

It is Finished!: Mark 15:37-41; John 19:30

"It is finished" (John 19:30) [Gk: tetelestai!] was the loud cry (Mark 15:37) from Jesus' lips as he breathed his last on the Cross. This shows that Jesus was in control of his senses and destiny right to the end. His cry was a victorious declaration of accomplishment. Jesus had fulfilled his divine commission of giving his life as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

"...he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and by his wounds we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5)

Significantly, the huge curtain of the temple, which was about 60 feet high, separating off the Most Holy Place, was torn in two from top to bottom (Mark 15:38). Through Christ's death, he opened up the way into God's holy presence for those who put their trust in him.

The Roman centurion watching the crucifixion (v.39) would doubtless have witnessed many crucifixions, but this one touched him deeply. This was not the usual way victims died (they were normally unconscious for some time before dying). The centurion "stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry, and saw how he died." He responded, "Surely this man was the Son of God!" (v.39).

Our passage today finishes with the presence of the women - Jesus' close followers - and "many other women who had come up with him to Jerusalem were also there" (v.41). They too were first-hand witnesses of Jesus' death, and they "saw where he was laid" (v.47).

"Lifted up was he to die
'It is finished!' was his cry
Now in heaven exalted high
Hallelujah, what a Saviour!"

(Philip Bliss)