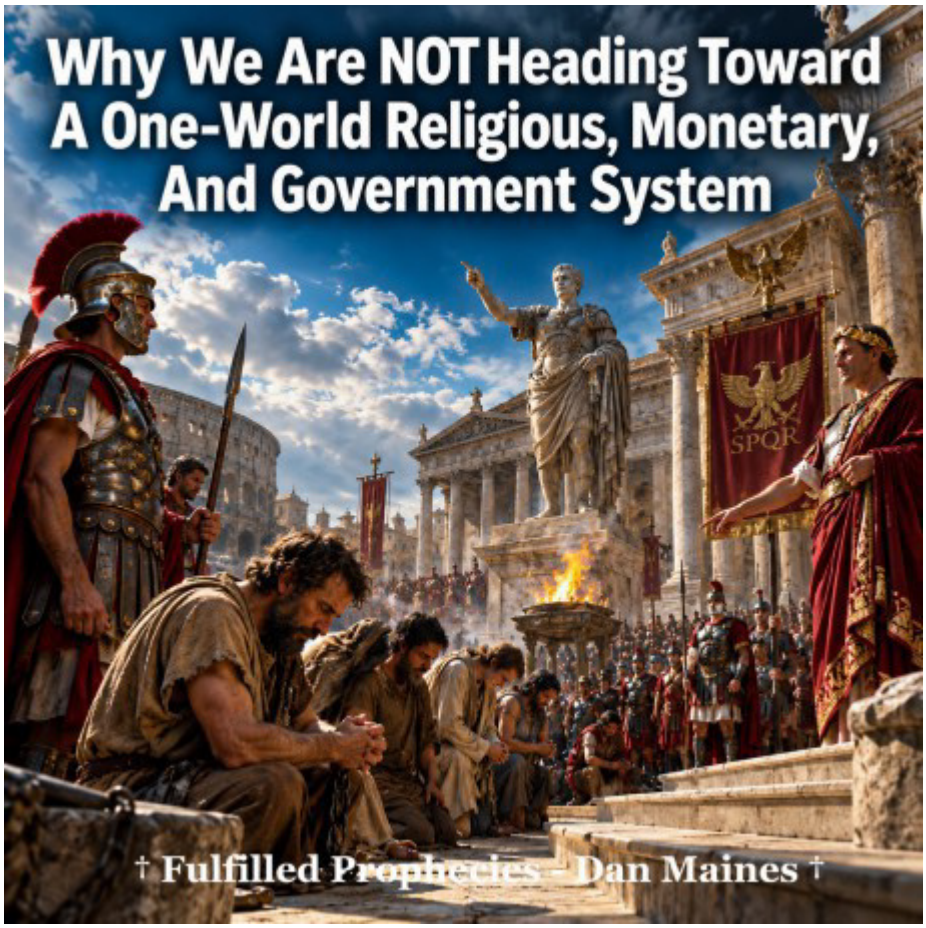
Fulfilled Prophecies

Why We Are NOT Heading Toward A One-World Religious, Monetary, And Government System



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† For generations, Christians have been warned that the world is moving toward a single government, a single religion, and a single monetary system controlled by the Antichrist. Every new development in technology, banking, international politics, or religious cooperation is presented as another sign that the end is approaching.

† We're told that digital currency will become the mark of the

beast, international organizations will establish a one-world government, and religious leaders will unite under a false prophet. But where does Scripture actually teach that these events must happen in our future?

† The answer begins by understanding when Revelation was written, whom it addressed, and when its prophecies were expected to be fulfilled. Jesus and His apostles consistently placed the fulfillment of these events within the first century, not thousands of years later (Matthew 24:34; Revelation 1:1-3).

† The fulfilled perspective doesn't deny that governments can become oppressive, financial systems can restrict freedom, or religious institutions can become corrupt. It recognizes that these modern developments aren't the fulfillment of prophecies that belonged to the first-century world.

† We must allow Scripture to interpret Scripture rather than allowing modern headlines to determine what prophecy means (Luke 21:20-22; Revelation 22:6-10).

Revelation Was About Things That Were 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,

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

† John didn't announce events that would begin thousands of years after his readers died. He said the things revealed to him must soon take place. The time was near for the seven churches receiving his message (Revelation 1:4; 22:6).

† The words soon and near established the time frame for the

entire prophecy, including the beast, false prophet, Babylon, and the judgment described throughout Revelation (Revelation 1:1-3; 22:6-10).

† If the mark of the beast, the religious deception, and the economic restrictions belong to Revelation's prophecy, they must be understood within the time frame John established (Revelation 13:16-18; 22:10).

† We can't move these events into the twenty-first century simply because modern technology resembles certain descriptions in Revelation (Revelation 1:1-3).

Jesus Identified The Generation Of Fulfillment

Matthew 24:34

Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

† Jesus placed the fulfillment of His prophetic warnings within the generation standing before Him. He wasn't describing a generation living thousands of years after His disciples (Matthew 23:36; 24:1-3).

† The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in AD 70 fulfilled His warnings concerning the end of the Old Covenant age. That judgment didn't require the destruction of the physical planet (Matthew 24:1-3, 34; Hebrews 8:13).

† The same first-century time frame must guide our understanding of Revelation. Jesus didn't give one generation a warning and secretly reserve its fulfillment for another generation thousands of years later (Luke 21:20-22, 32).

† That's why we shouldn't interpret modern international developments as evidence that Jesus' first-century warnings remain unfulfilled (Matthew 24:34; Luke 21:22).

The Beast Was A First-Century Imperial Power

Revelation 13:1, 7

And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.
It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.
† The beast represented an imperial power that opposed God and persecuted His people. From the fulfilled perspective, the sea beast identifies Rome's imperial authority during the first century (Daniel 7:7, 23; Revelation 13:1-7).
† Rome controlled a vast empire containing many nations, languages, and peoples. Its authority extended throughout the Mediterranean world, where the early churches were established (Luke 2:1; Acts 11:28).
† The language describing authority over every nation doesn't require a future government controlling every person on the planet. Biblical prophecy frequently uses universal language when describing the dominant empires of the ancient world (Daniel 2:39-40; 7:23).
† Rome's emperors claimed extraordinary authority, received divine honors, and demanded loyalty. Christians who confessed Jesus as Lord faced opposition because their allegiance belonged to Christ (Acts 17:6-7; Revelation 13:7).
† The beast wasn't a prediction of a future United Nations, European Union, or international political organization. It represented the imperial opposition confronting the first-century church (Revelation 13:1-7; 17:9-10).

The Number Of The Beast Identified A Man

Revelation 13:18

Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the

number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

† John expected his original readers to exercise wisdom and calculate the number. He didn't instruct them to wait thousands of years for computers, digital identification, or electronic banking (Revelation 13:18).

† The number identifies a man within the beast's historical setting. A well-known fulfilled interpretation associates 666 with Nero Caesar through the numerical values of the Hebrew letters in his name (Revelation 13:18; 17:10).

† Nero ruled Rome from AD 54 to AD 68 and became associated with the persecution of Christians. His reign fits the first-century setting of the beast's opposition to the saints (Revelation 13:5-7).

† The calculation concerns a person's name, not a computer chip, bank account, credit card, or digital currency. None of those modern technologies is identified in the verse (Revelation 13:17-18).

The Mark Of The Beast Was About Allegiance And Worship
Revelation 13:16-17

And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead,
and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.

† The mark must be understood within the conflict between worshiping the beast and remaining faithful to God. Revelation connects the mark directly with the beast's name and worship (Revelation 13:12-18; 14:9-12).

† The forehead and hand recall the covenant language used

when Israel was commanded to keep God's words before their eyes and upon their hands. These expressions represented identification, thought, and conduct (Deuteronomy 6:6-8; 11:18).
† Revelation also describes God's servants receiving His seal upon their foreheads. That seal identifies those belonging to God, just as the beast's mark identifies allegiance to the opposing power (Revelation 7:3; 14:1).
† The buying and selling restrictions describe economic pressure connected with allegiance to the beast. Participation in the ancient imperial world could involve pressure to honor its religious and political authority (Revelation 13:12-17).
† The passage doesn't say that the mark is a microchip, barcode, electronic payment system, or digital currency. Those ideas are added through modern speculation rather than established by John's words (Revelation 13:16-18).
† Modern governments may introduce digital identification or electronic financial systems, but that doesn't make them the fulfillment of the beast's mark (Revelation 1:1-3; 13:16-18).

The False Prophet Was Part Of The Same First-Century Conflict

Revelation 19:20

And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

† The false prophet supported the beast by promoting deception and directing worship toward its image. His activity belonged to the same prophetic setting as the beast and its mark (Revelation 13:11-15; 19:20).
† In the fulfilled interpretation, the land beast and false prophet

represent the religious authority that supported the first-century imperial system and encouraged allegiance to its power (Revelation 13:11-17).

† The false prophet wasn't introduced as the future leader of a worldwide religious organization. His identity and actions were tied to the beast already operating within Revelation's historical setting (Revelation 13:12; 19:20).

† Revelation describes the beast and false prophet as judged. We shouldn't rebuild their prophetic system thousands of years after the time John declared was near (Revelation 19:20; 22:10).

Babylon Was Not A Future Worldwide Religious Headquarters

Revelation 17:9, 18

Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits,

The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

† Revelation uses Babylon as a symbolic name for a city characterized by covenant unfaithfulness, persecution, and opposition to God's people (Revelation 17:1-6; 18:24).

† The seven mountains and authority over kings point toward Rome's imperial setting. Yet Revelation's accusations against the great city also identify Jerusalem as the covenantal focus of judgment (Revelation 11:8; 17:9, 18).

† Jerusalem was the city where Jesus was crucified, where the prophets were rejected, and where the blood of God's messengers was charged against that generation (Matthew 23:34-38; Revelation 11:8).

† From this fulfilled perspective, Babylon represents apostate Jerusalem in its alliance with the Roman world, while the beast

represents Rome's imperial power (Revelation 17:3-6; 18:24).
† The distinction matters because Revelation describes both religious corruption and political power without requiring a future worldwide religious headquarters (Revelation 17:1-6, 18).

Babylon's Commerce Doesn't Predict A Global Cashless Economy

Revelation 18:3, 11

For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.

And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more--

† Revelation describes commercial wealth, merchants, political alliances, and the collapse of a powerful city. These were familiar realities within the ancient Roman economy (Revelation 18:3, 11-19).
† The merchants mourned because the city's destruction ended their profitable relationship with her. The prophecy concerned judgment upon an existing commercial and religious order (Revelation 18:9-19).
† Nothing in this passage requires the creation of a future worldwide central bank, a single currency, or a universal electronic payment system (Revelation 18:11-19).
† International trade existed long before modern banking. Revelation's references to merchants and nations must be interpreted within its original historical setting (Revelation 18:3, 11-19).
† The destruction of Old Covenant Jerusalem in AD 70 brought the judgment Jesus had announced against that generation. From the fulfilled perspective, Babylon's fall belongs to that

completed covenantal judgment (Matthew 23:35-38; Luke 21:20-22; Revelation 18:24).

The Fourth Kingdom Was Already Identified In Daniel's Prophecy

Daniel 7:23

Thus he said: The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it.

† Daniel's vision described successive kingdoms, culminating in the fourth kingdom that would oppose God's people before the kingdom was given to the saints (Daniel 7:17-27).

† In the traditional fulfilled interpretation, these kingdoms were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. The fourth kingdom was Rome, the empire ruling during Jesus' earthly ministry (Daniel 2:37-44; Luke 2:1).

† Daniel didn't describe a two-thousand-year interruption before the fourth kingdom would suddenly reappear as a modern global government. The prophetic sequence concerned kingdoms leading to the establishment of Christ's kingdom (Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14).

† Christ received His kingdom and authority, and the first-century saints witnessed the transition from the Old Covenant order into the established New Covenant kingdom (Matthew 28:18; Hebrews 12:28).

† There's no biblical requirement for Rome to return as a future political empire before Christ's kingdom can be established. Christ already reigns (Colossians 1:13; Revelation 1:5-6).

The Antichrist Was Already Present In John's Day

1 John 2:18

Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this

we know that it is the last hour.
† John didn't say the last hour would begin thousands of years later. He declared that it was already the last hour because many antichrists had appeared (1 John 2:18).
† The antichrist teaching concerned those denying the Father and the Son, particularly those rejecting Jesus as the Christ. John identified this deception within his own generation (1 John 2:22; 4:2-3).
† Scripture doesn't identify a future president, pope, political leader, or international official as a final Antichrist who must control the entire planet (1 John 2:18-22).
† The first-century church was already confronting the deception John described. His words shouldn't be transferred into a future political system when he explicitly identified their fulfillment in his own time (1 John 2:18; 4:3).

The Old Covenant Was Already Near Its End

Hebrews 8:13

When He said, A new covenant, He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.
† Hebrews identified the Old Covenant as obsolete and ready to disappear. That language describes the approaching removal of the covenantal system centered upon Jerusalem and its temple (Hebrews 8:13; 9:8-10).
† Jesus established the New Covenant through His death and resurrection. The temple's destruction in AD 70 publicly demonstrated that the former covenantal administration had reached its end (Luke 22:20; Hebrews 9:11-15).
† Revelation's judgment belongs within this transition. Its central concern wasn't the creation of a future worldwide banking system, but the judgment of the old order and the vindication of

Christ's people (Matthew 24:1-3; Revelation 11:1-2).
† The New Covenant isn't waiting for another prophetic crisis before it becomes complete. Believers already belong to Christ's kingdom and have access to the heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22-28; Colossians 1:13).

Christ's Kingdom Isn't A World Government

John 18:36

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.

† Jesus distinguished His kingdom from the political kingdoms of the world. His authority doesn't depend upon armies, international institutions, national borders, or earthly governments (John 18:36; Matthew 28:18).
† Christ's kingdom was established through His redemptive work, not through the creation of a centralized political system. His people belong to a kingdom that cannot be shaken (Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 12:28).
† Governments will continue to rise, change, cooperate, and fall. None of those developments means Christ has lost control or that His kingdom remains unfinished (Daniel 7:13-14; Ephesians 1:20-22).
† The church doesn't need to fear that a future world government will fulfill an unfinished prophecy. Christ already possesses authority over every ruler and power (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20-22).

Revelation Explicitly Declared Its Fulfillment Was Near

Revelation 22:6, 10

And he said to me, These words are faithful and true; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to

show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place.
And he said to me, Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.
† Revelation closes with the same time limitation established in its opening chapter. The things revealed to John must soon take place because the time was near (Revelation 1:1-3; 22:6-10).
† Daniel was instructed to seal his prophecy because its fulfillment belonged to a later appointed time. John received the opposite instruction because his prophecy concerned events approaching his own generation (Daniel 12:4; Revelation 22:10).
† We can't reasonably interpret soon and near as thousands of years without removing their ordinary meaning for the original readers (Revelation 1:3; 22:6-10).
† That's why the beast, its mark, the false prophet, Babylon, and the associated judgments belong to the first-century fulfillment rather than an unfinished prophetic program awaiting modern technology (Revelation 13:16-18; 19:20; 22:6-10).

Historical References

† Tacitus, writing in the early second century, described Nero's persecution of Christians in Rome. His account confirms that Christians faced imperial hostility during the first century, the historical environment reflected in Revelation's warnings (Tacitus, Annals 15.44; Revelation 13:7).
† Suetonius recorded the reign of Nero and the punishment of Christians during his administration. His testimony supports the historical reality of Roman opposition to Christianity (Suetonius, Nero 16; Revelation 13:7).
† Josephus described Jerusalem's destruction in AD 70, including the Roman siege, famine, internal violence, and

destruction of the temple. His account provides important historical background for Jesus' warnings concerning Jerusalem (Josephus, The Jewish War, Books 5-6; Luke 21:20-24).
† Eusebius preserved early Christian traditions concerning the suffering of believers and the destruction of Jerusalem. His writings demonstrate that early Christians understood the city's destruction as an event of enormous religious significance (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 2.25; 3.5).
† These historians don't establish every detail of the fulfilled interpretation. They confirm that the Roman persecution, imperial authority, and destruction of Jerusalem were real first-century events rather than imaginary future scenarios (Matthew 24:34; Revelation 13:7).

How It Applies To Us Today

† Christians don't need to live in fear of every new technology, banking development, international agreement, or religious gathering. None of these developments automatically fulfills a prophecy that Scripture placed within the first century (Revelation 1:1-3; 22:6-10).
† Digital currencies and electronic payment systems may raise legitimate questions about privacy, financial freedom, and government authority. Those concerns should be evaluated on their actual merits rather than identified as the mark of the beast without biblical evidence (Revelation 13:16-18).
† International organizations may seek greater political cooperation, but cooperation between nations doesn't prove that a prophetic one-world government is approaching (Daniel 7:23-27; Revelation 1:3).
† Religious organizations may pursue unity, but that doesn't automatically identify them as the false prophet or Babylon. We must distinguish actual religious error from prophetic

speculation (1 John 4:1-3; Revelation 19:20).

† The Bible doesn't promise that modern governments will never become oppressive or that economic systems will never become centralized. It teaches us to exercise wisdom without assigning fulfilled prophecies to unrelated modern events (Romans 13:1-7; Revelation 22:10).

† Our responsibility isn't to search for a future Antichrist, fear a coming mark, or prepare for an unfinished judgment. Our responsibility is to remain faithful to Christ, proclaim His completed redemption, and live according to His New Covenant (Colossians 1:13-14; Hebrews 12:22-28).

† Jesus is already reigning. His kingdom has already been established, and believers already have access to the heavenly Jerusalem. We aren't waiting for a future worldwide religious, monetary, and government system to complete what Christ has already fulfilled (Ephesians 1:20-22; Hebrews 12:22-28).

† The fulfilled perspective doesn't require us to predict the political future of the world. It requires us to recognize that the prophetic events described in Revelation belonged to the first-century world and reached their covenantal fulfillment by AD 70 (Matthew 24:34; Revelation 22:6-10).

Q & A Appendix

Q: Does Revelation predict a future one-world government?

A: No. From the fulfilled perspective, Revelation's beast represented first-century Roman imperial authority, not a future worldwide political organization (Daniel 7:23; Revelation 13:1-7).

Q: Is digital currency the mark of the beast?

A: No. The mark concerned allegiance to the beast and participation in its system of worship. Scripture doesn't identify electronic currency or modern banking technology as the mark

(Revelation 13:12-18; 14:9-12).
Q: Could governments eventually control buying and selling?
A: Governments can impose financial restrictions, but that possibility doesn't establish that Revelation 13 remains unfulfilled. The prophecy belonged to the time John described as near (Revelation 1:3; 13:16-17).
Q: Is the Antichrist a future world leader?
A: John identified many antichrists already present during the last hour of the first-century covenantal age. He defined their deception by their denial of Christ, not by control of a future global government (1 John 2:18-22).
Q: Will all religions eventually unite under the false prophet?
A: Scripture doesn't require a future worldwide religious organization to fulfill Revelation. The false prophet belonged to the beast's prophetic setting and was included in its judgment (Revelation 13:11-17; 19:20).
Q: Does Babylon represent a future worldwide economic system?
A: No. In this fulfilled interpretation, Babylon represented apostate Jerusalem and its covenantal judgment, while the surrounding imperial and commercial imagery reflected the first-century Roman world (Revelation 11:8; 17:9, 18; 18:11-19, 24).
Q: Does this mean international governments and financial institutions can't become dangerous?
A: No. Political and financial systems can become oppressive, but modern dangers don't establish the future fulfillment of Revelation's first-century prophecies (Romans 13:1-7; Revelation 22:6-10).
Q: What should Christians be watching for today?
A: We should remain faithful to Christ, exercise discernment, love one another, and proclaim the gospel. We aren't waiting for

another prophetic fulfillment beyond AD 70 because Christ's kingdom has already been established (Colossians 1:13-14; Hebrews 12:22-28).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Revelation 1:1, 3; Matthew 24:34; Revelation 13:1, 7, 16-18; Revelation 19:20; Revelation 17:9, 18; Revelation 18:3, 11; Daniel 7:23; 1 John 2:18; Hebrews 8:13; John 18:36; Revelation 22:6, 10

† Tacitus, Annals 15.44; Suetonius, Nero 16; Flavius Josephus, The Jewish War, Books 5-6; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 2.25 and 3.5

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