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A Covenant of Death, Part 2

by Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D., 1976

Edited by David Sielaff, April 2025

Read both the "[April 2025 Newsletter](#)"



This article completes Dr. Ernest Martin's lecture from "[A Covenant of Death, Part 1](#)." A covenant will be negotiated between Israel and one man. That man is prophesied to rise to power in the Middle East in the years ahead of us. This covenant will be presented as a final step for PEACE in the Middle East and the world. This covenant is also the subject of major Old and New Testament prophecies. The two parties are the people of Israel and a remarkable man. it will have world-wide effect just before Christ returns.

EDITOR'S NOTE: First, I am reprinting below the last "section" from page 14 of "[A Covenant of Death, Part 1](#)" so the continuity of the prophecies can be understood better. DWS

Daniel Chapter 12, Continuing the Same Vision, More Exploits [Repeated]

"In that era [when all the prophetic events in Daniel will conclude] Michael shall stand up, the great chief who is standing over the sons of your people. Then AN ERA OF DISTRESS¹ will come to pass such as has not occurred since there was a nation on the earth, until that era. Now in that era your people shall escape — all those found written in the scroll."

• *Daniel 12:1 CLV*

That is exactly what Jesus said in the Olivet Prophecy. Great tribulation will occur, but Michael (an angel, who is not Christ Jesus) will stand up at that time to aid God's people.

"From those sleeping in the soil of the ground [they are dead] many shall awake, these to eonian [age-lasting] life and these to reproach for eonian [age-lasting] repulsion. The intelligent shall warn [other people] as the warning of the atmosphere, and those turning many to righteousness will be as the stars for the eon and further."

• *Daniel 12:2-3 CLV*

These verses refer to the resurrection of the dead at the second coming of Christ. However, remember that the

¹ The King James translates this phrase as "**a time of trouble.**" DWS

coming of the Messiah was not understood at the time of Daniel. It was a distant and undefined future event, In fact, it was also not understood when Jesus did reveal Himself to be the Son of God, the coming Messiah, which was not clear even to the apostles until after Christ's resurrection from the dead.

[In this passage] those being raised from the dead were understood to be the Patriarchs and those of all righteous people of Israel from the time of the Exodus to when Daniel wrote, all Israel was at that moment still in exile. There was no knowledge of a future time of a New Covenant for Israel, Gentiles could not receive salvation at that time, unless they had converted and became Israelites. Nor was there any hint here in Daniel about an *ekklesia* (composed of Israelites and Gentiles) which is the Body of Christ.

“Now you, Daniel, stop up [or ‘close up’] the words and seal the scroll until the era of the end, when many shall swerve as evil shall increase.”²

• *Daniel 12:4 CLV*

That verse has been misunderstood by many people. It is not talking about automobiles, airplanes, or such things, “going back and forth.” This is a figure which can be clearly shown from Scripture that it means they will be running to and fro to find out the meaning of these words of THIS prophecy.

When it says, **“knowledge shall be increased,”** knowledge of what? How to send men to the moon? No, it is the knowledge of this prophecy that is being talked about. This prophecy, at the time of the end, will be able to be understood. Readers will **“run to and fro”** in the Book of Daniel trying to understand it, but that knowledge shall be increased only at the time of the end.

I do not claim to understand it perfectly yet, maybe you do not understand it perfectly either. If that is the case, then we are not at the end yet.³ Not that you are not important or I am not important, but it is still difficult to understand, isn't it? But at the time of the end, many will go **“to and fro”** in the text of Daniel, but God says, the knowledge of this prophecy and its understanding shall be increased. And that is God's promise.

“I, Daniel — I see, and behold, two others [angels] are standing, one on the near ridge of the waterway and one on the far ridge of the waterway.

... Then he raised up his right hand and his left hand to the heavens and swore by Him Who is living for the eon, that it is for AN appointed time, TWO appointed times and HALF an appointed time [3½ years]. And when the shattering of the hand [meaning “the power”] of the holy people is concluded, then ALL THESE THINGS shall have their conclusion.”

• *Daniel 12:5, 7 CLV*

| Editor's Note: Continuing Dr. Martin's text from Part 1 *DWS*

Brethren, that is the last 3½ years there and that is what the 70-weeks prophesy says: at the end of that last 3½ year period it is determined upon the holy city, the holy people, the Temple, the altar, the sacrifices, and all of that will be finished and accomplished. Going on, Daniel writes:

⁸ **“As for me, I heard, yet I did not understand. So I said, ‘My lord, what will be after these things?’**

⁹ **And he replied, ‘Go, Daniel, for the words are stopped up and sealed until the era of the end. [That is when the knowledge will be increased.]¹⁰ Many shall purify and whiten themselves and be refined; yet the wicked will act wickedly. None [not one!] of all the wicked shall understand; yet the intelligent are understanding.¹¹ From the era when the continuous ritual is taken away, and to the setting of the abomination of desolation, is a thousand two hundred and ninety days.’”**

• *Daniel 12:8–11 CLV*

That is when the covenant that made for a 7-year period is broken in the middle of the “week” by the vile man

² Daniel 12:4, King James Version: **“But you, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book [scroll], even to the time of the end: many SHALL RUN TO AND FRO, and knowledge shall be increased.”** *DWS*

³ See Dr. Martin's article, [“Matters of Prophecy in Daniel”](#) as well as my article, [“The End Time? Not Yet!”](#) *DWS*

— when he goes against the holy covenant and takes away sacrifices, oblations, and sets up the abomination.

“Happy is he who will tarry [wait] and attain[s] to the thousand three hundred and thirty-five [1,335] days! Now you [Daniel], go on to the end [of the prophecy], and you shall rest [sleep in death] and stand up for your lot at the end of the days.”

• *Daniel 12:12–13*

Obviously, these things have to do with the end time. But what does all of this have to do with this **“Covenant of death”**? Are there other scriptures that perhaps speak about it? The answer is yes, definitely yes.

Editor’s note: If you have read Part 1 and are this far in Part 2 you may have noticed that the phrase *“Covenant of Death”* has not been quoted in any Bible verse. That precise phrase occurs only in the Book of Isaiah.

The writings of Isaiah were well known to Daniel, who as the chief of the Wise Men in Babylon almost certainly was responsible for preserving the written works of the people of Israel after Jerusalem and the archives of the Temple were removed to Babylon. The Old Testament you read today was likely one of the writings from the Temple that Ezra the Priest brought back to Jerusalem from Babylon. Therefore, the occurrences and uses of the phrase **“a covenant WITH death”** in Isaiah are important and Dr. Martin considered them to be so as they assist our understanding of the “end of the age” prophecies.

Dr. Martin examines the Isaiah passage now. *DWS*

Isaiah’s Prophecies

Turn to Isaiah chapter 28.⁴ These are scriptures many have avoided for years. I do not want to flatter myself, but most of my notes which I am referring to today are at least 10 years old.⁵ These notes are not perfect, but I will say this much: we should have been looking at these things long ago, in the context of understanding what the Bible says, rather than what a man like Ernest Martin or anyone else might say.

In Isaiah chapter 28, beginning in verse 5 in the King James Version, it starts out with a paragraph, and kind of a new subject. I must give this background.

The first 39 chapters of Isaiah, which many scholars call “First Isaiah” because it is homogeneous all the way through. Starting in Isaiah 28:5, we are talking about a time clearly at the end period. I will only read part of it; and maybe it will make better sense to you.

Beginning in verse 5 it carries on to an overall context, but we are [now] going into a particular context, which I think you will find very interesting:

⁵ **“In that day, Yahweh of hosts shall become a stately crown And a chaplet [a diadem, KJV, or small crown of leaves] of beauty for the remnant of His people,**

⁶ **And a spirit of right judgment for him who sits in judgment, And mastery for those who turn back the battle at the gate.**

⁷ **Yet these also err by wine, And they stray by intoxicant: Priest and prophet, they err by intoxicant; They are swallowed up because of the wine; They stray because of the intoxicant; They err in sight; They quaver in discernment.** [Isaiah is speaking of Israel here.]

⁸ **Indeed all the tables, they are full of vomit, Filth, without a place left.**

⁹ **Whom shall He direct in knowledge, And whom shall He cause to understand a report? Those**

⁴ Read Dr. Martin’s analysis of Isaiah in these articles: [“Introduction to Isaiah”](#); [“Isaiah, Part 2”](#); [“Isaiah, Part 3”](#) and [“Isaiah, Part 4.”](#) *DWS*

⁵ His notes on this passage of Isaiah began in 1966, ten years before 1976 when he gave this lecture. Dr. Martin separated himself from the Worldwide Church of God in January 1974 with a letter. Read [“Dr. Ernest Martin’s Resignation Letter to Herbert W. Armstrong.”](#) *DWS*

weaned from milk, just taken from breasts?

¹⁰ **For instruction is added to instruction, Instruction to instruction, principle to principle, Principle to principle, a bit here, a bit there.**

¹¹ **Indeed with deridings of lip, And in another tongue, He shall speak to this people.”**

• *Isaiah 28:5–11 CLV*

You know, they [the people of Israel] want plain language. Isaiah gave them plain language for years and people have avoided it, and they had not wanted to know it. They have gone after other things. I am not talking about any particular man or men; I am talking [the people of Israel] in general. But, God says in verse 11:

¹¹ **Indeed with deridings of lip, And in another tongue, He [YHWH] shall speak to this people.”**

¹² **He Who has said to them: ‘This is the resting place; Give rest to the faint; This is the respite.’ Yet they WOULD NOT HEARKEN.**

What is “**the resting place**”? What is “**the respite**”? They are God’s word — but no, the people of Israel refuse to hear or obey those words:

¹³ **“Hence the word of Yahweh comes to them: ‘Instruction is added to instruction, Instruction to instruction, principle to principle, Principle to principle, a bit here, a bit there, [to what end?] That they may walk and stumble back, And be broken and trapped and seized.’”**

• *Isaiah 28:11–13 CLV*

It says to these people who read Isaiah’s prophecies today, that was the attitude of those in Judah and Jerusalem in Isaiah’s day. Why was it that way? In the middle of verse 13 the reason is given:

“That they may

- [1] **walk and**
- [2] **stumble back, And**
- [3] **be broken and**
- [4] **trapped and**
- [5] **seized.”**

Is it not more beautiful that you have prophecy, doctrines, and teachings, and not “**a bit here**” and not “**a bit there**”? Would it be better that it is just made clear and plain so that no one would ever get mixed-up on it? I guess it would. When you really understand certain prophecies of the Scripture, if you would get the key points, like “**Covenant**” here, and follow it all the way through.

Take the New Testament teaching like “baptism,” get a concordance, read everything there is on baptism, sure enough, you find a “**little here and a little there**.” But you will find that mostly it is made very clear in long context, IF you will just pay attention to it. It is the rebellious who want to find it all over the place, and put a whole “hodge-podge” together. God says he is getting fed up with people who are doing all of these things wrong and yet they claim to have the truth.

Well, going on, the reason it is “**precept upon precept, line upon line here a little, and there a little**” is so that people might go and fall backward and be broken and snared and taken. That is what the word of God says, and I would rather take it that way.

Look at Isaiah 28:14. We are getting into the context of this covenant. I am sure it is this covenant that is to be talked about here because verse 14 below starts out with the particle “**Wherefore**” What does the word “wherefore” mean? [It is a word] you cannot understand what follows unless you know what went on before.

God is saying, “*because the people have erred through strong dreams, they have not understood proper vision and judgment, the tables are full of vomit and filthiness . . .*, and all of these things. God has given them stammering lips and another tongue, and all of that. So, that they might fall backwards, be broken, snared, and taken. Since that is the case . . .

“WHEREFORE, hear the word of Yahweh, you mocking men, Proverb-quoters of this people who are in Jerusalem.”⁶

¹⁵ **For you say: ‘We have contracted a COVENANT WITH DEATH, And with THE UNSEEN [*sheol* in Hebrew] WE HAVE MADE A TREATY’:**

The overflowing scourge, when it passes [Have we read this in Daniel about the overflowing nation coming through? Yes, we have], **it shall not come on us, For we have made a lie our refuge, And in falsehood we are concealed.’**

¹⁶ **WHEREFORE, thus says my Lord, Yahweh:**

‘Behold, I AM laying a foundation stone in Zion, A choice stone, a precious corner, a well-founded foundation; The one [who is] believing, he shall NOT be put to shame.

¹⁷ **And I will make right judgment the measuring tape, And righteousness the plummet [He will build up some things of righteousness]; **Then hail will scoop away the refuge of the lie, And waters shall overflow the place of concealment.****

¹⁸ **Your COVENANT WITH DEATH will be annulled, And your TREATY WITH THE UNSEEN [*sheol*, the place of the dead, *i.e.*, the grave], **it shall not stand firm; The overflowing scourge, when it shall pass, You will be the one tramped down by it.”****

• *Isaiah 28:14–18 CLV*

Who is this man in the Book of Daniel that Israel will covenant with? He will be, practically, the personification of Satan himself. It will be a man, but it will also be hell, if you want to put it that way. They think some good will come out of this covenant — but it will be a covenant with death. It shall be annulled [ended, terminated] and your [Israel’s] agreement with hell shall not stand.

The Book of Revelation Refers to This “Agreement”

What does the book of Revelation 11:2 say? The Gentiles shall tread (suppress) the city of Jerusalem.

¹ **“And a reed like a rod was given me, and one said, ‘Rouse, measure the temple of God and the altar and those worshipping in it.**

² **And the court outside of the temple cast outside, and you should not be measuring it, for it was given to the nations, and the holy city will they be treading forty-two months.**

³ **And I will be endowing My two witnesses and they will be prophesying a thousand two hundred sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.’**

⁴ **These are the two olive trees, and the two lampstands which stand before the Lord of the earth.”**

• *Revelation 11:1–4*

These words in the Book of Daniel express the same sentiment as those here in Isaiah 28:19–22:

¹⁹ **“As often as it passes it [the scourge] shall take you; Indeed morning by morning it shall pass, By day and by night, And it will be sheer stirring horror to comprehend the report.**

²⁰ **For the berth is too short to stretch forth oneself, And the blanket is too narrow to wrap up oneself,**

²¹ **For AS at Mount Perazim, Yahweh shall rise⁷;**

⁶ The covenant will be made with leaders in Jerusalem, not in Pasadena, New York, and not in London. DWS

⁷ Mt. Perazim is where David defeated the Philistines (2 Samuel 5:20). **“So they went up to Baal-perazim, and David smote them there. David said, ‘The One, Elohim, has breached through my enemies by my hand like a breach of waters.’ Therefore they called the name of that place Baal-perazim”** (1 Chronicles 14:11). DWS

AS at the vale [valley or gorge] **in Gibeon,**⁸ **He shall rage up To do His work; alien**
[strange] **is His work!**

And to serve His service; foreign is His service!

²² **So now, do not mock lest your bonds should hold fast; For of a decisive CONCLUSION have**
I heard from my Lord, Yahweh of hosts, On the entire land."

• *Isaiah 28:19–22 CLV*

This word "**CONCLUSION**" means "end," the same word is in Daniel 9:27, speaking about the consummation of all things. Read the context here, and you find God has a controversy with Jerusalem because they made a covenant, and He calls it "**a covenant of death.**" It will be based on lies and falsehoods, not on truth. God is against it. We do not know of any covenant [maybe there was one we do not know about] in the period of Isaiah, made with anyone of this nature. It certainly has to do with the end time.

I want to mention one thing: Throughout these chapters of Isaiah (Chapters 1 through 39, up to 35 in particular), you find two individuals mentioned repeatedly throughout. One is righteous and one is wicked. They go by various names.

The righteous one goes by the name "**Immanuel**" who we learned about back in Isaiah chapter 7. Sometimes he is called the "**Mighty One**" in Isaiah 10:34 [KJV; he is called "**the noble one**" in the CLV]. Sometimes He is referred to as the "**Holy,**" "**Counselor,**" "**the Mighty Prince,**" "**Holy One of Israel,**" "**a shoot out of Zion**" (or "**out of Jesse,**" Isaiah 11:1). Who is this righteous one? Of course, that is Christ Jesus, the Messiah.⁹

But repeatedly, in this first section of Isaiah, there is another man who is mentioned time and time and time again by various names. In Isaiah 30:31, if you will just go over a few pages, he is called the "**Assyrian,**" in Isaiah 31:8 he is also called the "**vile person**" or "**the liberal one.**"

I have the phrase "**vile person**" [called the Decadent One in the CLV *DWS*] which is from Daniel 11. Look at Isaiah chapter 32:

- ¹ **"Behold, according to righteousness a King shall reign,**
As for chiefs, according to right judgment shall they control.
- ² **A Man will be like a hiding place from the wind And**
a place of concealment from the storm, Like rillets of water in an arid place,
Like the shadow of a massive crag in a fainting land.
- ³ **The eyes of those who see shall not squint, And the ears of those who hear shall be attentive;**
- ⁴ **The heart of those who are hasty shall understand knowledge,**
And the tongue of the stammerers shall hasten to speak fluently.
- ⁵ **No longer shall the DECADENT ONE be called princely, Nor shall it be said of the miser:**
savior.
- ⁶ **For the DECADENT ONE speaks decadence, And his heart works LAWLESSNESS,**
To practice POLLUTION And to speak CONFUSION about Yahweh,
To make the soul of the famished empty, And he abates the drink of the thirsty.
- ⁷ **As for the miser, his instruments are evil; He himself counsels schemes to harm the humble**
with false words, And when the needy one speaks, he shatters right judgment.
- ⁸ **Yet the princely one counsels willingness, And he himself is standing firm on willingness.**

• *Isaiah 32:1–8 CLV*

Now look at Isaiah chapter 33:

⁸ The vale or Valley of Gibeon is where Joshua defeated the armies of the Canaanite kings (Joshua 10:10, 41). *DWS*

⁹ These titles and names of the exalted Christ [Messiah] are used in the Hallelujah Chorus of *Handel's Messiah*. *DWS*

“Woe, **DEVASTATOR**, you who have not [yet] been devastated,

And **TREACHEROUS ONE**, yet they have not dealt treacherously with you;

When you come to end devastation, you shall be devastated!

When you have culminated dealing treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with you.

O Yahweh, be gracious to us; Toward You are we expectant; Become our arm in the mornings, Indeed, our salvation in the time of distress.

Because of the sound of clamor the peoples wander; Because of Your thunder the nations are scattered.

And your loot is gathered as the gathering of the beetle; As the onrushing of hoppers shall one rush upon it.

Impregnable is Yahweh, For He is tabernacling in the height; He fills Zion with judgment and righteousness,

And He becomes the faithfulness of your times; The safeguard of salvation, wisdom and knowledge is the fear of Yahweh; This is its treasure.”

• *Isaiah 33:1–6 CLV*

When this “churl one,” this vile person, this liberal one, called “the Assyrian,” this man being talked of through these passages, and he is finally put down by Messiah, [then] we will find righteousness and salvation and civility exalted. Now look at verse 33:7–9:

“Behold, the Arielites¹⁰ cry outside!

The messengers of peace, they are lamenting bitterly.

The highways are desolated; He who passes along the path has ceased.

One has **ANNULLED A COVENANT**, has rejected witnesses,

Has accounted mortal man as nothing. It is mournful;

The land is wasted away; **LEBANON IS ABASHED**; It withers;

Sharon has become like the Arabah, And

Bashan and Carmel are shaking off their leaves.”

• *Isaiah 33:7–9 CLV*

These are areas of the Holy Land which will be made desolation. Who will desolate that land? It says in verse 8, “**One has annulled a covenant**” (broken the covenant). Is it God who breaks the covenant? God has never broken a covenant He has made. But someone is going to break a covenant, just before universal righteousness and civility and salvation comes on the scene. It will occur at Jerusalem.

This man being talked about makes a covenant, a covenant the Israelites will respect. It is a covenant based upon lies and falsehoods. It will result, finally, with the complete obliteration of their land, mourning and languishing. “**Lebanon is abased**” (KJV). Look at verse 33:10: “**Now I shall arise, Yahweh is saying; Now I shall be exalted ...**” at the time the covenant is broken, and YHWH comes down to take care of this vile person,

“**Now I shall arise, Yahweh is saying; ‘Now I shall be exalted; Now I shall be lifted up. You shall become pregnant with chaff; You shall generate stubble; Your spirit is a fire that shall devour you. The peoples will become burnings of lime; Like thorns obliterated, they shall be ravaged by fire.’**”

• *Isaiah 33:10–12*

This man and his ways are going to be destroyed. But what is most interesting is that all this is taking place in Isaiah, building up to the Second Coming of Christ. In Isaiah chapter 34 is the judgment of all nations on the earth that will take place. The judgment upon the nation of Edom will take place. Jerusalem also comes

¹⁰ The translation is uncertain. It is perhaps an unusual term for “messengers.” The King James Version translates it as “valiant ones.” The Greek LXX clearly has “angels,” who are “messengers” of God.

into judgment and rescue (Zechariah chapter 14). But all nations will be judged by God, and that is according to Isaiah chapter 34.

That ends this long section in the Book of Isaiah that started in Chapter 1 coming all the way through. If this is dealing with the End Time, what is this Covenant we have been talking about through Isaiah?

Could Isaiah dovetail with the Covenant mentioned in the Book of Daniel? The same words are being used throughout. My answer is “YES.” I am certain that it has something to do with it.

In Psalm 55 there seems to be a reference to that. Look at it and read the whole Psalm. It was written by David in his time hundreds of years before Isaiah. It may have ramifications for us today, because it mentions a man who walks in the Holy Temple of God with David and yet he will turn against David, the King of Israel, and will break the Covenant that he had made with David. That is in Psalm 55. Also, you find in Hosea 10:1–9 and Hosea 12:1–2, evil covenants that will be made at the end of the age and that God is upset with it.

But when you go to Daniel chapter 9, into the prophecy called the “70-Weeks prophecy” we find the crucial part of the whole 70 weeks prophecy is that last week. One week, 7 years, a covenant is going to be made with Israel. It will concern the people of Israel, the city of Jerusalem, the Temple, animal sacrifices, and all that go with these things.

In the midst of the [prophetic] week sacrifice shall be cut off, [and] the abomination of desolation set up. If that covenant is made, God says, and we bring in Isaiah, and **“a covenant of death”** and they think it will be a covenant of life, but it will not be.

It is a wrong type of Covenant made with a man who comes virtually out of hell, so to speak, the evil one called **“the vile one”** [KJV, “abomination”] **“the Assyrian,” “the churlish one”** [Isaiah 32:5–7], **“the liberal one”** [KJV, Isaiah 32:5, 8] And it is fair to call him **“the vile one”** in Daniel. The apostle Paul calls him **“the Man of Sin,” “the son of perdition.”** The apostle John calls him **“the beast.”**

They will make an agreement with that man. That will happen. In the middle of this week, after 3½ years, this man will show his true colors. Instead of supporting the Temple, and the sacrifices, and God’s Holy religion of the Old Testament, he will turn against them, set himself up as God, and everyone must worship him for 3½ years. Who will put an end to it? Jesus Christ will do so when He returns. He will come at the END of either:

1,150 days – in Daniel chapter 8.

1,260 days – in Daniel chapter 7 (and also in Revelation 11:3, 12:6)

1,290 days – in Daniel 9:11.

1,335 days – in Daniel 12:12¹¹

Somewhere during one of these time markers, the end will take place. People will then know, according to Isaiah, that this **“Covenant of Death,”** based upon lies, was an agreement of horror.

Brethren, what we need to be watching for in the next few years, is some type of covenant with someone in the East, coming out of that northern quarter, the Kingdom of the North. Not from Rome, but coming from north of Jerusalem with a man that people will, in Jerusalem, make a covenant with.

It may look good on the surface, but God calls it **“a Covenant of Death.”** We need to look on it as the Covenant that later on leads to — righteousness. It means, when that Covenant is broken, Jesus Christ is just around the corner to finally introduce the righteousness that this man and the world system corrupted. The world will be worse than ever. All this can, and will, take place in that last week.

So, let’s be watching for a Temple, for sacrifices, for a covenant, and for them being cut off.

Ernest L. Martin, 1976
Edited by David Sielaff, April 2025

¹¹ On the audiotape, Dr. Martin was likely pointing to a board or on an overhead projector to show the audience these numbers as he read the list. This list is duplicated from page 8 in [“A Covenant of Death, Part 1.”](#) In that original list there was a final number of 2,300 days presented in Daniel 8:14. Those days have to do with the cleansing of the Temple, and not the final judgment of evil and/or the return of the Messiah. DWS