

It Is Finished – *Tetelestai*

Text: John 19:30, “*When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, ‘It is finished...’*”

INTRODUCTION:

Last words matter. They often reveal what is most important. Truly, last words are lasting words.

On the cross, Jesus’ final words were: “*It is finished.*” In Greek, one powerful word for it is, ***Tetelestai***. Not resignation, but triumph.

Point 1: *Tetelestai* – The Debt Is Fully Paid

In the ancient marketplace, ***tetelestai*** was written on receipts to show **a debt was paid in full**.

At the cross, Jesus cancelled our greatest debt – the record of sin.

Colossians 2:14 tells us *He “cancelled the record of debt... nailing it to the cross.”*

Imagine owing a debt so huge you could never repay it. Then someone pays it all – and erases the record forever. That’s what Jesus did for us.

Because Jesus has fully paid our debt, we no longer have to carry guilt or shame. Salvation is not something we work for – it is a gift we receive. So instead of striving to be “good enough,” we can rest in the finished work of Christ.

Our lives of obedience and service flow out of gratitude, not obligation.

That’s the truth of ***tetelestai*** – it is finished, and the debt is paid in full.

Point 2: *Tetelestai* – The Sentence Is Fully Served

In the legal system of the ancient world, once a prisoner had completed their sentence, officials would write “***tetelestai***” across their release papers.

This word meant: *the sentence is fully served, justice is satisfied, you are free to go.*

Romans 8:1 declares, “*There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*”

Think about that – when Jesus cried, “It is finished” on the cross, He wasn’t serving His own sentence; He was serving ours. We were the guilty ones, but He bore the penalty.

Justice has been satisfied, not because of what we've done, but because of what Christ has already completed.

Walk in the freedom Jesus purchased for you.

When guilt tries to drag you back, hold up the certificate of the cross and declare: *"It is finished – justice has been satisfied, and I am free in Christ."*

Point 3: *Tetelestai* – The Battle Is Fully Won

On the battlefield, when soldiers won a decisive victory, they would shout "***tetelestai***" – "It is finished, the battle is won." It was not a cry of exhaustion but of triumph.

At the cross, Jesus wasn't whispering defeat; He was proclaiming victory. There, Jesus disarmed Satan, stripped sin of its power, and broke the grip of death.

Colossians 2:15 declares: *"He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him."*

1 Corinthians 15:57 reminds us: *"Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

The cross was not the end of the story—it was the moment the ultimate war was won.

Here's the good news: as Christians, we don't fight *for* victory—we fight *from* victory.

Yes, battles still rage in our daily lives—temptations, struggles, hardships. But these are not the final outcome. Jesus has already declared, “***tetelestai***”.

You are *more than a conqueror* through Christ (Romans 8:37). Walk in the boldness that comes from knowing the outcome is secure.

When Jesus declared “***tetelestai***” on the cross, He meant:

- Your **debt** is fully paid.
- Your **sentence** is fully served.
- Your **battle** is fully won.

It is not a cry of defeat—it is a declaration of victory that echoes through eternity.

Let us live in the freedom, pardon, and victory that Christ purchased with His blood. Because when Jesus said, “***It is finished***”, He meant it for you!