

Fulfilled Prophecies

[Home](#)

>

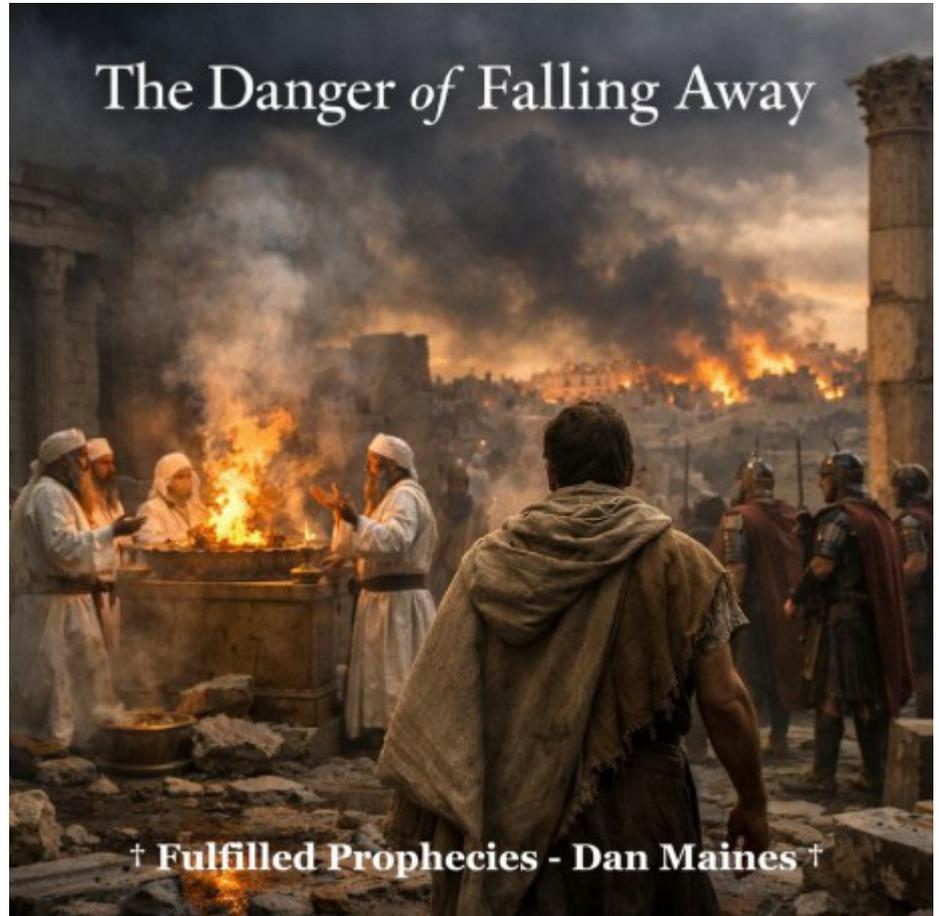
[D](#)

>

[Share on Facebook](#)

[FACEBOOK LINK](#)

The Danger of Falling Away



By Dan Maines

The Danger of Falling Away

Introduction

† This passage is written to those within the covenant community who were being tempted to retreat back into the old system rather than press forward in Christ.

† Hebrews addresses the danger of abandoning Christ in favor of returning to the shadows of the Law, not losing personal salvation in a modern sense.

† The warning is covenantal, historical, and urgent, tied to the

transition period before Jerusalem's destruction.

† Hebrews was written during the last days of the Old Covenant, while that system was still standing but ready to vanish away (Hebrews 8:13).

Hebrews 6:1-3

Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and about the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. And this we will do, if God permits.

† The elementary teachings listed are foundational Jewish covenant doctrines, not New Covenant distinctives.

† Dead works refers to the works of the Law that could never bring life or perfection.

† Maturity is moving fully into the completed work of Christ, not circling back to Mosaic rituals.

† Hebrews later confirms this transition by stating the Old Covenant was obsolete and near to disappearing (Hebrews 8:13).

Hebrews 6:4-6

For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

† Enlightened describes covenant exposure, not eternal security language.

† Tasting doesn't mean full possession, it means participation in the covenant environment.

† Falling away is apostasy, a deliberate return to the old

covenant system that rejected Christ.

† Restoring them again to repentance is impossible because there was no other sacrifice beyond Christ.

† To return to the Law was to side with those who crucified Him and deny His finished work.

† This warning aligns with Paul's teaching that returning to the Law nullifies grace and severs one from Christ (Galatians 5:1-4).

Hebrews 6:7-8

For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and produces vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God, but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned.

† The ground represents Israel under the covenant.

† The same rain fell on all, yet the response determined the outcome.

† Thorns and thistles echo covenant curse imagery from the Law and the prophets.

† Burned points to covenant judgment, fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem, not eternal torment language.

† Jesus used the same vineyard judgment imagery when warning of Israel's coming destruction (Matthew 21:33-45).

Historical References

† Clement of Alexandria taught that Hebrews warned Jewish believers against reverting to the Law after receiving gospel light.

† Eusebius connected Hebrews warnings with the impending judgment on Jerusalem.

† John Chrysostom stated this passage addressed those abandoning Christ for the old sacrifices.

† Josephus recorded that Jerusalem and the temple were burned and the land left desolate as a result of covenant

judgment.

A Clarification Concerning Sabbath Keepers

† This warning in Hebrews isn't aimed at people resting in Christ, it's aimed at those who, after coming to Christ, turn back to covenant signs like Sabbath observance, ritual washings, and law keeping as if Christ hasn't fulfilled them.

† Hebrews defines falling away as a backward movement into the obsolete covenant, not a struggle with personal faith or obedience.

† Returning to covenant signs that pointed to Christ, after He's fulfilled them, is the very regression Hebrews warns against.

† The issue isn't sincerity, it's direction, pressing forward into fulfillment or retreating back into shadows.

† Early Christian writers consistently warned against returning to Sabbath observance as a covenant obligation after Christ.

† Ignatius taught that believers were no longer living according to the Sabbath but according to the Lord's life, showing a clear break from Mosaic covenant signs.

† Justin Martyr argued that Sabbath keeping belonged to Israel under the Law and wasn't binding on those in Christ, identifying it as a sign fulfilled in Him.

How It Applies To Us Today

† This passage warns against clinging to religious systems once Christ has fulfilled them.

† It reminds us that spiritual growth means moving forward in faith, not retreating into shadows.

† Any system that replaces Christ's finished work with ritual obligation repeats the same error.

† Modern Sabbath keeping systems mirror the same backward movement Hebrews warned against, returning to covenant signs that have already been fulfilled.

† True rest isn't found in law keeping, it's found in remaining

grounded in Christ alone.

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

© Fulfilled Prophecies - Dan Maines.

Source Index

† Hebrews 6:1-8

† Hebrews 8:13

† Galatians 5:1-4

† Matthew 21:33-45

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

† John Chrysostom, Homilies on Hebrews

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 6

Share on Facebook

Links

Facebook Link

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1349070089314462/posts/1908320790056053/>

Fulfilled Prophecies <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1349070089314462/>

Dan Maines

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1349070089314462/user/100001027365819/>

You may share this article freely without permission as long as you include credit to Dan Maines and/or a link to the Fulfilled Prophecies Group.