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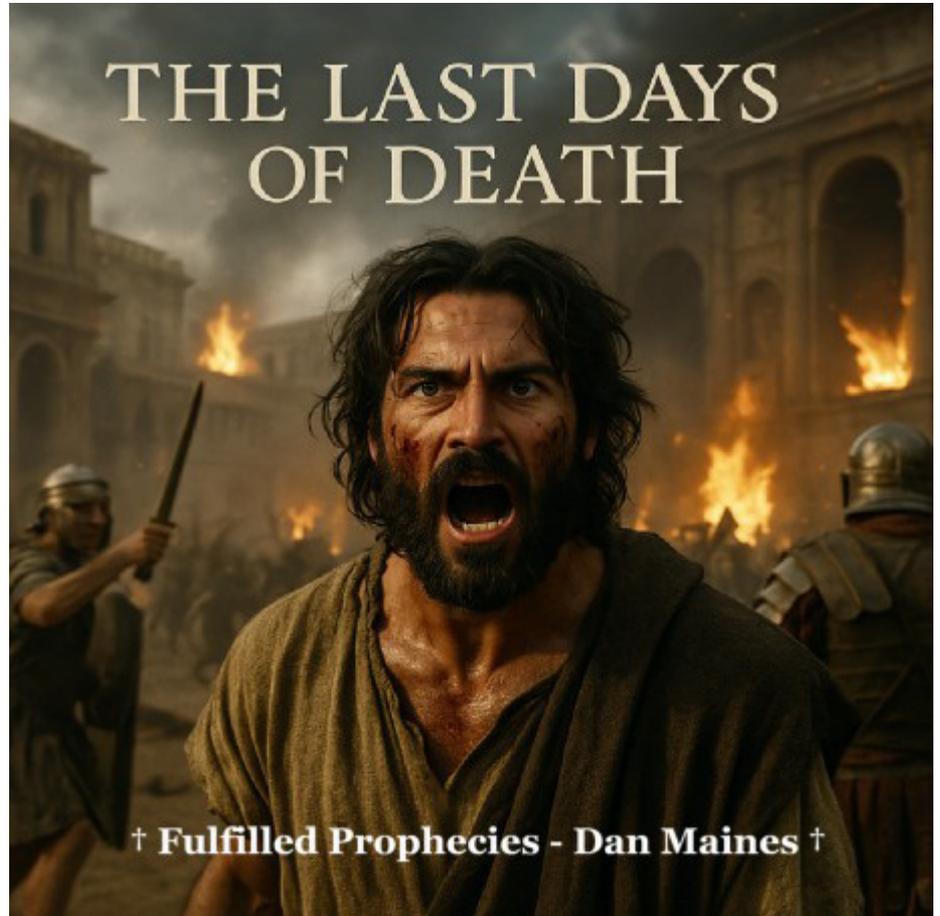
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The Last Days Of Death



By Dan Maines

The Last Days Of Death

† Hosea, Isaiah, and Paul all speak of the same enemy, and they all place that enemy inside the covenant world of Israel. Death was not a biological problem, it was a covenant problem. Adam died the day he sinned because he entered covenant death, the separation produced by the Law's condemnation. From that point forward, Israel lived under a system where sin was counted, judgment was recorded, and death reigned because the Law empowered it.

Hosea 13:14

Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol, shall I redeem them from death? O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion will be hidden from My sight.

† Hosea 13:14 says O Death, where are your thorns, O Sheol, where is your sting. Hosea is not talking about graves opening thousands of years later. He is speaking to the northern kingdom under covenant collapse. The sting of death belonged to Israel's sin under their covenant, and God promised that He Himself would redeem them from that death. That promise is the very language Paul repeats in 1 Corinthians 15, proving he is dealing with covenant death, not biology.

Isaiah 25:7-8

And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, even the veil which is stretched over all nations. He will swallow up death for all time, and the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces, and He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken.

† Isaiah 25:7-8 declares that God would swallow up the covering which is over all peoples and the veil which is stretched over all nations. That veil is not a biological shroud, it is the condemnation of the Law which Israel carried as the representative nation. When that old covenant world fell, the veil was removed. Then Isaiah says He will swallow up death for all time. Jesus fulfilled that promise, and Paul quotes Isaiah 25 in 1 Corinthians 15 to show that Christ is the One who swallowed up death forever in the completion of the resurrection in AD 70. God removes death when He removes the covenant that produced it.

1 Corinthians 15:56

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law.

† Paul makes it unmistakable. In 1 Corinthians 15:56 he says the sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law. That is covenant language. Biological death does not come from the Law of Moses, but covenant death did. The Law held sin against Israel, and because of that, death reigned over them. When the Law ended, death lost its power. That is why Paul ties the resurrection to the end of the Law's authority. When the Law was removed in AD 70, the sting of death was destroyed because the covenant that empowered it was gone.

1 Corinthians 15:54

But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

† The resurrection is the victory over covenant death. It is not the reviving of biological bodies, it is the removing of the separation that existed under the Law. That is why believers today never enter spiritual death. We are not in Adam's world or Israel's covenant system. We are in Christ, where sin is not counted and death has no claim. If death's sting came from the Law, and the Law ended in AD 70, then the resurrection is a finished reality. That is exactly why Paul said death would be swallowed up in victory, not delayed for thousands of years.

2 Corinthians 5:8

We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

† The last days of death were the last days of the Old Covenant. When Jerusalem fell, the age of death ended. The resurrection was the covenantal raising of God's people out of the dominion of the Law into the fullness of life in Christ. Now, when believers die physically, they do not enter death. They enter the presence of Christ. There is no separation, no condemnation, and no waiting for a future resurrection. The resurrection is a finished reality, accomplished when the Law

that empowered death was removed.

Christ Destroyed Death

† Paul did not invent the idea that death would be defeated in AD 70. Scripture already declared that Christ Himself would destroy death, and Paul applied that truth to the end of the covenant system that empowered it.

2 Timothy 1:10

But now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

† Paul says Christ has abolished death. This isn't a future hope, it's a completed work. Christ destroyed the power behind death, and AD 70 marked the end of the covenant system that kept that power alive.

Hosea 13:14

I shall ransom them from the power of Sheol, I shall redeem them from Death. O Death, where are your plagues? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion is hidden from My eyes.

† Hosea prophesied that God would ransom His people from Sheol and remove the sting of death. Paul quotes this because the prophecy reached its fulfillment in the first century as the old covenant ended.

1 Corinthians 15:55

O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?

† This is Paul quoting Hosea. Grave is Sheol, the realm of the dead under the old covenant. Christ conquered Sheol, and in AD 70 the power of that realm was fully removed when the Law that empowered death passed away.

Hebrews 2:14-15

Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

† Hebrews confirms the same truth. The devil's power was the power of death, and that power came through the Law. Christ destroyed it, and the full freedom from covenant death arrived when the old covenant system collapsed in AD 70.

† This is why believers today never enter Sheol, never enter covenant death, and never experience the sting that belonged to the Law. Christ finished it, AD 70 completed it, and no believer today ever sees death in the covenant sense.

Revelation 20:14

Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

† Revelation seals the point. Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. That's the symbolic end of the covenant world that held God's people in bondage. The destruction of Jerusalem fulfilled this picture as the last remnants of covenant death were removed forever.

Historical References

† Justin Martyr recorded that the destruction of Jerusalem marked the judgment the prophets warned about and that the old order was passing away as the gospel went to the nations. He tied Israel's fall to the fulfillment of God's promises and the establishment of the new age in Christ.

† Irenaeus spoke of Christ destroying the one who had the power of death and connecting that victory to the passing away of the former covenant system. While not a preterist, he acknowledged that resurrection life was tied to Christ's

completed work and the defeat of covenant death.

† Eusebius gave the earliest Christian testimony that the fall of Jerusalem fulfilled Jesus' words. He described the old covenant world collapsing, the believers escaping, and the city judged exactly as Christ said. His history shows the early church saw AD 70 as the turning of the ages.

† Josephus recorded the covenant curses falling on Israel, the collapse of priesthood and sacrifice, the tribulation, the end of the temple, and the destruction of the system that empowered death. His eyewitness record confirms exactly what Hosea, Isaiah, and Paul said would bring the end of death's sting.

How It Applies To Us Today

† Because Christ destroyed covenant death and removed the Law that empowered it, believers today never enter the realm of death that Israel feared. We don't enter Sheol, we don't face condemnation, and we don't wait for resurrection life. We live in the age of immortality that Christ revealed. Death has no sting for us because the system that gave it power is gone forever.

† We aren't waiting for victory, we live in it. We aren't waiting for life, we walk in it. We aren't hoping death will someday be defeated, we stand in the finished work of the One who already defeated it. The resurrection isn't our future fear, it's our present confidence. Christ destroyed death, AD 70 completed the transition, and the kingdom we live in is a kingdom where death has no authority over the people of God.

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

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Source Index

† Hosea 13:14, Isaiah 25:7-8, Isaiah 27:1

† 1 Corinthians 15:22-26, 50-57, 2 Corinthians 5:8

† 2 Timothy 1:10, 1 Corinthians 15:55, Hebrews 2:14-15

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