Fulfilled Prophecies

Satan - When Was The Devil Cast Down And Thrown Into The Lake Of Fire?



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† The Bible doesn't teach that Satan will remain active forever or that his final destruction is still waiting thousands of years after Christ's victory. Scripture reveals a progressive judgment that began during Jesus' earthly ministry and reached its completion with the end of the Old Covenant age in AD 70 (John 12:31; Romans 16:20; Revelation 20:10).

† Jesus announced Satan's fall, declared that the ruler of this

world had been judged, and accomplished His victory through the cross. The apostles expected Satan's crushing and the completion of God's judgment within their own generation (Luke 10:18; John 16:11; Hebrews 2:14; Romans 16:20).
† Revelation describes Satan being cast down, bound, released for a short time, and finally thrown into the lake of fire. These events must be understood within the first-century time statements that govern the entire prophecy (Revelation 1:1-3; 22:6-10).
† The question isn't whether Satan was defeated. The question is when Scripture says his defeat would be completed, and whether we should believe the time statements given by Jesus and His apostles (Matthew 24:34; James 5:8-9).

The Devil's Fall Was Announced During Jesus' Ministry

Luke 10:18-19
And He said to them, I watched Satan fall from heaven like lightning. Behold, I have given you authority to walk on snakes and scorpions, and authority over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.
† Jesus wasn't predicting an event thousands of years in the future. He was describing Satan's downfall in connection with the authority already being exercised by His disciples (Luke 10:17; Matthew 12:28).
† The disciples had returned rejoicing that demons were subject to them in Jesus' name. Their success demonstrated that Satan's kingdom was already being overcome by the arrival of God's kingdom (Luke 10:17; Matthew 12:28-29).
† The fall from heaven represents the loss of Satan's position and authority. It doesn't require understanding heaven as a physical location from which Satan literally fell through the atmosphere (Revelation 12:9-10; John 12:31).
† Jesus connected Satan's downfall with His own ministry, showing that the defeat of the enemy was already underway before the cross (Matthew 12:28-29; 1 John 3:8).

Jesus Announced The Judgment Of The Ruler Of This World

John 12:31-32
Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself.
† Jesus said now, not thousands of years later. Satan's judgment was directly connected to the approaching cross and the establishment of Christ's kingdom (John 12:33; Colossians 2:14-15).
† The ruler of this world was being cast out because Jesus was about to accomplish the redemption that would destroy Satan's power over those held in bondage through fear of death (Hebrews 2:14-15).
† The cross wasn't a temporary victory that left Satan's ultimate defeat uncertain. It established the decisive judgment that would reach its covenantal completion within the generation Jesus addressed (Matthew 16:27-28; 24:34).
† Satan's authority was being removed because Christ was establishing His reign, not because the physical planet was about to disappear (Daniel 7:13-14; Luke 17:20-21).

Satan Was Already Judged

John 16:8-11
And He, when He comes, will convict the world regarding sin, and righteousness, and judgment: regarding sin, because they do not believe in Me; and regarding righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you no longer are going to see Me; and regarding judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.
† Jesus didn't describe Satan's judgment as an uncertain future possibility. He declared that the ruler of this world had been judged (John 12:31).
† The Holy Spirit would testify to a judgment already established through Christ's authority and His approaching

victory at the cross (John 16:7; Acts 2:32-36).
† The distinction between judgment being pronounced and judgment being fully executed is important. Satan's defeat was secured through Christ, while Revelation portrays the completion of that judgment at the end of the Old Covenant age (Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:10).
† This means we shouldn't confuse the beginning of Satan's downfall with the final execution of his sentence (Romans 16:20; Revelation 12:12).

Jesus Bound The Strong Man

Matthew 12:28-29
But if I cast out the demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or, how can anyone enter the strong man’s house and carry off his property, unless he first ties up the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.
† Jesus connected the arrival of God's kingdom with the binding of the strong man. The context identifies Satan as the enemy whose power was being overcome (Matthew 12:24-26).
† Jesus' authority over demons demonstrated that Satan couldn't prevent the kingdom from advancing through Christ's ministry (Luke 11:20-22).
† Binding doesn't mean Satan immediately ceased every activity. It means his power was restricted according to God's redemptive purpose (Revelation 20:1-3).
† Revelation later describes Satan being bound so that he couldn't deceive the nations in the same way until the appointed period had been completed. This corresponds to the gospel advancing beyond Israel into the nations (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8).
† The binding began with Christ's ministry and belongs to the first-century establishment of His kingdom, not to an earthly kingdom still awaiting establishment (Mark 1:15; Colossians 1:13).

Christ Destroyed The Devil's Power Through Death

Hebrews 2:14-15
Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, so that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.
† The writer of Hebrews identifies the devil as the one who held the power of death, and declares that Jesus came to destroy that power through His own death (1 John 3:8).
† The cross broke Satan's authority over death and opened the way for the promised redemption of God's people (2 Timothy 1:10; Hebrews 9:15).
† The continued existence of physical death doesn't prove Satan remains alive or in authority. Christ's victory concerns the power of death to hold God's people separated from their promised inheritance (1 Corinthians 15:54-57; Revelation 20:14).
† The destruction of Satan's power was accomplished through Christ's sacrifice, while the final removal of death and Hades belongs to the completed resurrection judgment (1 Corinthians 15:26; Revelation 20:13-14).

Christ Publicly Triumphed Over His Enemies

Colossians 2:14-15
having canceled the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.
† Paul connects Christ's victory over the hostile powers with the removal of the written obligations that stood against His people (Ephesians 2:14-16).
† Satan's defeat wasn't postponed until the end of world history. Christ had already triumphed through the cross (Hebrews 2:14;

John 12:31).
† The Old Covenant system was approaching its final removal because Christ had established the better covenant through His sacrifice (Hebrews 8:13; 10:9).
† The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in AD 70 publicly demonstrated the passing of that former covenant order, while Christ's kingdom remained established forever (Matthew 24:1-3, 34; Hebrews 12:26-28).

Satan Was Cast Down From Heaven

Revelation 12:9-10
And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers and sisters has been thrown down, the one who accuses them before our God day and night.
† Revelation identifies the dragon as the devil and Satan. There's no uncertainty about the identity of the enemy being cast down (Revelation 20:2).
† The announcement connects Satan's expulsion with the arrival of salvation, God's kingdom, and Christ's authority (Luke 10:18; John 12:31).
† Satan's role as the accuser was being removed because Christ had become the victorious mediator of the New Covenant (Romans 8:33-34; Hebrews 9:15).
† The imagery of heaven and earth communicates a change in spiritual and covenantal authority. It doesn't require a literal battle involving physical weapons in the sky (Ephesians 6:12; Revelation 12:7-8).
† The casting down belongs to the victory inaugurated by Christ and the first-century conflict surrounding the establishment of His kingdom (John 16:11; Revelation 1:1-3).

The Devil Knew His Time Was Short

Revelation 12:12
For this reason, rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you with great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.

† Revelation explicitly says the devil had only a short time. That statement must be understood according to the first-century audience receiving the prophecy (Revelation 1:1-3).

† The short time describes the limited period remaining before Satan's judgment would be completed, not an additional two thousand years of activity (Revelation 22:6-10).

† The intensified persecution of God's people belonged to the final crisis of the Old Covenant age, which Jesus said would come upon His own generation (Matthew 23:34-36; 24:9-13).

† If Satan's final destruction remains in our future, the short time announced in Revelation has been stretched far beyond the urgency communicated to its original readers (James 5:8-9; 1 Peter 4:7).

Satan Was Bound For A Thousand Years

Revelation 20:1-3
Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he took hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he threw him into the abyss and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

† Revelation identifies the bound dragon as Satan, the same enemy previously cast down from heaven (Revelation 12:9).

† The thousand years are symbolic of a complete period determined by God. Revelation uses prophetic imagery rather than requiring a literal one-thousand-year earthly imprisonment

(Psalm 50:10; 90:4).
† The binding corresponds to Christ's victory over the strong man and the advancement of the gospel among the nations (Matthew 12:28-29; Colossians 1:23).
† Satan's restriction concerned his ability to deceive the nations, not the immediate elimination of every form of opposition or persecution (Revelation 20:3; 1 Peter 5:8).
† The symbolic millennium belongs to Christ's first-century reign and the transition from the Old Covenant order to the fully established New Covenant kingdom (1 Corinthians 15:24-26; Hebrews 8:13).
† The passage also requires a brief release before the final judgment. That release isn't an ongoing period extending into our present age (Revelation 20:7-10; 22:10).

Satan's Final Rebellion Was Brief

Revelation 20:7-9
When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.
† The release of Satan describes a final, limited outbreak of deception and opposition before God's judgment (Revelation 20:3).
† Gog and Magog draw upon Ezekiel's prophetic imagery of hostile nations gathering against God's people (Ezekiel 38:2-9; 39:1-6).
† The beloved city and the camp of the saints represent God's covenant people under attack, not a prediction that Satan would return to threaten a future physical kingdom (Hebrews 12:22-23; Galatians 4:26).
† The first-century persecution of the church and the gathering conflict surrounding Jerusalem fit the covenantal setting of

Revelation's final judgment (Matthew 24:9-22; Revelation 11:7-8).
† The fire from heaven represents decisive divine judgment, consistent with prophetic descriptions of God's intervention against His enemies (Ezekiel 38:22; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).
† Revelation doesn't identify the precise historical moment of Satan's release. However, its repeated statements of nearness place the completed judgment within the approaching events announced to its original readers (Revelation 1:1-3; 22:6-10).

The Devil Was Thrown Into The Lake Of Fire

Revelation 20:10
And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.
† This is the final judgment of Satan. Revelation doesn't describe another release, another rebellion, or another opportunity for the devil to deceive the nations afterward (Revelation 20:7-10).
† The devil joins the beast and the false prophet, whose judgment had already been described in the preceding vision (Revelation 19:20).
† The lake of fire represents God's final and irreversible judgment. Satan's defeat isn't temporary, and his authority isn't restored after this sentence (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).
† The language of everlasting torment emphasizes the permanent nature of the devil's judgment. It shouldn't be confused with the second death experienced by those whose names weren't found in the book of life (Revelation 20:14-15).
† From the fulfilled perspective, this judgment reached its completion in AD 70, when the Old Covenant age ended and the prophetic events announced as near reached their fulfillment (Matthew 24:34; Revelation 22:6-10).
† The text explicitly declares Satan's final judgment, while the AD 70 identification follows from reading Revelation's visions

within their first-century time frame (Revelation 1:1-3; 22:10).

Death And Hades Were Also Destroyed

Revelation 20:13-14
And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them; and they were judged, each one of them according to their deeds. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.
† Satan's final judgment is connected with the judgment that removes death and Hades. These aren't unrelated events separated by thousands of years (1 Corinthians 15:24-26).
† Hades was the realm of the dead, and its destruction represents the removal of the former condition in which the dead awaited the promised resurrection (Daniel 12:1-2; Acts 24:15).
† The removal of death doesn't mean human bodies stopped physically dying in AD 70. It means the covenantal power of death was overcome through Christ's completed redemptive work (1 Corinthians 15:54-57; Hebrews 2:14-15).
† The resurrection and judgment completed the transition into the established New Covenant order, in which God's people have direct access to His presence through Christ (Hebrews 12:22-24; Revelation 21:3-4).
† The devil, death, and Hades aren't presented as powers that continue indefinitely after God's final judgment (Revelation 20:10, 14).

Paul Expected Satan To Be Crushed Soon

Romans 16:20
The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.
† Paul wrote to living first-century Christians and told them that God would soon crush Satan under their feet. He didn't tell them that the victory would remain incomplete for thousands of

years (Romans 16:19; Revelation 1:1).
† The word shortly communicates an expectation relevant to Paul's original readers. It's consistent with the approaching judgment announced throughout the New Testament (Hebrews 10:37; James 5:8-9).
† This promise echoes the original judgment pronounced against the serpent and demonstrates that the victory accomplished by Christ would be brought to its appointed completion (Genesis 3:15; Hebrews 2:14).
† Paul didn't describe Satan as an eternal rival who would continue challenging Christ's authority throughout an endless series of future prophetic ages (Colossians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 15:25-26).
† The crushing of Satan fits the first-century completion of the victory inaugurated through Jesus' death and resurrection (John 12:31; Revelation 20:10).

The Time Of Revelation's Fulfillment Was Near

Revelation 1:1-3
The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, everything that he saw. Blessed is the one who reads, and those who hear the words of the prophecy and keep the things which are written in it; for the time is near.
† Revelation begins by identifying its events as things that must soon take place. The original audience was told that the appointed time was near (Revelation 22:6-7).
† The judgment of Satan in chapter 20 belongs to the same prophecy introduced with these time statements (Revelation 20:10; 22:10).
† We can't consistently apply the nearness statements to some judgments while removing Satan's final judgment from the first-century setting without clear textual justification (Revelation 1:3; 22:10).

† Jesus had already declared that the judgment of Jerusalem would occur within the generation then living, providing the historical setting for the completion of the Old Covenant age (Matthew 23:36; 24:34).
† The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 marked the decisive removal of the former covenant system, while the New Covenant kingdom established through Christ remained (Hebrews 8:13; 12:26-28).

The Angel Was Told Not To Seal The Prophecy

Revelation 22:10-12
And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. Let the one who does wrong still do wrong, and the one who is filthy still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous still practice righteousness, and the one who is holy still keep himself holy." "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to reward each one as his work deserves.
† John was explicitly instructed not to seal the prophecy because its fulfillment was near. That instruction governs the entire book, including Satan's final judgment (Revelation 1:1-3; 20:10).
† Daniel had been instructed to seal his prophecy because its appointed fulfillment was still distant from his own day. John received the opposite instruction because the fulfillment was approaching (Daniel 12:4, 9).
† Jesus connected His coming in judgment with the rewarding of each person according to their deeds, and He placed that coming within the lifetime of some who heard Him (Matthew 16:27-28).
† The time statements don't permit us to move the devil's final judgment into an indefinite future while maintaining that Revelation was written to encourage Christians facing an approaching crisis (Revelation 1:3; 22:6-7).
† The fulfilled interpretation recognizes AD 70 as the covenantal completion of the judgment announced by Jesus and His

apostles (Luke 21:20-22; Matthew 24:34).

Historical References

† Flavius Josephus, writing in The Jewish War, Books 5-7, describes the siege of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, the burning of the city, and the terrible suffering surrounding the Jewish revolt. His account provides historical evidence for the national judgment Jesus had announced (Luke 21:20-24).

† Josephus also records the violent divisions, deception, and false leadership that contributed to Jerusalem's destruction. These conditions correspond to Jesus' warnings about false messiahs, lawlessness, and internal conflict before the city's fall (Matthew 24:4-13).

† Tacitus, Histories 5.10-13, provides a Roman account of the conflict surrounding Jerusalem and reports extraordinary signs associated with the approaching disaster. His testimony independently confirms the historical crisis surrounding AD 70 (Luke 19:41-44).

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.5-7, preserves the early Christian tradition that believers in Jerusalem fled to Pella before the city's destruction. This corresponds to Jesus' instruction that His followers should flee when they recognized Jerusalem's approaching judgment (Luke 21:20-22).

† These historical writers confirm the first-century setting of Jerusalem's destruction. They don't independently establish the invisible event of Satan's judgment in the lake of fire. That conclusion rests on the prophetic interpretation of Scripture (Revelation 20:10; 22:10).

How It Applies To Us Today

† Christians don't need to live in fear that Satan is secretly controlling the world or preparing another prophetic rebellion. Christ has already triumphed over the enemy, and His kingdom cannot be overthrown (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 12:28).

† We don't need to wait for a future millennium, another binding of Satan, or a future release of the devil. The fulfilled perspective recognizes those prophetic events as belonging to

the completed first-century judgment (Matthew 12:28-29; Revelation 20:1-10).
† Our confidence rests in the finished work of Jesus Christ, who destroyed the devil's power through death and secured the inheritance promised to His people (Hebrews 2:14-15; 9:15).
† The physical world continues, but the Old Covenant age has ended. We're living under the established reign of Christ, not waiting for Him to establish His kingdom someday (Daniel 7:14; Colossians 1:13).
† We still face temptation, suffering, evil, and human opposition. However, Scripture doesn't require us to attribute those things to an active Satan. Human beings remain responsible for their own sinful desires and decisions (James 1:13-15; Mark 7:20-23).
† We have access to God through Christ, and we belong to the heavenly Jerusalem, the kingdom that cannot be shaken (Hebrews 12:22-28; Ephesians 2:18).
† Our calling isn't to fight a defeated devil. It's to live faithfully in Christ, proclaim His completed victory, love one another, and demonstrate the righteousness of His kingdom (Romans 13:8-10; Colossians 3:1-17).

Q & A Appendix

Q: When did Satan first begin to fall?
A: Jesus announced Satan's fall during His earthly ministry, when the disciples were already exercising authority over demons in His name (Luke 10:17-19; Matthew 12:28-29).

Q: Was Satan defeated at the cross or in AD 70?
A: Christ decisively defeated Satan through the cross. The fulfilled perspective understands AD 70 as the completion of the prophetic judgment that followed that victory (John 12:31; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 20:10).

Q: Does Satan being cast down from heaven mean he was immediately thrown into the lake of fire?

A: No. Revelation distinguishes his casting down, binding, brief release, and final judgment. These are related stages of his defeat, not descriptions of one identical event (Revelation 12:9-12; 20:1-10).

Q: Were the thousand years a literal millennium?
A: The fulfilled perspective understands the thousand years symbolically, representing the divinely appointed period of Satan's restriction during the establishment of Christ's kingdom (Matthew 12:28-29; Revelation 20:1-3).

Q: When was Satan thrown into the lake of fire?
A: Revelation doesn't give a calendar date for this invisible judgment. However, its statements that the events were near support the fulfilled interpretation that Satan's final judgment was completed by AD 70 (Revelation 1:1-3; 20:10; 22:6-10).

Q: Is Satan still alive and deceiving people today?
A: According to the fulfilled perspective, no. Revelation presents the lake of fire as Satan's final judgment, with no subsequent release or renewed activity. Human sin and deception continue because people remain capable of evil choices (Revelation 20:10; James 1:14-15).

Q: If Satan has been defeated, why does evil still exist?
A: Satan's destruction doesn't mean human beings lose their ability to sin. Scripture identifies evil desires, selfishness, and disobedience as arising from the human heart (Mark 7:20-23; James 1:14-15).

Q: Was the lake of fire the literal burning of Jerusalem?
A: No. The lake of fire is prophetic imagery describing final divine judgment. Jerusalem's destruction provides the historical covenantal setting, but the lake of fire shouldn't be reduced to the physical flames that consumed the city (Revelation 20:10, 14-15; Matthew 24:34).

Q: Does Revelation 20:10 teach that all unbelievers suffer everlasting conscious torment?
A: No. The verse specifically identifies the devil, the beast, and the false prophet. Revelation separately describes the judgment of those not found in the book of life as the second death (Revelation 20:10, 14-15; Matthew 10:28).

Q: What happened to death and Hades when Satan was judged?
A: Revelation describes death and Hades being thrown into the lake of fire following the resurrection judgment. The fulfilled perspective understands this as the removal of the former realm of the dead and the completion of Christ's victory over covenantal death (1 Corinthians 15:26, 54-57; Revelation 20:13-14).

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