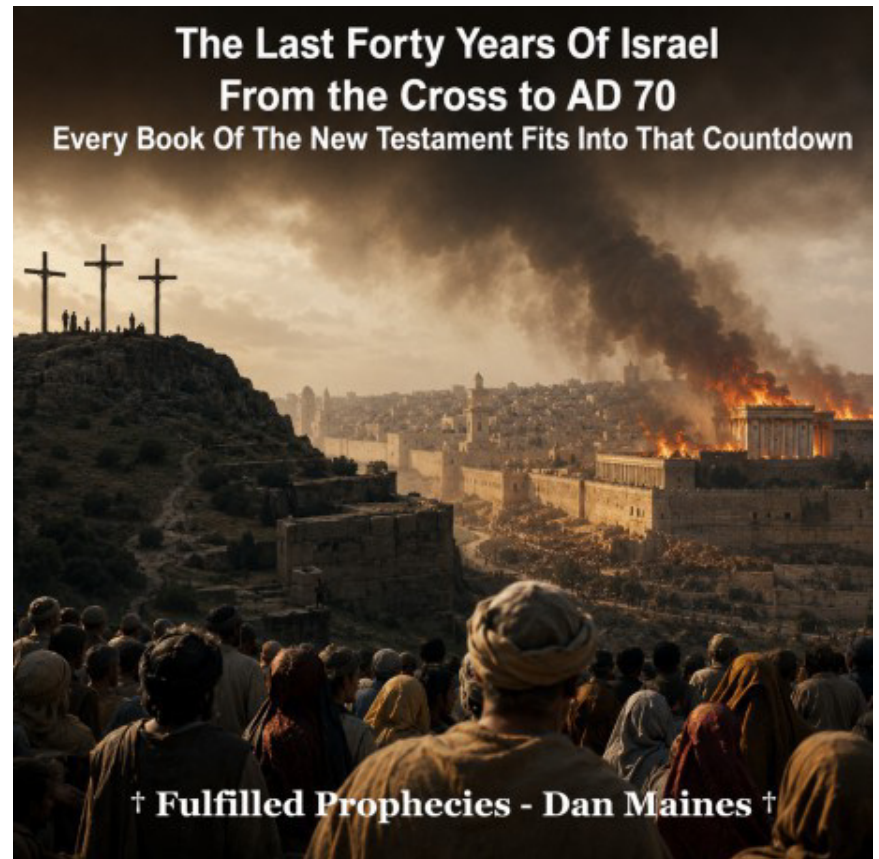


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**Covenant - The Last
Forty Years Of Israel
From the Cross to AD 70
Every Book Of The New
Testament Fits Into That
Countdown**



By Dan Maines

**The Last Forty Years Of Israel
From the Cross to AD 70
Every Book Of The New Testament Fits Into That Countdown**

Introduction

† Most Christians read the New Testament as if it were written over a long period with no unifying timeline. But the writers themselves saw something very different. They believed they were living in the final

generation of Old Covenant Israel. From the cross until the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 was a forty-year period of transition, just as Israel wandered forty years before entering the Promised Land. Every New Testament book fits somewhere within that covenant countdown, warning that the end of the Old Covenant age was near.

† Jesus' death established the New Covenant, but the Old Covenant order remained standing until God's judgment fell upon Jerusalem and the temple. Throughout those forty years the apostles repeatedly warned that the end was approaching.

† When we read the New Testament within its original time frame, the repeated statements of "near," "at hand," "this generation," and "the last days" all become perfectly consistent.

Matthew 24:34

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

† Jesus placed the fulfillment within the lifetime of His own generation, not thousands of years later.

† Every New Testament writer remained faithful to this same time expectation because they believed Jesus' words.

† The forty-year countdown began with Christ's ministry and ended exactly as He foretold with Jerusalem's destruction.

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.

† Hebrews describes the Old Covenant as growing old and ready to disappear.

† The temple was still standing when Hebrews was written, showing the final removal had not yet occurred.

† Only AD 70 completely removed the Old Covenant system exactly as the writer expected.

Hebrews 10:25

not abandoning our own meeting together, as is the habit of some people, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

† The writer expected his readers to actually see "the day" approaching.

† This wasn't describing an event thousands of years in the future.

† It confirms the same forty-year countdown found throughout the New Testament.

James 5:8-9

You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Do not complain, brothers and sisters, against one another, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the

door.

† James did not describe a coming thousands of years away.

† "At hand" and "before the doors" describe an event that was extremely close to his readers.

† James encouraged endurance because the covenant judgment was rapidly approaching.

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

† Paul says the ends of the ages had already come upon his generation.

† He places his readers at the climax of redemptive history, not people living thousands of years later.

† This perfectly fits the final years before the Old Covenant age ended.

1 Peter 4:7

The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.

† Peter spoke of the end that his audience expected to witness.

† The context concerns the end of the Old Covenant world, not the end of planet Earth. (Matthew 24:3)

† Peter urged believers to remain spiritually alert because that covenantal end was near.

1 John 2:18

Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

† John didn't say the last hour would come someday.

† He declared they were already living in it.

† The appearance of many antichrists proved the Old Covenant age was reaching its conclusion.

Revelation 1:1-3

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, everything that he saw. Blessed is the one who reads, and those who hear the words of the prophecy and keep the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

† Revelation opens by declaring that its prophecies would happen shortly.

† John repeats that the time was at hand, matching Jesus, James, Peter, and Hebrews.

† The entire book belongs within the final years leading to Jerusalem's destruction.

Revelation 22:10

And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.

† Revelation closes exactly as it opened, declaring the time was at hand.

† The first and last chapters leave no room to postpone these prophecies for thousands of years.

† John's message remained focused on events about to occur in his generation.

Luke 21:20-22

But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near. Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those who are inside the city must leave, and those who are in the country must not enter the city; because these are days of punishment, so that all things which have been written will be fulfilled.

† Jesus gave His disciples a visible sign that the end had arrived.

† The destruction of Jerusalem fulfilled the covenant judgments promised throughout the Old Testament.

† AD 70 completed the forty-year transition from Old Covenant Israel to the fully established New Covenant.

Romans 13:11-12

Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let's rid ourselves of the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

† Paul says salvation was nearer than when they first believed because the New Covenant transition was nearing completion.

† The repeated expression "the day is at hand" agrees with every other New Testament writer.

† Romans belongs within the same forty-year countdown leading to Jerusalem's destruction.

Historical References

† Josephus (Wars of the Jews, Book 6, Chapters 3-5) records the destruction of Jerusalem and the burning of the temple in AD 70, exactly as Jesus foretold.

† Eusebius (Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 5) records that Christians fled Jerusalem before its destruction in obedience to Christ's warning.

† Tacitus (Histories, Book 5) confirms the Roman siege and destruction of Jerusalem during the reign of Vespasian and Titus.

How It Applies To Us Today

† We can trust every time statement Jesus and the apostles gave because history confirms their fulfillment.

† We no longer live waiting for the Old Covenant to end because Christ has already established His everlasting kingdom.

† We now live under the finished New Covenant, enjoying direct access to God through Jesus Christ.

† Understanding the forty-year transition brings the entire New Testament into harmony and removes the confusion created by postponing its prophecies into our future.

Q & A Appendix

Q: Why was there a forty-year period instead of immediate judgment after the cross?

A: God demonstrated remarkable patience, giving Israel one final generation to repent before covenant judgment came upon Jerusalem. (Matthew 23:37-39; Luke 21:20-22; 2 Peter 3:9)

Q: Were all the New Testament books written during this forty-year countdown?

A: Yes. Every New Testament book was written during the transition between Christ's death and the destruction of Jerusalem, addressing believers living in those last days of the Old Covenant. (Hebrews 1:1-2; James 5:8-9; Revelation 1:1-3)

Q: Why is AD 70 so important to understanding the New Testament?

A: Because it marked the complete removal of the Old Covenant system, the destruction of the temple, and the fulfillment of Jesus' covenant judgment prophecies. (Matthew 24:34; Luke 21:20-22; Hebrews 8:13)

Q: If the New Testament was written during the last forty years of Israel, why don't the writers ever mention the temple had already been destroyed?

A: Because the temple was still standing when they wrote. They consistently speak of its destruction as a coming event, not a past event. Had AD 70 already occurred, the greatest covenant event of their generation would certainly have been mentioned as fulfilled. (Hebrews 8:13; Hebrews 10:25; Matthew 24:1-2; Luke 21:20-22)

Q: Why is the forty-year period significant?

A: Just as Israel wandered forty years before entering the Promised Land, first-century Israel experienced a forty-year covenant transition from the cross until Jerusalem's destruction. God gave that generation time to repent before bringing the covenant judgment Jesus had foretold. (Numbers 14:33-34; Matthew 23:37-39; Matthew 24:34; Luke 21:22)

Q: What was God doing during those forty years?

A: God was establishing the New Covenant while patiently calling Israel to repentance through the preaching of Christ's apostles. When that generation rejected the gospel, the Old Covenant system came to its appointed end in AD 70. (Acts 2:38-40; Hebrews 8:13; Hebrews 12:26-28; 2 Peter 3:9)

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

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Source Index

† Matthew 24:34; Hebrews 8:13; James 5:8-9; 1 Peter 4:7; Revelation 1:1-3; Luke 21:20-22

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book 6, Chapters 3-5; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, Chapter 5; Tacitus, Histories, Book 5

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