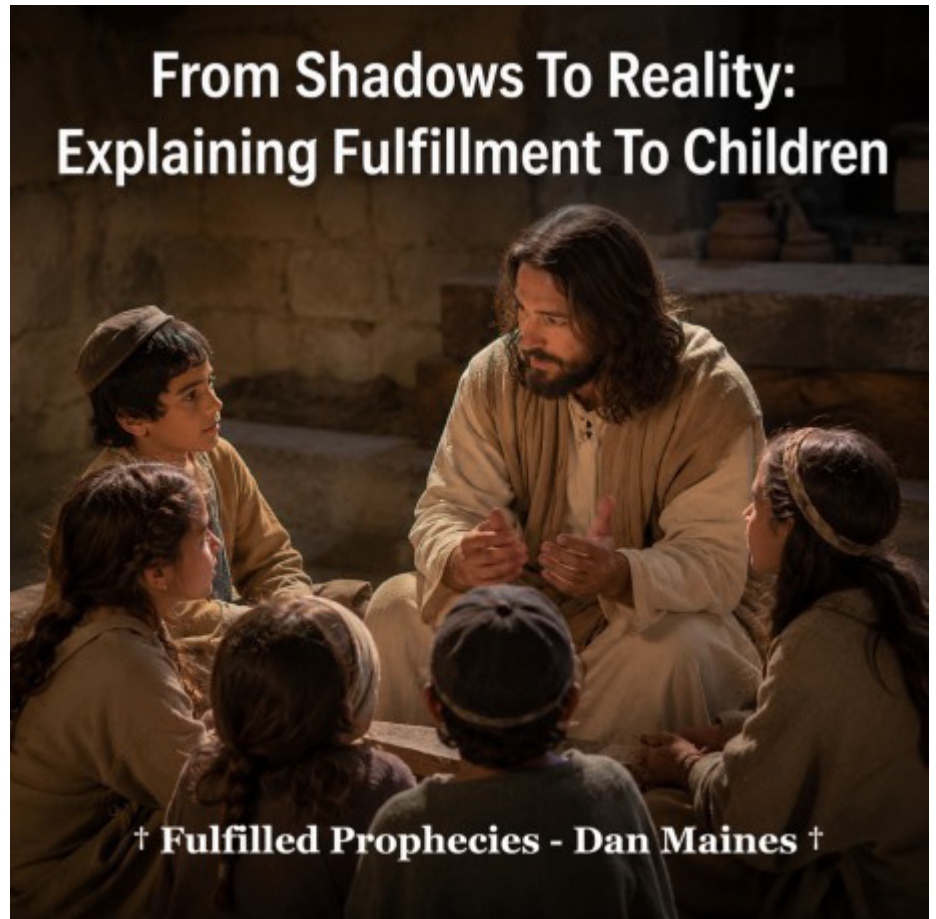


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From Shadows To Reality: Explaining Fulfillment To Children



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† Sometimes children learn best by seeing the difference between a picture and the real thing. The Bible teaches that many things in the Old Covenant were pictures, shadows, and lessons that pointed forward to Jesus Christ. When Christ came, the reality arrived. God did not give Israel the Law because it was the final goal. He gave it to lead people to

Christ. The fulfilled view helps us understand that God's plan moved from shadow to reality, from promise to fulfillment, and from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant.

Galatians 3:24-25

Therefore the Law has become our guardian to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

† The Law was a teacher that pointed people to Jesus Christ.

† A teacher's job is not to stay with a student forever. Once the lesson is learned, the student moves forward.

† God never intended the Law of Moses to be the final destination. It was preparing people for Christ. (Romans 10:4)

Colossians 2:16-17

Therefore, no one is to act as your judge in regard to food and drink, or in respect to a festival or a new moon, or a Sabbath day- things which are only a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

† God specifically calls these Old Covenant things shadows.

† A shadow is not the real object. It only points to something greater. (Colossians 2:16-17)

† Christ is the reality to which all those shadows pointed. (Colossians 2:16-17)

Hebrews 10:1

For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the form of those things itself, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually every year, make those who approach perfect.

† The Law contained shadows of future blessings.

† Animal sacrifices could never accomplish what Christ would accomplish. (Hebrews 10:1-14)

† Jesus fulfilled what the sacrifices, priests, and temple were pointing toward. (Hebrews 9:11-12)

Hebrews 8:5

who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, "THAT YOU MAKE all things BY THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN TO YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN."

† The tabernacle itself was a copy and shadow of a greater reality.

† God designed the Old Covenant system to teach spiritual truths that would be fulfilled in Christ. (Hebrews 8:5)

† The earthly tabernacle pointed forward to the greater things found in the New Covenant. (Hebrews 9:23-24)

John 1:17

For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

† Moses brought the Law, but Jesus brought the fulfillment of God's promises.

† Grace and truth arrived through Christ because He was the One to whom the Law pointed. (John 5:39)

† The New Covenant provides the reality that the Old Covenant anticipated. (Hebrews 8:6)

Luke 24:44

Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all the things that are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

† Jesus taught that the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms were all pointing to Him.

† The Old Testament is not a separate story. It is the story that leads to Christ. (Luke 24:44)

† God's promises were fulfilled in Jesus exactly as He foretold. (Luke 24:44)

Hebrews 8:13

When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is

about to disappear.

† The first covenant was growing old because a better covenant had arrived.

† God was transitioning His people from the shadow to the reality. (Hebrews 8:6-13)

† The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple completed that covenant transition. (Luke 21:20-22)

Historical References

† Josephus recorded the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70, bringing an end to the Old Covenant system that depended upon the temple, priesthood, and sacrifices.

† Eusebius wrote that the judgments foretold by Christ came upon Jerusalem, confirming the fulfillment of those first-century covenant promises and warnings.

How It Applies To Us Today

† Imagine drawing a picture of your mother while she is away. The picture reminds you of her, but when she comes home you don't hug the picture, you hug your mother. The Old Covenant was like the picture. Jesus is the reality.

† Think about training wheels on a bicycle. They help for a time, but they are not meant to stay forever. The Law helped teach God's people until Christ came.

† Think about a blueprint for a house. The blueprint is important, but nobody lives inside the blueprint. The finished house is what the blueprint was pointing toward. Christ is the fulfillment of God's plan.

† Think about a shadow on the ground. You can tell someone is coming by seeing the shadow, but the real person is much greater than the shadow. Jesus is the reality that the shadows pointed toward.

† When we read the Old Testament, we should look for how it points to Jesus because He is the reality behind the shadows. (Luke 24:27)

Q & A Appendix

Q: What is a shadow in the Bible?

A: A shadow is something that points to a greater reality that would come later. The Law, sacrifices, feasts, and temple were shadows pointing to Christ. (Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 10:1)

Q: Why did God give Israel the Law?

A: The Law was given to teach and guide people until Christ came. (Galatians 3:24-25)

Q: Did God make a mistake with the Old Covenant?

A: No. The Old Covenant accomplished exactly what God intended. It prepared the way for Christ and the New Covenant. (Galatians 3:24; Hebrews 8:6)

Q: What changed when Jesus came?

A: The reality arrived. Jesus fulfilled the things that the Law, sacrifices, priesthood, and temple represented. (Matthew 5:17; Hebrews 9:11-12)

Q: Are Christians under the Law of Moses today?

A: No. Believers are under Christ and the New Covenant. (Galatians 3:25; Romans 10:4)

Q: How do we know the New Covenant is better?

A: God calls it a better covenant established on better promises. (Hebrews 8:6)

Q: If the Old Covenant was a shadow, should we still read the Old Testament?

A: Yes. The Old Testament helps us understand who Jesus is and how God fulfilled His promises through Him. (Luke 24:27, 44)

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

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Source Index

† Galatians 3:24-25; Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 10:1; Hebrews 8:5; John 1:17; Luke 24:44; Hebrews 8:13; Romans 10:4; Hebrews 9:11-12, 23-24; John 5:39; Hebrews 8:6-13; Luke 21:20-22; Luke 24:27; Matthew 5:17

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