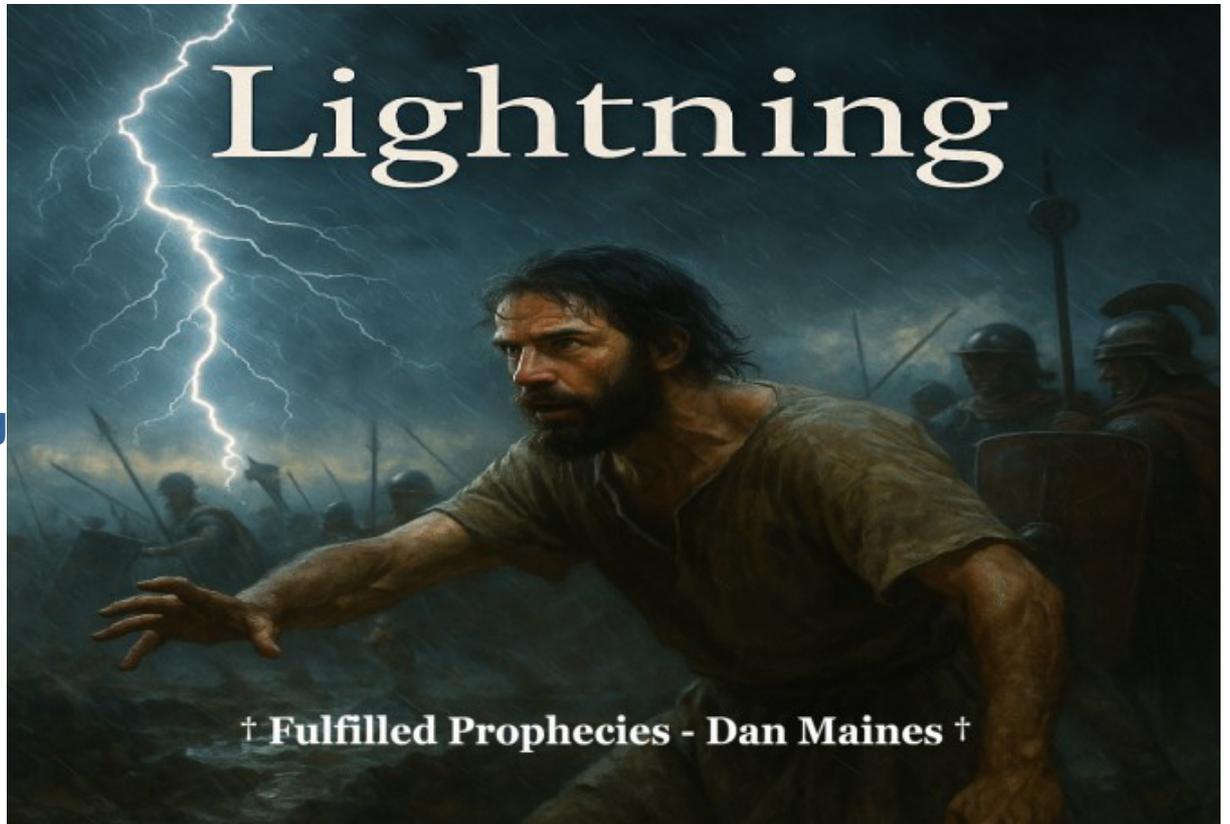


Fulfilled Prophecies

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Lightning



By Dan Maines

Lightning

Introduction

† Jesus warned His disciples not to be misled by rumors. No secret locations, no hidden appearances. His coming in judgment would not be private or local (Matthew 24:26).

† From the fulfilled perspective, this language points directly to the public and world shaking nature of His coming against Jerusalem in AD 70 (Matthew 24:34). Lightning is sudden, unmistakable, sky spanning, and impossible to ignore (Luke 17:24).

† The lightning imagery ties directly to Old Testament theophanies when God rode on the clouds in judgment, surrounded by thunder, fire, and lightning (Psalm 18:7-14). Jesus places Himself in these divine patterns because He is the fulfillment of every judgment scene in

Scripture (Daniel 7:13-14).

Additional Note On The Shekinah Glory

† The lightning also reflects the Shekinah glory, the visible brightness of God's presence that appeared in the cloud during major covenant transitions, showing divine action and judgment (Exodus 24:16-17).

Covenant Lawsuit Imagery

† Lightning and storm language also reflect covenant lawsuit imagery, where God calls heaven and earth as witnesses against His people before executing judgment (Micah 6:1-2).

Comparison With Sinai

† Lightning appeared at Sinai when God established the Old Covenant, and it appeared again in its ending at AD 70, forming a perfect covenant parallel (Exodus 19:16-18).

Matthew 24:26

So if they say to you, Behold, He is in the wilderness, do not go out, or, Behold, He is in the inner rooms, do not believe them.

† Jesus is warning His disciples that His coming would not be in secret places (Matthew 24:26). False messiahs did appear in the first century, hiding in the wilderness to gain followers (Acts 5:36-37).

† This destroys futurist claims of a secret return. Jesus explicitly rejects the idea (Matthew 24:23-24).

Lightning Exposes False Messiahs

† Lightning imagery exposes false messiahs because no one could mimic or fake such a sudden and unmistakable act of divine judgment (Matthew 24:23-24).

Matthew 24:27

For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

† Lightning cuts across the entire sky. It is sudden, public, visible, and unmistakable (Luke 17:24). Jesus used this image to show that His coming in judgment on Jerusalem would not be hidden.

† Lightning also connects to divine judgment scenes in the prophets (Psalm 97:4). Jesus uses the same imagery to show He is the same divine Judge who came in the Old Testament (Isaiah 19:1).

† The Roman armies themselves marched from the east toward

Jerusalem, giving a historical layer to lightning coming from the east (Matthew 24:27).

Visibility Of The Roman Siege

† The Roman siege was visible from miles away, with fires, flashes of metal, and standards gleaming like lightning across the landscape, making the judgment unmistakably public (Luke 21:20, Matthew 24:30).

Luke 17:24

For just like the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, so will the Son of Man be in His day.

† Luke confirms Jesus was speaking of His Day, not a distant event thousands of years later (Luke 17:25).

† The lightning shows the revelation of Christ, not a physical descent to earth. It is covenantal, judicial, and world shaking, just like every Old Testament Day of the Lord (Joel 2:1-2).

† Lightning in Scripture always signals divine judgment, not a literal descent to earth, reinforcing the covenantal nature of His coming (Revelation 4:5).

Jewish Understanding Of Lightning

† The Jewish leadership understood lightning as a sign of divine judgment, so when these signs appeared they knew exactly what they meant, even if they refused to repent (Psalm 29:7).

Lightning And Heavenly Throne Imagery

† Lightning proceeds from the throne of God, connecting Jesus coming in lightning with His revealed authority as the enthroned Son of Man (Revelation 4:5).

Lightning Symbolizes Speed And Inevitability

† Lightning also symbolizes the speed and inevitability of God's judgment. Once the signs began, nothing could stop the collapse of the Old Covenant system (Isaiah 13:10-13).

Global Expansion Imagery

† Lightning from east to west also symbolizes the worldwide spread of the gospel after the judgment of Jerusalem, as the kingdom moved beyond Israel to the nations (Matthew 24:14).

Revelation Rather Than Arrival

† Lightning reveals what is already present. Jesus was already enthroned in heaven. AD 70 revealed His kingship to the world just as lightning lights the sky (Matthew 26:64).

Heavenly Warfare Imagery

† The armies seen in the clouds symbolized the heavenly host carrying out the covenant judgment Jesus predicted (2 Kings 6:17).

Lightning In Old Testament Judgment Scenes

† Scripture consistently portrays God coming with dark clouds, thunder, earthquake, and lightning when He judges nations (Psalm 18:7-14).

† These are covenant judgment motifs, not literal weather reports (Isaiah 29:6).

† Jesus applies the same imagery to His return because He is Yahweh Himself executing judgment on the covenant breaking nation (Malachi 3:1-5).

† Zechariah also prophesied that the Lord would appear against Jerusalem in storm and lightning imagery during covenant judgment (Zechariah 9:14).

Lightning In The Jewish War

† Matthew 24:27 was fulfilled both literally and symbolically in the Jewish War (Matthew 24:34).

† When God came on the clouds in judgment in the Old Testament, the spirit of the Lord was pictured riding dark storm clouds accompanied by rumblings of the earth, thunder and lightning (Ezekiel 1:4).

† The fact that Jesus links His return to "lightning that comes from the east" illustrates the fact that when Christ was expected to come on the clouds in judgment He was to do so as the Lord had done in the past riding on dark storm clouds accompanied by lightning.

† Tacitus records the fulfillment: In the sky appeared a vision of armies in conflict, of glittering armour. A sudden lightning flash from the clouds lit up the Temple (Tacitus, Histories 5.13).

† Josephus also recorded additional signs: a star resembling a sword appeared over the city, and a bright light shone around the altar for half an hour, both understood as omens of the coming judgment (Josephus, Wars 6.5.3).

Historical References

† Josephus – Wars of the Jews 6.5.3

† Tacitus – Histories 5.13

† Eusebius – Ecclesiastical History 3.8.6

How It Applies To Us Today

† Lightning shows us that Christ's coming in judgment was not hidden or mysterious. It was public, covenantal, and world changing (Matthew 24:30).

† Jesus is not returning to repeat the judgment scene. His work is finished. His kingdom is here (Hebrews 12:28).

† The world is becoming better because His kingdom grows through His people. But Israel having less than 1 percent who believe in Christ does not stop the world from improving (Galatians 3:28-29).

† The lightning imagery explains why all the tribes of the land would see the Son of Man coming, referring to the tribes of Israel, not the entire globe (Matthew 24:30).

† Lightning reminds us that Christ's authority is universal and His rule is visible to all who have eyes to see (Daniel 7:14).

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

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Source Index

† Matthew 24:26-27, Luke 17:24, Mark 13:24-27, Luke 21:25-28, Psalm 18:7-14, Isaiah 29:6, Ezekiel 1:4, Nahum 1:3-6

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