

# Fulfilled Prophecies

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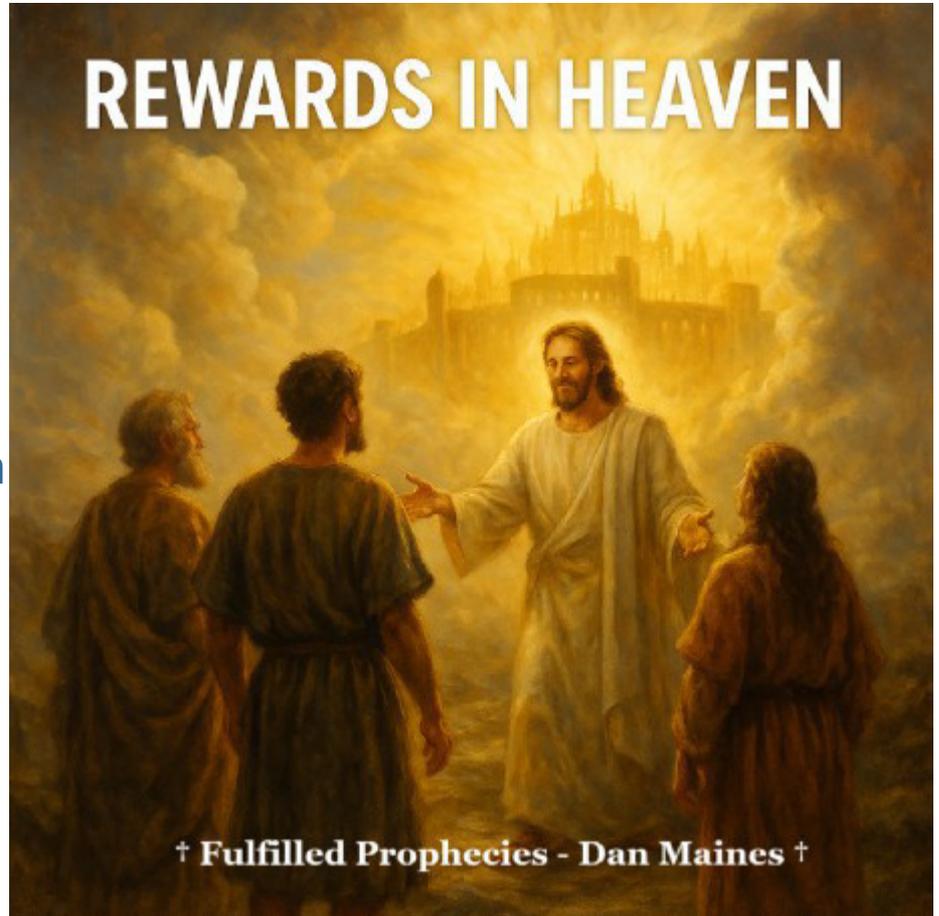
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## Rewards in Heaven



By Dan Maines

## Rewards in Heaven

### Introduction

Many have misunderstood the rewards in heaven as physical treasures or ranks in an afterlife still awaiting us. But from the fulfilled perspective, these rewards were promised to the faithful first-century believers who endured persecution, and who received their inheritance when the Lord returned in judgment at the close of that age. These rewards were spiritual and eternal,

not material or future.

## **Scripture Foundation**

### **Matthew 16:27**

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.

† Jesus promised that when He came in His kingdom, He'd reward each one according to their deeds. That coming wasn't delayed thousands of years, but was fulfilled in their generation when He came in judgment upon the old covenant system. The righteous were rewarded with eternal life, entrance into the New Jerusalem, and full access to the presence of God (Matthew 16:28; Revelation 21:2-4).

† This judgment and reward fulfilled Isaiah 40:10, "Behold, the Lord God will come with might, with His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him." The same language reappears in Revelation 22:12, proving His reward arrived when He came.

### **Matthew 25:21**

His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master.

† The faithful servants were rewarded with joy in the presence of their Master. That joy was realized when the kingdom was established in fullness, not postponed to a far future time (Matthew 25:31-34).

† This mirrors Luke 19:17, "Well done, good slave, because you've been faithful in a very little thing, you're to have authority over ten cities." The parables pointed to authority and joy within the fulfilled kingdom, not future hierarchy in heaven.

### **Revelation 22:12**

Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to reward each one as his work deserves.

† Christ's coming in judgment was imminent, and He brought His reward with Him. Those who overcame received the promises of the New Covenant and the crown of life (Revelation 2:10).

† This matched Isaiah 62:11, "Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your salvation is coming, behold His reward is with Him." The salvation and reward arrived together in that generation.

### **Romans 2:6-7**

Who will repay each person according to his deeds, to those who by perseverance in doing good seek glory, honor, and immortality, He will give eternal life.

† Paul confirmed the same promise spoken by Jesus, the reward was eternal life, not earthly prosperity. This reward was given to those who remained faithful and sought His glory (Galatians 6:8).

† Psalm 62:12 says, "For You compensate a person according to his work." God's justice in recompense never changed, but its fulfillment came through Christ's completed redemption.

### **1 Corinthians 3:8**

Now he who plants and he who waters are one, but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

† The apostles and early workers in the gospel received their reward when their labor in the kingdom was completed. The harvest came at the end of the age, when Christ's kingdom was fully revealed (Matthew 13:39).

† Hebrews 6:10 adds, "For God isn't unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you've shown toward His name." Their work was remembered and rewarded when the old covenant ended.

### **1 Corinthians 9:24-25**

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in

all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

† The reward of faithfulness wasn't a perishable crown, but the imperishable, eternal life in Christ's completed kingdom (James 1:12).

† 2 Timothy 2:5 says, "If someone likewise competes as an athlete, he isn't crowned as victor unless he competes according to the rules." Their faithful endurance through persecution won them the crown.

## **2 Timothy 4:7-8**

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith, in the future there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

† Paul's crown wasn't delayed to a distant afterlife. "That day" was the day of Christ's appearing in judgment and deliverance, when the faithful received what was promised (Hebrews 10:37).

† Revelation 3:11, "I'm coming quickly, hold firmly to what you have, so that no one will take your crown." The same crown Paul expected was the one the faithful in every city were about to receive.

## **1 Peter 1:4-5**

To obtain an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

† This inheritance was ready to be revealed in the last time, that last time being the end of the old covenant age. The inheritance was the eternal kingdom of Christ (Colossians 1:12-13).

† Hebrews 9:15, "For this reason He's the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the violations that were committed under the first covenant, those who've been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." That inheritance was now opened to

them.

### **1 Peter 5:4**

And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

† This appearance was His coming in glory to reward the faithful shepherds of His flock, confirming the nearness of their hope (1 Peter 4:7).

† Psalm 84:11 says, "The Lord gives grace and glory, no good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly." The crown of glory was God's full grace manifested in His kingdom.

### **Colossians 3:23-24**

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord and not for people, knowing that it is from the Lord that you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

† The reward of the inheritance was tied directly to serving Christ. The first-century believers received this when the Old Covenant ended and the New was fully established (Hebrews 12:28).

† Ephesians 6:8, "Knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he'll receive back from the Lord." Every act of faithfulness was rewarded in His presence.

### **Revelation 2:10**

Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

† This was spoken to those facing tribulation before AD 70. The crown of life was the reward given to those who endured to the end (Matthew 24:13).

† James 1:12, "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial, for once he's been approved, he'll receive the crown of life." The same promise joined every assembly in that generation.

### **Revelation 3:11**

I am coming quickly; hold firmly to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

† The Lord's coming was soon, and their crown, their reward, would be secured through faithfulness during that generation (Revelation 22:12).

† Hebrews 10:36, "For you've need of endurance, so that when you've done the will of God, you may receive what was promised." Endurance kept the faithful from losing what was already near.

### **Matthew 5:11-12**

Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for in this same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

† Jesus comforted His disciples with the assurance that their reward was in heaven, their citizenship in the kingdom of God that was about to be revealed (Philippians 3:20).

† Hebrews 11:26, "[Moses] considered the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward." The righteous of every age looked forward to the same fulfillment now realized in Christ.

### **Luke 6:35**

But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil people.

† The reward was tied to the character of God, not physical gain but participation in His divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).

† Proverbs 19:17, "One who's gracious to a poor person lends to the Lord, and He'll repay him for his good deed." The principle of divine reciprocity was fulfilled through Christ's kingdom of mercy.

### **Hebrews 10:35-36**

Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was

promised.

† The writer encouraged believers to endure the trials before the coming judgment, knowing their reward was near (Hebrews 10:37-38).

† Galatians 6:9, "Let's not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we'll reap if we don't grow weary." The harvest was ready at the end of their age.

### **Hebrews 11:6**

And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for the one who comes to God must believe that He exists, and that He proves to be One who rewards those who seek Him.

† God's always rewarded faith, both under the old covenant and in the new. The saints of old looked forward to the same promise that was fulfilled in Christ (John 8:56).

† Psalm 18:20, "The Lord has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands He has repaid me." His justice was consistent through every covenant.

### **Proverbs 11:18**

The wicked earns deceptive wages, but the one who sows righteousness gets a true reward.

† Even under the old covenant, the principle of reward was spiritual, righteousness leading to life, not wealth or position (Proverbs 11:30).

† Romans 6:22, "But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life." The true reward of righteousness is life in Christ.

### **Psalm 58:11**

And people will say, There certainly is a reward for the righteous; there certainly is a God who judges on the earth!

† God's justice and reward were always tied to His righteous judgment, which found its fullness when He judged Israel and established His kingdom (Matthew 23:35-36).

† Revelation 11:18, "The time came for the dead to be judged,

and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints." That judgment completed what David foresaw.

### **Isaiah 40:10**

Behold, the Lord God will come with might, with His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him, and His compensation before Him.

† This prophecy pointed directly to the coming of Christ in power, echoed later in Revelation 22:12, confirming that the reward came when He did.

† Isaiah 62:11, "Behold, your salvation comes, behold His reward's with Him." The salvation of Zion was the reward of the faithful remnant fulfilled in AD 70.

### **Historical References**

† Clement of Rome spoke of the apostles receiving their "reward of faithfulness" after finishing their course, referring to their spiritual inheritance, not a distant future resurrection.

† Eusebius recorded that many early Christians understood the Lord's coming as fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem, where He rewarded the righteous and judged the wicked.

† Tertullian wrote that the souls of the faithful were received into the presence of the Lord, having attained the promised inheritance.

### **How it Applies to Us Today**

We live in the reality of those fulfilled promises. Our reward isn't postponed but possessed, the eternal life Christ promised. Every believer shares in the same reward as the saints who endured before us, reconciliation with God, freedom from condemnation, and citizenship in the heavenly kingdom. When we serve Him faithfully, we experience the joy and peace that come from living in His eternal presence. The true reward in heaven's being with Him, now and forever.

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

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## Source Index

† Matthew 16:27-28, Matthew 25:21, Revelation 22:12, Romans 2:6-7, 1 Corinthians 3:8, 1 Corinthians 9:24-25, 2 Timothy 4:7-8, 1 Peter 1:4-5, 1 Peter 5:4, Colossians 3:23-24, Revelation 2:10, Revelation 3:11, Matthew 5:11-12, Luke 6:35, Hebrews 10:35-36, Hebrews 11:6, Proverbs 11:18, Psalm 58:11, Isaiah 40:10, Philippians 3:20, Galatians 6:8-9, Ephesians 6:8, Revelation 11:18

† Clement of Rome, 1 Clement 5-6

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.5

† Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh 58

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