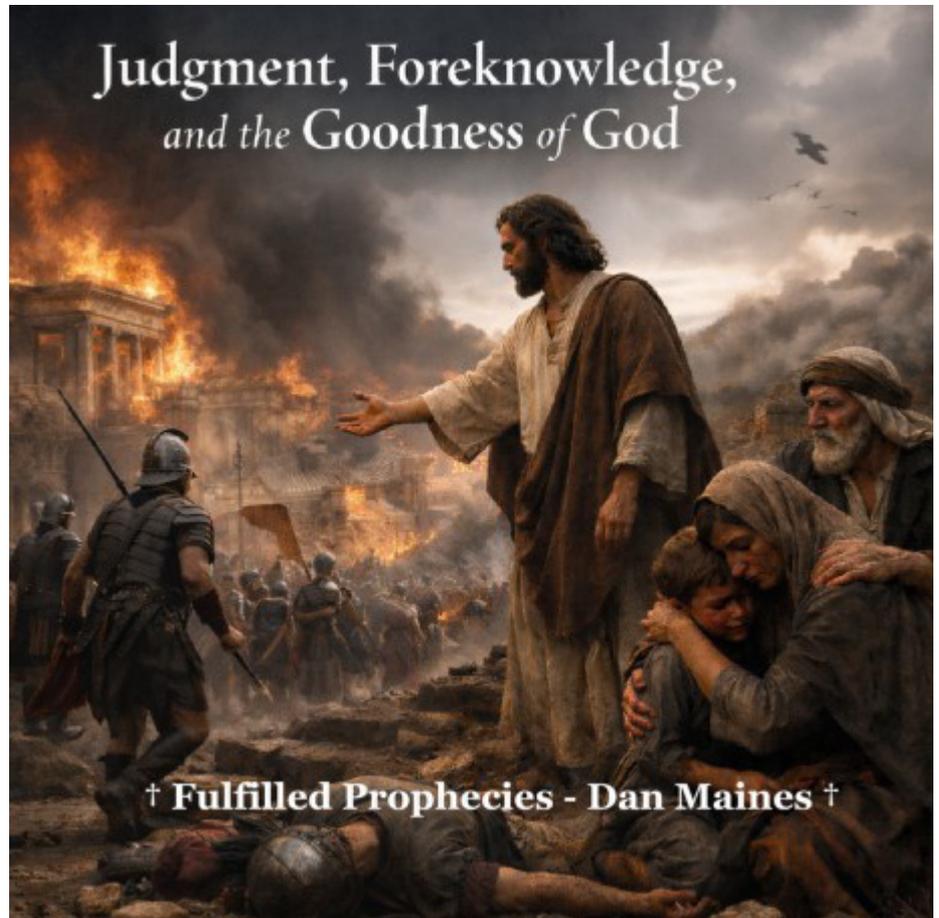


# Fulfilled Prophecies

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## Judgment, Foreknowledge, and the Goodness of God



By Dan Maines

## Judgment, Foreknowledge, and the Goodness of God

### Introduction

† Scripture consistently reveals God as good, purposeful, and redemptive, not cruel or arbitrary (Psalm 145:8-9).

† Confusion about hell and judgment comes from later traditions imposed on Scripture rather than letting Scripture define itself (Colossians 2:8).

† From the fulfilled perspective, judgment, foreknowledge, love, and redemption must be understood covenantally and

historically, not as eternal conscious torture (Matthew 23:36; Matthew 24:34).

### **Lamentations 3:31-33**

For the Lord will not reject forever,  
For if He causes grief,  
Then He will have compassion  
According to His abundant lovingkindness.  
For He does not afflict willingly  
Or grieve the sons of men.

† God plainly states that affliction is not His desire or disposition (Ezekiel 18:23).

† Judgment is limited and governed by compassion, not cruelty (Isaiah 57:16).

† Scripture denies the idea of God taking pleasure in prolonged suffering (Ezekiel 33:11).

### **Romans 6:23**

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

† Scripture defines the consequence of sin as death, not eternal torment (James 1:15).

† Death is the covenant penalty under the law, not metaphysical torture (Ezekiel 18:4).

† Eternal life is presented as union with Christ, not rescue from a wrathful Father (John 3:16-17).

### **Matthew 23:33-38**

You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?

Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city,  
so that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood

shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her, how often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.

Behold, your house is being left to you desolate.

† Jesus explicitly locates this judgment in Jerusalem and the temple system, not in the afterlife (Luke 13:34-35).

† The phrase your house refers to the covenant house of Israel, centered in the temple (Matthew 21:13).

† This judgment is covenantal, generational, and historical, not eternal torture (Matthew 23:36).

### **Matthew 24:1-3**

Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when His disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to Him.

And He said to them, Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down.

As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?

† Jesus immediately ties judgment to the destruction of the temple and the end of the age (Matthew 24:1-3).

† The disciples ask about timing, not eternal destiny, showing the covenant focus of the discourse (Mark 13:4).

† This confirms Gehenna language belongs to historical judgment on Jerusalem (Jeremiah 7:31-34).

## **Matthew 24:34**

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

† Jesus anchors judgment to that living generation, eliminating the idea of endless delay (Luke 21:32).

† Time statements govern interpretation and prevent speculative afterlife doctrines (Habakkuk 2:3).

† Fulfillment preserves God's justice and integrity (Joshua 21:45).

## **Isaiah 46:10**

Declaring the end from the beginning,  
And from ancient times things which have not been done,  
Saying, My purpose will be established,  
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure.

† Foreknowledge refers to God's governance of redemptive history, not predestined damnation (Acts 2:23).

† God's pleasure is fulfillment of His purpose, not eternal suffering (Psalm 100:5).

† Scripture never equates foreknowledge with creating beings already condemned (Ezekiel 18:23).

## **Ezekiel 18:23**

Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord God, rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?

† God explicitly denies delight in destruction (Ezekiel 18:23).

† Judgment serves repentance and life, not endless torment (Hosea 6:1-2).

† Eternal conscious torment contradicts God's stated desire (Ezekiel 33:11).

## **1 Timothy 2:4**

Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge

of the truth.

† God's salvific desire is universal in scope (Titus 2:11).

† This desire cannot coexist with the creation of beings for inevitable torture (Psalm 145:8-9).

† Salvation is tied to knowledge of truth, not escape from torment (John 17:3).

## **2 Corinthians 5:18-19**

Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,

namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

† God is the initiator of reconciliation, not the enemy Christ saves us from (Romans 5:8).

† The Father and Son act in unity, not opposition (John 10:30).

† Non imputation of sin contradicts eternal punishment theology (Psalm 103:10-12).

## **Hebrews 12:6-11**

For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines,

And He scourges every son whom He receives.

It is for discipline that you endure, God deals with you as with sons, for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them, shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness.

All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful, yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it

yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

† Discipline is an expression of love, not cruelty (Proverbs 3:11-12).

† God's correction has purpose and produces fruit (James 1:12).

† This framework rules out endless punitive torment.

### **1 Corinthians 15:26**

The last enemy that will be abolished is death.

† Death is the enemy to be destroyed, not humanity (2 Timothy 1:10).

† Eternal conscious torment requires death to remain forever (Revelation 21:4).

† Scripture declares death abolished, not eternalized.

### **Romans 8:1**

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

† Condemnation is removed in Christ, not postponed (John 5:24).

† The gospel replaces fear with assurance (1 John 4:18).

† This verdict is present and covenantal.

### **Historical References**

† Josephus records Jerusalem's fall as catastrophic covenant judgment, not eternal punishment.

† Eusebius identified the destruction of Jerusalem as fulfillment of Jesus' warnings.

† Clement of Alexandria described divine punishment as corrective rather than vindictive.

† Justin Martyr spoke of judgment in terms of accountability and restoration, not endless torture.

† Lactantius emphasized God's justice as measured and

purposeful.

## How It Applies To Us Today

† We are freed from fear based religion rooted in eternal torment (1 John 4:18).

† We proclaim a God whose judgments are just, measured, and fulfilled (Psalm 89:14).

† We live reconciled lives grounded in love, not terror (2 Corinthians 5:19).

† Faith becomes relational trust, not survival from punishment.

† God's wrath is **disciplinary, corrective, measured, and motivated by love** (Hebrews 12:6; Hebrews 12:10-11; Lamentations 3:31-33; Isaiah 54:7-8; Isaiah 57:16; Ezekiel 18:23; Hosea 11:8-9; Romans 2:4; Revelation 3:19; Psalm 89:14).

## Q & A Appendix

**Q** Does rejecting eternal conscious torment deny judgment?

**A** No. Scripture affirms judgment with purpose and restoration in view (Matthew 23:36; Hebrews 12:6).

**Q** Does foreknowledge mean God creates people condemned?

**A** No. God governs history while desiring repentance and life (Isaiah 46:10; Ezekiel 18:23).

**Q** Did Jesus die to save us from the Father?

**A** No. God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19).

**Q** If judgment was fulfilled in history, does that mean God no longer judges at all?

**A** No. Scripture shows God judges righteously within history, but judgment is not eternal torture. God still disciplines, corrects, and holds people accountable, but always in line with

His goodness and purpose (Hebrews 12:6; Romans 2:6).

**Q** What about passages that speak of fire and destruction?

**A** Fire language in Scripture consistently represents judgment, purification, and covenant removal, not endless torment. Jerusalem's destruction is described this way, and it resulted in desolation, not eternal suffering (Matthew 3:10-12; Jeremiah 7:31-34).

**Q** Does rejecting eternal conscious torment diminish God's holiness?

**A** No. God's holiness is upheld by righteous, measured judgment, not by infinite punishment for finite sin. Scripture says righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne, and mercy triumphs over judgment (Psalm 89:14; James 2:13).

**Q** If God is love, why was judgment necessary at all?

**A** Judgment was necessary to deal with covenant unfaithfulness, injustice, and bloodguilt, especially under the old covenant system. Judgment cleared the way for reconciliation and restoration in Christ (Matthew 23:35-36; Hebrews 9:15).

**Q** How should believers talk about hell and judgment today?

**A** Believers should speak biblically, covenantally, and truthfully, pointing people to Christ's finished work rather than using fear as a tool. The gospel is reconciliation, not terror (2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Romans 8:15).

**Q** I was raised in fear of hell and eternal punishment. How do I move forward without that fear controlling my faith?

**A** Scripture says perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment. In Christ, punishment has been dealt with and reconciliation has been accomplished. Growth comes from renewing the mind with truth, learning to trust God's character, and resting in the finished work of Christ rather than living under threat (1 John 4:18; Romans 8:15; 2 Corinthians 5:19).

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

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## Source Index

† Lamentations 3:31-33; Romans 6:23; Matthew 23:33-38; Matthew 24:1-3; Matthew 24:34; Isaiah 46:10; Ezekiel 18:23; Ezekiel 33:11; 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Hebrews 12:6-11; 1 Corinthians 15:26; Romans 8:1  
† Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 6; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3; Clement of Alexandria, Stromata; Justin Martyr, First Apology; Lactantius, Divine Institutes

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