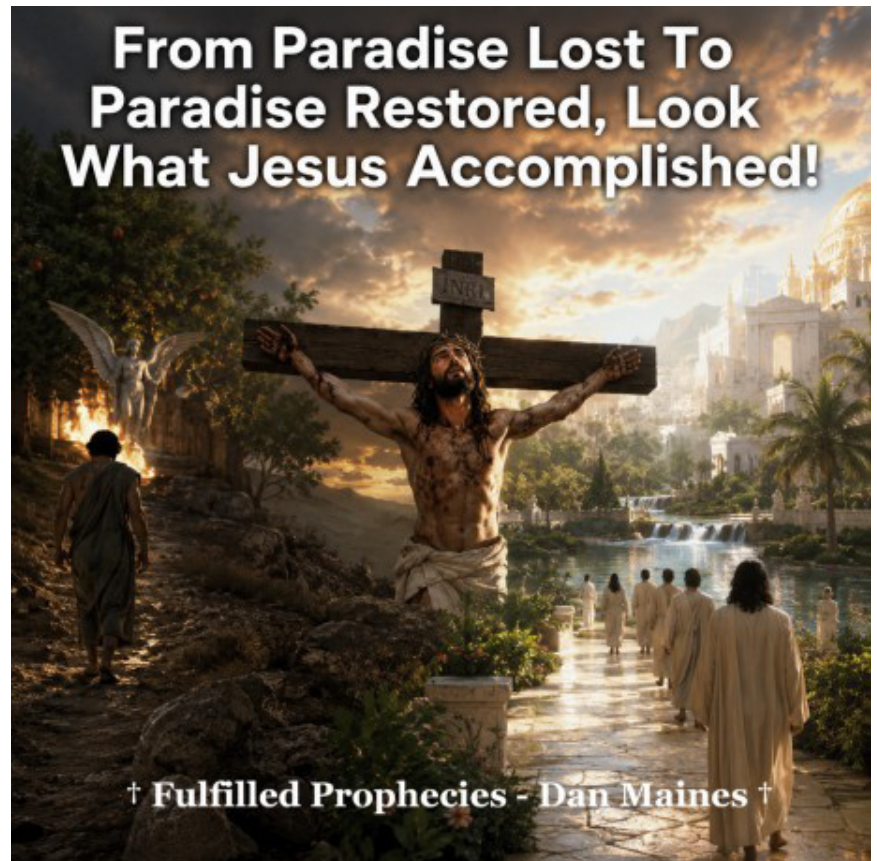


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**New Jerusalem - From
Paradise Lost To
Paradise Restored, Look
What Jesus
Accomplished!**



By Dan Maines

**From Paradise Lost To Paradise Restored, Look What Jesus
Accomplished!**

Introduction

† The Bible opens with humanity losing access to paradise, and it closes with God's people enjoying restored access to life and His presence.

† Genesis shows separation, curse, death, and exile. Revelation shows reconciliation, blessing, life, and fellowship with God.

† This isn't two unrelated stories. It's one great redemption story,

moving from what was lost in Adam to what was accomplished in Christ (Romans 5:17-19).

† The amazing truth is that Jesus didn't merely promise restoration. He accomplished the work necessary to bring His people back into fellowship with God (2 Corinthians 5:18-19).

† Fulfilled prophecy isn't primarily a story about destruction. It's the story of restoration, reconciliation, access, and life through Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10:19-22).

† The Bible begins with the way to the tree of life guarded. It ends with the tree of life accessible. That's one of the greatest WOW moments in the entire Bible.

Genesis 3:23-24

therefore the Lord God sent him out of the Garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. So He drove the man out; and at the east of the Garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

† Humanity's story outside Eden began with expulsion. Adam was driven from the garden, and access to the tree of life was guarded.

† The problem wasn't simply that Adam lost beautiful surroundings. Humanity experienced separation from the special presence and fellowship represented by Eden (Isaiah 59:2).

† Notice the wording carefully. The way of the tree of life was guarded. Genesis leaves humanity standing outside paradise with the way blocked.

† This creates one of the Bible's great questions: Will the way to life ever be opened again?

† The rest of Scripture moves toward God's answer in Jesus Christ (John 14:6).

Luke 23:43

And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

† Jesus spoke these words while accomplishing redemption on the cross. Paradise appears again, but now it's connected directly with Christ.

† Adam's sin brought death, but Christ came to overcome the

condemnation and death associated with Adam (Romans 5:18-19).

† The criminal beside Jesus had no opportunity to build a lifetime record of religious accomplishments. His hope rested in Jesus.

† Jesus wasn't pointing him back toward earthly Eden. He was pointing toward restored fellowship and life in God's presence.

† The movement of redemption is becoming clear, from paradise lost through Adam to paradise restored through Christ (1 Corinthians 15:22).

Hebrews 10:19-22

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, through His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let's approach God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

† Genesis showed the way guarded. Hebrews announces a new and living way through Jesus.

† That's an incredible biblical contrast. Humanity was driven away in Genesis, but believers are told to draw near in Hebrews.

† Jesus accomplished what humanity couldn't accomplish. Through His sacrifice, access to God was opened (Ephesians 2:13, 18).

† The veil represented restricted access under the old covenant system, but Jesus opened the way into God's presence (Matthew 27:51).

† Christianity isn't humanity desperately trying to find its way back to God. It's the announcement that God opened the way through His Son.

Revelation 21:3-5

And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among the people, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away." And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."

† Look at where the biblical story arrives. Genesis described humanity driven from God's garden presence. Revelation describes God's dwelling with His people.

† This is covenant restoration language. The separation introduced through sin gives way to reconciliation and fellowship through Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17-19).

† The first things passing away fits Revelation's covenantal movement from the former order into the completed new covenant reality (Hebrews 8:13).

† God's goal wasn't simply to destroy Jerusalem. The judgment of the old covenant world cleared the stage for the fully established new covenant order in which God's dwelling isn't centered in an earthly temple (John 4:21-24).

† The WOW moment is enormous. The Bible begins with humanity outside God's garden sanctuary, but Revelation shows God's dwelling with His people.

Revelation 21:22-25

I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illuminated it, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed;

† Eden had guarded access after Adam's sin. The New Jerusalem has gates that aren't shut.

† Under the old covenant, access to God's presence was represented through priests, sacrifices, curtains, and a physical temple. In the New Jerusalem, God and the Lamb are its temple (Hebrews 9:6-10).

† The nations walking in its light shows an ongoing kingdom reality. The picture isn't an empty planet after human history has ended. Nations are pictured receiving the light of God's completed redemptive work.

† The open gates proclaim access. What was guarded in Genesis has been opened through Christ.

† We don't need another earthly temple because God's dwelling place is with His covenant people (Ephesians 2:19-22).

Revelation 22:1-2

And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

† Here is the tree that humanity couldn't approach after Eden. At the end of Revelation, the tree of life stands in the New Jerusalem.

† The tree isn't described as inaccessible. It produces fruit continually, and its leaves are for the healing of the nations.

† Genesis 3 and Revelation 22 belong together. The guarded tree in Genesis becomes the accessible tree in the restored creation imagery of Revelation.

† Notice again that nations are present. They need healing. This points to the continuing mission and blessing of Christ's kingdom in the world (Matthew 28:18-20).

† Fulfillment didn't end God's work through His people. Fulfillment established the completed covenant reality from which the gospel continues flowing to the nations.

Revelation 22:3

There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him;

† These few words reach all the way back to Genesis. The curse entered the biblical story after humanity's rebellion, but Revelation declares that there will no longer be any curse.

† Jesus became a curse for His people so that the blessing promised through Abraham could come through Him (Galatians 3:13-14).

† The biblical movement couldn't be clearer. Curse gives way to blessing, separation gives way to reconciliation, exile gives way to access, and death gives way to life.

† What Adam couldn't repair, Jesus accomplished.

† Paradise wasn't restored by humanity climbing back to God.

Paradise was restored because God acted decisively through Jesus Christ.

Revelation 22:14

Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the

right to the tree of life, and may enter the city by the gates.

† Genesis ended humanity's access to the tree of life. Revelation announces the right to the tree of life.

† Don't miss that contrast. Genesis 3 says the way was guarded. Revelation 22 speaks of entering through the gates and coming to the tree.

† Jesus is the reason the story changed. His redemptive work brought His people from alienation to reconciliation and from death to life (Colossians 1:20-22).

† We aren't standing outside Eden waiting for God to someday restore access. In Christ, the way to God has been opened.

† That's the great restoration story of Scripture, paradise lost through Adam, paradise restored through Jesus Christ.

Historical References

† Josephus described the catastrophic destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70, providing an important historical witness to the end of the old Jerusalem and its temple-centered order, Wars of the Jews, Books 5-7.

† Tacitus also recorded the Roman conflict with Jerusalem and the destruction associated with that first-century war, Histories, Book 5.

† Eusebius later connected Jerusalem's catastrophe with Jesus' warnings concerning that generation and recorded the early Christian understanding that believers escaped the city's destruction, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, chapters 5-7.

† These historical witnesses don't create our doctrine. Scripture establishes our doctrine, but history confirms that the first-century Jerusalem and temple system actually experienced the judgment Jesus had announced (Luke 21:20-22).

How It Applies To Us Today

† We don't live outside the gates begging God to open them. Revelation presents the gates of the New Jerusalem as open.

† We don't need to rebuild an earthly temple to approach God. Through Christ, believers have access to the Father (Ephesians 2:18).

† We don't need to live as though Adam's failure is greater than Christ's victory. Where sin brought condemnation and death, Christ brought righteousness and life (Romans 5:17-19).

† We can live with joy because Christianity isn't ultimately the story of what humanity lost. It's the story of what Jesus accomplished.

† We can invite people to Christ because the water of life is available and the gates of the city are pictured as open (Revelation 22:17).

† Fulfilled eschatology doesn't leave us staring backward at AD 70. It helps us understand what Christ established and how we're called to live because of His completed work.

† We live after the great covenant transition, enjoying reconciliation with God, access through Christ, the blessings of the new covenant, and the continuing mission of taking His good news to the nations.

† Genesis says they were driven out. Hebrews says draw near. Revelation says enter through the gates. That's the restoration story.

† Paradise lost isn't the final word. Jesus Christ gets the final word, and His word is restoration, reconciliation, access, life, and God's presence with His people.

Q & A Appendix

Q: What was really lost in Eden?

A: Humanity lost access to the tree of life and experienced exile from the garden sanctuary. The deeper biblical issue was separation from the fellowship and life associated with God's presence (Genesis 3:23-24).

Q: Did Jesus come to restore what was lost through Adam?

A: Yes. Paul deliberately contrasts Adam and Christ. Adam's trespass brought condemnation, while Christ's righteous act brings justification and life to His people (Romans 5:17-19).

Q: Why does Revelation bring back the tree of life?

A: Because Revelation completes the restoration theme that began in Genesis. The tree that was guarded after Adam's sin appears in the New Jerusalem with access restored (Genesis 3:24; Revelation 22:2, 14).

Q: Why are the gates of the New Jerusalem never shut?

A: The open gates picture access rather than exclusion for those who

come through Christ. The nations are pictured walking in the city's light, and the invitation to take the water of life continues (Revelation 21:24-25; 22:17).

Q: Does fulfilled prophecy mean God's kingdom stopped working in AD 70?

A: No. AD 70 marked the decisive end of the old covenant age, not the end of Christ's kingdom. His kingdom continues, the gospel continues, and the nations continue to receive its blessings (Daniel 7:14; Matthew 28:18-20).

Q: What's the great WOW moment of this entire story?

A: The Bible begins with humanity driven from paradise and the way to life guarded. It ends with God's dwelling among His people, the curse removed, the tree of life present, and the gates open. What was lost in Adam has been restored through the victory of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:17-19).

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

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Source Index

† Genesis 3:23-24; Luke 23:43; Hebrews 10:19-22; Revelation 21:3-5; Revelation 21:22-25; Revelation 22:1-2; Revelation 22:3; Revelation 22:14

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Books 5-7; Tacitus, Histories, Book 5; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, Book 3, chapters 5-7

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