

Last Seven Statements of Jesus – Wednesday, March 18, 2026

The seven statements of Jesus on the cross, drawn from the four Gospels, represent his final hours of suffering and triumph. They include: *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"* (Luke 23:34), *"Today you will be with me in Paradise"* (Luke 23:43), *"Woman, behold your son... Behold your mother"* (John 19:26-27), *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"* (Matthew 27:46/Mark 15:34), *"I thirst"* (John 19:28), *"It is finished"* (John 19:30), and *"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"* (Luke 23:46).

These last words provide profound theological insights into forgiveness, salvation, and his role as the Messiah.

- **1. Forgiveness:** "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34) - Jesus prays for his executioners.
- **2. Salvation:** "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43) - Spoken to the repentant thief.
- **3. Relationship:** "Woman, behold your son! ... Behold your mother!" (John 19:26-27) - Jesus entrusts his mother, Mary, to the disciple John.
- **4. Abandonment:** *"Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?"* which means, *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"* (Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34) - Expresses the weight of bearing sin.
- **5. Distress:** "I thirst" (John 19:28) - Highlights his humanity and fulfills Scripture.
- **6. Triumph:** "It is finished" (John 19:30) - Signals the completion of his redemptive work.
- **7. Reunion:** "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46) - A final act of trust in God.

Tonight, we look at statements 5 and 6.

Distress: "I thirst" (John 19:28) - Highlights his humanity and fulfills Scripture.

Only John records this 5th statement, but all four gospels record that Jesus was offered a drink of sour wine, called posca. A sponge soaked in the wine was lifted up to Jesus on a hyssop branch. Hyssop branches are often mentioned in the Old Testament, as they were used symbolically in the sacrificial ritual purification act.

"In my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink."

(Psalm 69:21)

What We See in this Statement

Fulfillment of Prophecy - Psalm 69:21

Physical Humanity - Jesus cries out

Spiritual Longing - Jesus, having just cried out for God, shows that He is spiritually thirsty.

A Practical Purpose - Perhaps Jesus is simply thirsty, needing to moisten his throat.

A Closer Look at Psalm 69:21

*"Insult has broken my heart, and I despair;
I looked for compassion, but there was none,
for comforters, but found none"*

Why was Jesus thirsty?

- Fulfillment of Prophecy – John’s gospel states that Jesus said, “I thirst” to fulfill Scripture. We also read in Psalm 22:15 that his strength “has dried up.”
- Physical Suffering and His Humanity – Jesus suffered extreme physical agony, dehydration, and exhaustion after being scourged, mocked, and hanging on the cross for 3 hours.
- Completing the Mission – The phrase “I thirst” allowed Jesus to speak his next words, “It is finished.” Jesus had to complete that which he was sent to do – *to die as the ultimate sacrifice for our sin.*
- Spiritual Symbolism – Some theologians see this statement as a metaphor for Jesus’ desire to save our souls. Galatians 3:3 states that he experienced the spiritual separation that causes us to thirst, offering his own “living water” in return. First, he suffered physically, second, he fulfilled Scripture, third, he provides for our own thirst.

Reunion: *"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"* (Luke 23:46) - A final act of trust in God.

Translated *tetelestai* in the Greek, it carries several layers of significance.

- **Payment of Debt** – *Tetelestai* was an accounting term used to mean “paid in full.” Theologically, it means our debt, incurred because of our sin, is paid in full – the debt fully satisfied through Jesus’ death on the cross – His *sacrifice* for us.

- **Mission Accomplished** – Jesus earthly mission is complete. His work of redemption is done!
- **End of the Old Covenant** – the Old Covenant sacrificial system is ended, the New Covenant has begun.
- **Victory, not defeat** – the use of the present tense here tells us of the action completed in the past, producing ongoing, eternal results. Rather than a cry of exhaustion, it is the shout of triumphant victory.

Christ's death on the cross purchased our forgiveness, our redemption, our freedom, our fellowship with God, our eternal well-being.

But we need to remember that when the Lamb of God hung on that cross, He hung there naked, beaten, and bleeding – a ghastly sight!

Blood drenched Jesus' body, pouring from His head and brow. The effect of the scourging Jesus received had begun to take its toll as his body swelled up and became horribly disfigured. The whole scene was ugly, unsightly, repulsive, vile, foul and revolting.

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”

Isaiah 53:3-5

Never forget: Jesus was willing to offer His own blood for the full payment of our sinful debt – we are forgiven and utterly debt-free.

PAID IN FULL has been stamped on our past, sinful record because Jesus paid the price for our redemption with His own blood.

No wonder Jesus shouted, “It is finished!” This was the greatest victory in the history of the human race! Jesus had been faithful to His assignment even in the face of unfathomable challenges.

When the fight was over, and Jesus could finally cry out to the Father, it was these words:

*“I have done exactly what You asked me to do! The mission is
ACCOMPLISHED!”*