. Because our hearts, because our conscience, has been purged, by the blood of Jesus, we can have, full assurance of faith.

Now that takes work. I think there are two, challenges, two difficulties, when it comes to us, as believers, who are trusting in Jesus, drawing near to God.

One is, we look at all of our, past sins. Would God really, give me access? Man, I am, so filthy.

I've done so many, filthy, things. And that's that, condemnation and guilt, that continues to rear, its ugly head, and say, well you, you don't have access, to the Father.

[51 : 30] That's where we need to, take up that, shield of faith, and believe, what God said, and not what our past, says about us.

But then the other ditch, that we can get into, is thinking, well I'm going to draw near, to God, because of, my own, righteousness, hey I've done a pretty good job, in life. I've done pretty well.

I deserve, to be able to come near, to God. I'm self sufficient. We need to look to Jesus, as our sufficiency. The one who, accomplished, our need, for us.

So that we could, draw near to God. But, since we have access, to God, God, I think so many of us, we fail, to draw near to God, in our time of need.

And when is our time of need? Every day, right? I talked about that hymn, a few weeks ago, I need thee every hour. Every hour, we need him.

[52 : 37] And we should be, drawing near to him, day in, and day out. In full assurance of faith, because, he accomplished, our need for us. Let's, why don't we go ahead, and stand, and we'll finish, in a word of prayer.

Father, we love you. Thank you for, what you accomplished, for us. I ask, that you would work, in our hearts today, that this would just, be a reminder, that you took, away, every, obstacle, to us, having a relationship, with you.

That our sins, do not have to, separate us from you, anymore. That they have been, done away with. That they have been purged, by the blood of Jesus. That we can draw near, to you, at any time, in full assurance of faith, because of what, was accomplished, on our behalf.

Thank you for doing that. And I ask, that you would remind us, on a daily basis, to take advantage, of that nearness, that has been afforded to us. We would draw near, to you, each and every hour, of every day.

Taking advantage, of what our true need is. We need you. We thank you, for giving yourself, to us, as a gift. We thank you, for these things, in Jesus name.

[53 : 50] Amen.