Fulfilled Prophecies

Scriptures Futurists Cannot Refute: Let The Bible Answer For Itself



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† What happens when we allow Scripture to explain prophecy instead of allowing modern prophecy teachers to tell us what Scripture must mean? We discover that Jesus and His apostles repeatedly identified when the promised events would take place. They weren't describing events thousands of years beyond their own generation.

† Futurism depends on moving prophetic fulfillment into our

future. Yet Jesus said this generation, John said the time is near, James said the Judge was standing at the door, and Peter said the end of all things was near. These weren't vague statements. They were declarations addressed to people living in the first century (Matthew 24:34; Revelation 1:3; James 5:9; 1 Peter 4:7).

† The fulfilled perspective doesn't require us to deny the coming of Christ, the resurrection, the judgment, or the establishment of the New Jerusalem. We believe these promises were fulfilled according to the time statements God gave. The question isn't whether these events were promised. The question is whether we believe the timing Scripture assigned to them.

† No passage is beyond discussion, and futurists offer different interpretations. However, any interpretation must account for the actual words, audience, and historical setting of Scripture. Let's examine the evidence and allow the Bible to answer the objections.

Matthew 24:34

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

† Jesus identified the generation that would witness the fulfillment of His prophecy. He was speaking to His disciples about the destruction of the temple they had just discussed (Matthew 24:1-3).

† Some futurists argue that this generation means the generation that sees the final signs. However, Jesus had already used this generation when addressing His contemporaries and warning of judgment upon Jerusalem (Matthew 23:36-38).

† Luke records the same generation statement while explicitly identifying Jerusalem's surrounding armies and approaching desolation (Luke 21:20-24, 32). The fulfilled interpretation keeps the generation and the judgment within the same historical setting.

† If Jesus meant a generation thousands of years later, where did He tell His disciples that this generation would no longer

refer to their contemporaries? The immediate context provides no such announcement (Matthew 23:36; 24:34).

Matthew 16:27-28
For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.
Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.
† Jesus connected His coming, judgment, and kingdom with the lifetime of some people standing before Him. His audience wasn't a generation living thousands of years later (Mark 8:38-9:1).
† Futurists often identify verse 28 with the Transfiguration. However, verse 27 speaks of judgment and repayment according to deeds. Revelation connects that same judgment language with Christ's coming quickly (Revelation 22:12).
† The Transfiguration revealed Christ's glory, but the fulfilled perspective understands His promised coming in judgment as reaching its covenantal fulfillment in AD 70. Jesus' statement about those standing there establishes a first-century time boundary (Matthew 24:30-34).

Luke 21:20-22
But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near.
because these are days of vengeance, so that all things which are written will be fulfilled.
† Jesus didn't tell His disciples to watch for a modern political alliance or a future rebuilt temple. He told them to recognize Jerusalem surrounded by armies (Luke 21:20-21).
† He called the approaching destruction days of vengeance and connected it with the fulfillment of what had been written. This agrees with His earlier warning that judgment would fall upon that generation (Matthew 23:35-38).
† Futurists sometimes separate Luke's account from Matthew's

and place Matthew's fulfillment in the distant future. Yet both accounts describe Jerusalem's crisis, great distress, and the generation that would witness these events (Matthew 24:15-21, 34; Luke 21:20-24, 32).
† The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 supplies the historical setting for the fulfilled perspective. The city, temple, armies, and generation all belong together.

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.
† Revelation begins by identifying its intended audience and the nearness of its fulfillment. The message was given to Christ's bond-servants, and its original readers were expected to hear and obey it (Revelation 1:4, 11).
† Futurists sometimes argue that soon describes how rapidly events will unfold once they begin. However, John also says the time is near. The combined statements naturally communicate approaching fulfillment to the original audience (Revelation 22:6-7, 10).
† A prophecy addressed to first-century churches shouldn't automatically be transferred into our future. The seven churches were actual congregations facing actual circumstances, and Christ addressed them directly (Revelation 2:1-3:22).
† The fulfilled perspective understands Revelation as describing the approaching covenantal judgment and the full establishment of the New Covenant order, not a timetable for modern world events (Hebrews 8:13; Revelation 21:1-3).

Revelation 22:6-7, 10, 12
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 behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.
And he said to me, Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.
Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.
† Revelation closes with the same urgency with which it began. The events must soon take place, Christ is coming quickly, and the time is near (Revelation 1:1-3).
† John was specifically told not to seal the prophecy. Daniel, by contrast, was told to seal his book until the time of the end. The different instructions deserve careful attention (Daniel 12:4, 9).
† Futurists may argue that God's perspective on time differs from ours. However, Revelation's repeated time statements were communicated to human readers who were instructed to respond to an approaching event (Revelation 1:3; 22:10).
† Christ's promise to come quickly with His reward also parallels His statement to those standing before Him that He would come and repay according to deeds (Matthew 16:27-28).
† If the fulfillment was intended to remain thousands of years away, the command not to seal the prophecy because the time was near becomes difficult to explain.

Hebrews 10:37
FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY.
† Hebrews encouraged believers who were enduring persecution and needed perseverance. The writer assured them that the promised coming would not be delayed (Hebrews 10:32-36).
† The expression a very little while was directed to those original believers. The fulfilled perspective understands that assurance in connection with the approaching conclusion of the Old Covenant age (Hebrews 8:13; 9:26).
† Futurism must explain why the writer used such immediate

language if the promised coming was intended to remain unfulfilled for thousands of years.
† Hebrews doesn't describe an endlessly postponed covenantal transition. It identifies the first covenant as obsolete and ready to disappear (Hebrews 8:13).

James 5:8-9
You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.
Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.
† James addressed believers experiencing oppression and hardship. He encouraged patience because the coming of the Lord was near (James 5:1-7).
† The Judge standing at the door communicates immediate accountability, not an event that James explicitly assigned to a distant generation (Matthew 24:33-34).
† Futurists may understand the language as a continuing call to readiness. Yet James specifically grounded his encouragement in the nearness of the Lord's coming to his readers (James 5:7-9).
† The fulfilled perspective recognizes the approaching first-century judgment as the event that gave urgency to James' instruction.

1 Peter 4:7
The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.
† Peter didn't tell his readers that the end was thousands of years away. He said it was near and instructed them to live accordingly (1 Peter 4:5-6).
† The fulfilled perspective understands this end as the conclusion of the Old Covenant age, not the destruction of the physical universe. Hebrews describes that covenant as becoming obsolete and ready to disappear (Hebrews 8:13).
† Peter also said judgment was beginning with the household of

God. That statement connects his warning with the judgment circumstances confronting the first-century church (1 Peter 4:17).
† Futurists who interpret this as the end of the physical world must explain why Peter announced its nearness to his original readers.

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 said it was already the last hour, and he identified the appearance of many antichrists as evidence (1 John 2:19).
† John described these opponents as people who had gone out from the Christian community. His concern was an existing first-century situation, not a prediction requiring one future political dictator (1 John 2:19, 22).
† The fulfilled perspective connects John's last hour with the closing period of the Old Covenant age, consistent with the apostles' other statements about approaching fulfillment (1 Corinthians 10:11; Hebrews 9:26).
† Futurism must account for John's declaration that the last hour had already arrived.

1 Corinthians 10:11
Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.
† Paul said the ends of the ages had come upon his own generation. He didn't describe them as something awaiting people thousands of years in the future (Hebrews 9:26).
† The expression concerns the culmination of the ages in God's redemptive purpose. The fulfilled perspective connects that culmination with the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:6-13).
† Paul wrote these words to the Corinthian believers and

included himself among those living at the ends of the ages. His statement must be interpreted within that original setting (1 Corinthians 1:2; 10:11).

Daniel 12:1-2, 7
Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.
Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.
I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed.
† Daniel connects unparalleled distress, deliverance, resurrection, and the completion of these events within the same prophetic setting (Daniel 12:1-7).
† Jesus applied Daniel's unparalleled distress language to the crisis facing Judea and Jerusalem, and He placed that crisis within His generation (Matthew 24:15-21, 34).
† Daniel identifies the shattering of the power of the holy people as the point at which these events reach completion. The fulfilled perspective understands this as the final destruction of Israel's Old Covenant national and temple order in AD 70 (Luke 21:20-24).
† Futurists generally place Daniel's resurrection in the future, but the fulfilled interpretation argues that the resurrection must be understood within Daniel's own stated prophetic timeframe (Daniel 12:1-7).
† This doesn't deny the resurrection. It understands the promised resurrection covenantally, as the completion of redemption and deliverance from the condemnation associated

with the old order (1 Corinthians 15:54-57; Hebrews 9:15).

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 distinguishes the New Covenant from the Old Covenant and declares the first obsolete. The writer also describes it as ready to disappear (Hebrews 8:6-12).
† The fulfilled perspective understands the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in AD 70 as the historical removal of the remaining institutional Old Covenant order (Matthew 24:1-2).
† Futurism often expects a future Jewish temple to play a central prophetic role. Yet Hebrews identifies Christ as the greater High Priest whose sacrifice accomplished what the old sacrificial system couldn't (Hebrews 9:11-14; 10:11-18).
† The New Covenant doesn't require the restoration of animal sacrifices or a rebuilt temple. God's people are now His dwelling place through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22).

Colossians 1:23
if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.
† Paul described the gospel as already proclaimed in all creation under heaven. His statement must be understood according to the first-century world and the language he used (Romans 10:18).
† Jesus had declared that the gospel of the kingdom would be preached throughout the inhabited world as a testimony to the nations before the end (Matthew 24:14).
† The fulfilled perspective understands Paul's declaration as evidence that the gospel proclamation associated with that prophetic period had reached its intended fulfillment before AD 70 (Romans 16:25-26; Colossians 1:6).

† Futurists who insist Matthew 24:14 remains unfulfilled must account for Paul's explicit statement about the gospel's proclamation.

Historical References

† Flavius Josephus, writing in The Jewish War, Books 2-7, described the Jewish revolt, Jerusalem's siege, famine, internal conflict, and the destruction of the temple in AD 70. His historical record provides important evidence concerning the judgment upon Jerusalem (Luke 21:20-24).

† Tacitus, in Histories, Book 5, also discussed the Jewish war and the circumstances surrounding Jerusalem's destruction. His account provides non-Christian historical testimony to the first-century conflict (Matthew 24:1-2).

† Eusebius, in Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 5, recorded the tradition that Christians in Jerusalem departed for Pella before the city's destruction. This tradition is relevant to Jesus' warning that those in Judea should flee (Luke 21:20-21).

† These writers provide historical context, not the authority for our doctrine. Scripture establishes the prophetic claims, while historical testimony helps us examine the events associated with their fulfillment (Luke 21:22).

How It Applies To Us Today

† We don't need to live in fear of a future Antichrist, a seven-year tribulation, or the destruction of the physical earth. The fulfilled perspective recognizes that the apostolic warnings concerned the approaching end of the Old Covenant age (1 John 2:18; Hebrews 8:13).

† We aren't waiting for Christ to establish His kingdom. Believers have already been transferred into the kingdom of God's beloved Son (Colossians 1:13).

† We aren't waiting for another temple to restore access to God. Through Christ, believers already have access to the Father in one Spirit (Ephesians 2:18-22).

† We don't need to search modern headlines for the fulfillment of prophecies that Jesus assigned to His generation. Our calling

is to live faithfully, love one another, and proclaim the gospel (Matthew 24:34; John 13:34-35).
† Fulfilled prophecy doesn't mean God's work has ended. Christ continues to reign, His kingdom remains, and believers continue to enjoy fellowship with Him (Hebrews 12:28; Ephesians 3:21).
† Our confidence rests in Christ's faithfulness. He accomplished redemption, established the New Covenant, and fulfilled His promises according to God's purpose (Hebrews 9:15; 10:12-18).

Q & A Appendix

Q: Doesn't Matthew 24 describe events that haven't happened yet?
A: Jesus identified Jerusalem's temple, warned of its destruction, and placed the events within this generation. The fulfilled perspective connects the prophecy with Jerusalem's first-century judgment (Matthew 24:1-3, 34; Luke 21:20-24, 32).

Q: Couldn't this generation mean a future generation?
A: Jesus used this generation for His contemporaries when announcing judgment upon Jerusalem. The same expression appears in the following discourse (Matthew 23:36; 24:34).

Q: Doesn't the Transfiguration fulfill Matthew 16:28?
A: The Transfiguration revealed Christ's glory, but Matthew 16:27 also includes judgment and repayment according to deeds. The fulfilled perspective connects that broader promise with Christ's coming in judgment (Matthew 16:27-28; Revelation 22:12).

Q: Doesn't God measure time differently from humans?
A: God is eternal, but Revelation's time statements were addressed to actual first-century churches. John repeatedly said the events were near and must soon take place (Revelation 1:1-4; 22:6-10).

Q: Doesn't the Bible teach a future resurrection?
A: Daniel connects resurrection with the distress and completion of events involving his people. The fulfilled perspective understands the promised resurrection as completed in the covenantal transition culminating in AD 70 (Daniel 12:1-7; 1 Corinthians 15:54-57).

Q: Doesn't the end of all things mean the destruction of the universe?
A: The fulfilled perspective understands Peter's statement in the context of the approaching covenantal judgment. Hebrews identifies the old order as obsolete and ready to disappear (1 Peter 4:7, 17; Hebrews 8:13).

Q: Isn't the Antichrist still coming?
A: John said many antichrists had already appeared and identified that as evidence of the last hour. He described opponents already active in his day (1 John 2:18-22).

Q: Wasn't the Great Commission supposed to continue until the end of the world?
A: The church's mission of proclaiming Christ continues, but Paul described the gospel as already proclaimed throughout creation under heaven. The fulfilled perspective distinguishes the first-century prophetic proclamation from the church's continuing mission (Matthew 24:14; Colossians 1:23; Ephesians 3:21).

Q: Doesn't a future Jewish temple have to be built?
A: Hebrews teaches that Christ's sacrifice is sufficient and that the Old Covenant has become obsolete. Believers are God's dwelling place through the Spirit (Hebrews 8:13; 10:11-18; Ephesians 2:19-22).

Q: If prophecy has been fulfilled, what are Christians supposed to do now?
A: We're called to love one another, proclaim Christ, grow in

faith, and live as citizens of His established kingdom (John 13:34-35; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 12:28).

Q: Can futurists simply dismiss all these time statements as symbolic?
A: Symbolic prophecy still requires interpretation according to its audience and context. Jesus identified His generation, and Revelation repeatedly announced approaching fulfillment. Those statements must be explained rather than ignored (Matthew 24:34; Revelation 1:1-3; 22:6-10).

Q: What is the strongest evidence for the fulfilled perspective?
A: The combined testimony of Jesus, Paul, Peter, James, and John. Their statements consistently place the climactic events of their prophetic expectation within the first-century setting (Matthew 16:27-28; 24:34; 1 Corinthians 10:11; James 5:8-9; 1 Peter 4:7; 1 John 2:18; Revelation 22:10).

Conclusion
† The fulfilled perspective isn't built upon one isolated verse. It rests upon the combined testimony of Jesus and His apostles concerning the audience, timing, and nature of prophetic fulfillment (Matthew 24:34; Revelation 1:1-3).
† Futurists can offer alternative interpretations, but those interpretations must account for every time statement, every original audience, and every connection Scripture makes between the promised events (Luke 21:20-22; Hebrews 10:37).
† We don't need to change soon into thousands of years, this generation into an unidentified future generation, or the last hour into an age that continues indefinitely. We believe Scripture should be understood according to its original context (Matthew 24:34; 1 John 2:18; Revelation 22:6-10).
† Jesus Christ is faithful. His kingdom is established, His New Covenant remains, and His people can live in the confidence that God's redemptive promises have been fulfilled (Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 12:28).

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

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Source Index

† Matthew 24:34; Matthew 16:27-28; Luke 21:20, 22; Revelation 1:1, 3; Revelation 22:6-7, 10, 12; Hebrews 10:37; James 5:8-9; 1 Peter 4:7; 1 John 2:18; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Daniel 12:1-2, 7; Hebrews 8:13; Colossians 1:23.

† Flavius Josephus, The Jewish War, Books 2-7; Tacitus, Histories, Book 5; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 5.

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