



IT IS FINISHED!

"It is finished !" Three words. According to the Gospel of John, these were the last words of Jesus on the cross (**John 19:30**). Throughout the millennia of earth's existence, all of heaven and God's creation have eagerly waited to hear these three words. Just three words; but these three words divided human history into two dispensations: the *Era of the Promise* and the *Era of the New Reality*.

The *Era of the Promise* began immediately after the fall of Adam and Eve, when God promised the victory of "the Seed" over the serpent (**Gen. 3:15**). The Promise was restated to Abraham, when God covenanted to bless all the nations through his "Seed" (**Gen. 12:3**).

Centuries later, God established Israel with a covenant that was designed to continually make them aware of the vast separation between a holy God and sinful humankind. This time, they were pointed to the Promise again and again through a system of symbols and rituals that reminded them that the "Anointed One" would come someday to completely fulfill the covenant that they made with God. He would restore what was lost by Adam and destroy the works of the devil, who had stolen man's inheritance and freedom.

Man was originally created to have intimacy with God. Even in his sinful state, the remnant of God's image in him would only genuinely respond to the revelation of God's character of love. The Mosaic law system was merely a dim shadow of what was promised. So, it became a religion that promoted law and punishment, a culture that aroused fear, not intimacy and loving obedience.

The apostle John declared that Jesus Christ is the highest and best revelation of who God is and what He is really like (**John 1:17-18**). The fullness of God's glory – His love and power – is fully revealed in Christ. The Good News of John is that Jesus is the Promised One – God who became a man. When Jesus began His earthly ministry, He simply declared, *"The kingdom of heaven is here"* (**Matt. 4:17**). Christ came to bring the kingdom of heaven to earth and to restore sinful man to his God-given destiny – to rule earth, to be fruitful, to subdue and fill the earth with God's glory.

When Jesus declared with His dying breath, *"It is finished,"* He ended the *Era of the Promise* and ushered in the *Era of the New Reality*. People no longer have to look forward to the fulfillment of the promised Messiah. He had already come and completed His work of atonement – His life of righteousness, His sacrificial death, and the destruction of the devil's works. Now, we can live life in its fullness because of the realities in the heavenly realm that flow out of Christ's finished work.

Because of Christ's finished work, we now can step into our God-given destiny and live out these heavenly realities:

The Cross - When He died on the cross, Christ gained forgiveness for all sins – past, present and future. We are forgiven by God because of the blood of Jesus. The first step that God took in restoring us to His family is to make sure that the penalty for all sins was paid by Jesus on the cross. Because of Jesus' death, God cannot and does not count our sins against us. We now have divine forgiveness (a "legal" result of the payment of Christ for all sins).

The Resurrection - When He rose from the dead, Christ gained eternal life for all who would believe. Even though God has already forgiven us because Jesus already paid the penalty of our sins on the cross, if we don't believe it, it doesn't do us any good in the restoration of our relationship with Him. We can't be restored to God's Kingdom unless we believe in God's love. Many people will be lost not because they were not forgiven by God, but because they do not believe that God can be trusted and that He is good.

The Restoration - We are saved into God's Kingdom when we believe in Jesus Christ and accept Him as our Savior and Lord. Our first step to restoration is to accept God's forgiveness, not try to earn it. You do this by believing in Jesus, the One who died in your place.

This is the Good News of the *Era of the New Reality*: Christ's death on the cross was a complete victory over Satan and his kingdom and a public declaration of the deliverance of his captives. We have been ransomed by the blood of Jesus Christ. ***It is finished!*** There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus for the law of the Spirit of Life has set us free from the law of sin and death! (**Rom. 8:1-2**)