

# The DEFENDER - April 2015

“... defending the faith once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3)

A monthly publication of the  
IN DEFENSE OF TRUTH radio broadcast.



## From the Director's Desk: Be Wise as Serpents

It's that time of year again. Just as at Christmas, the Easter season is a time when the devil steps up his attacks on our Lord. Most notably on Christ's divinity, but no part of our Lord's life, death, or ministry is safe from onslaught. Doubts about Jesus can come from all corners, from friend and foe alike. Even from people whom we know nothing about.

They write books, they produce movies, they tweet, they blog, and they bloviate. It seems like everybody has something to say. Take Bill O'Reilly. I like Bill. I really do. But he's a television personality, not a theologian. A broadcaster, not a Bible expert. A political pundit, not a preacher. Bill's not alone. Many outside the church, and within it as well, try to interpret the Holy Scriptures using human wisdom alone. It can't be done. The way of salvation is found in the Bible, and once it is, the indwelling Holy Spirit will illuminate God's Word and make its truths known to you. Until that happens, you will always see the revelations of God through a human lens.

The problem with all of this, of course, is not the effect it has on the true believers, but how it affects the unbeliever. Many people trust what Bill O'Reilly has to say in his area of expertise, so it would be a natural extension for them to naively buy into what he says about any subject. He is a professing Roman Catholic who firmly believes he can work his way into heaven. He is not alone in his soteriology. Billions worldwide, in many religions, are trusting in their own good deeds to secure a blissful place for them in the afterlife. While this makes us as humans feel good, it doesn't sit well with God, whose opinion is the only one that matters.

I tell people all the time, read a book, watch a movie (or video), go to a conference. But do your homework. Know something about the author, the producer, the speaker. Do they have an agenda, or are they just innocently misinterpreting scripture? New Age Catholic Roma Downey and her husband Mark Burnett have produced another made for TV miniseries entitled **A.D. The Bible Continues**, which is a follow-up to their immensely popular series **The Bible**. Popular, yes. But not completely biblically accurate. I would even caution believers who are young in their faith against watching it for the entertainment value. The best advice I can give, of course, comes directly from our Lord and Savior. In cautioning His disciples against the opposition they would be facing, He told them to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves (Matthew 10:16). Like sheep among wolves, we're to be discerning while going about the Lord's business, which is the spreading of the true gospel message. Use wisdom but also have compassion. And don't be caught off guard.

*Rev. David Lewis*



## **A Woman Rides the Beast Part II – Authentication by Fulfilled Prophecy**

**By Robert Luthardt, Sr.**

“And I saw a woman drunken with the blood of the saints and ... of the martyrs ...” (Rev. 17:6).

History is replete with periods of persecution of God’s chosen nation and of the church of Jesus Christ. During the Dark Ages, the visible organization unfurled the Christian flag and persecuted, tortured and murdered Christians. Even while subjecting His own to the rod of correction, God preserved a remnant in Israel (Jer. 30:11; 31:31-36).

God’s rod upon Israel was their being exiled into Babylon accomplished by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC. In fulfillment of prophecy, God returned a remnant to repopulate the land in preparation for the future appearance of the promised Messiah. Centuries elapsed into that tiny window of time opened for numerous prophecies to reach consummation.

The iron legs and feet of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream represented the coming world rule from Rome. Rome had conquered Israel and was in governance when Christ was born, lived and suffered crucifixion. Forty years after Christ’s return to heaven, Israel was again exiled from their land and remained so for over nineteen hundred years.

A prophecy much debunked by destructive critics was nevertheless brought to fruition when Israel raised the Star of David flag in 1948. Interestingly, hostility, by Israel’s neighbors restarted after centuries as if on cue. Today, all eyes are focused on Jerusalem in fulfillment of Zechariah’s “cup of trembling” prediction. Many speculate as to when the “time of the Gentiles” will end and the “time of Jacob’s trouble” will begin (Luke 21:24; Jer. 30:7; Zech. 12:2-3).

Similarly, Nebuchadnezzar’s “legs and feet of iron” described by Daniel is for many Biblicists indicative of a revived Roman Empire yet future (Daniel 2:31-44).

Many specific prophecies were initiated and perfected beginning at Christ’s miraculous conception and continuing through His resurrection. From that time and even now, bizarre fabrications have been advanced to explain away the genuine historicity of consummated prophecies. The deceitfulness of man’s nature aside, God’s Word and biblical truth are more durable than an anvil surrounded by a thousand broken hammers (Jeremiah 17:9).

The Hebrews were always ready for someone to restore the greatness of David’s throne and relished those promises. Few understood, let alone welcomed, a suffering slaughtered Messiah and since crucifixion only entered Israel’s realm centuries after the prophecies were penned, they could not even comprehend it. It was centuries before Rome’s rule that David and Isaiah wrote God’s prophecies. Almost no one understood that their Messiah would make two separate advents to earth. Hindsight is twenty-twenty and today we know that Christ came and defeated Satan judicially and morally two thousand years back. When Christ returns, Satan, his

puppet rulers, his armies and all unrepentant reprobates will be vanquished eternally (Ps. 22:6-8, 12-16; Isa. 9:7, 53:3-6; Zech. 9:9, 12:10).

Future predictions were as difficult for them then as they are for students today. Even when Jesus clarified His teachings of coming events (including His crucifixion) few comprehended. Dullness prevented most from understanding that Daniel had recorded the exact date of Christ's triumphal entry on Palm Sunday and that Zechariah had also supplied details and that Malachi's prophecies required a temple still standing (Dan. 9; Zech. 9; Micah 5:2; Mal. 3:1).

For centuries none could know that Israel's legal right to capital punishment (stoning) would be outlawed when Christ was upon the earth nor that the temple would be totally destroyed forty years later as Christ prophesied (Matt. 24:2).

The Romans practiced crucifixion in perfect fulfillment of scripture – Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. Roman mentality gave vinegar to Christ, placed Him between thieves, gambled for His robe and pierced His side. Christ gave up “the ghost” by His own power and will, thus preventing the breaking of His bones (Ex. 12:46; Num. 9:12; John 19:36).

Bible-honoring teachers conclude that Daniel's God-inspired interpretation of the King's dream depicted four kingdoms: Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon, the coming Medes and Persians, the reign of Greece initiated by Alexander the Great and finally the Roman Empire. Of these, Rome will rise from history past represented by the ten toes of iron mixed with clay. This revived empire will be led by the Antichrist and will be a combined world-wide religious and political governance. John saw this as a beast mounted by a purple and scarlet clad, blood swilling woman. As in ancient Rome, resisters will be killed (Revelation 13:15).

Antichrist, colluding with apostatized Christian leaders and those of other religions, will reinstitute a modern version of ancient Rome's Emperor worship when he declares himself to be deity requiring worship. Millions will adore him.

In John's vision the name Babylon was written on the forehead of the woman riding the beast. Babylon was the first in Daniel's vision of four beasts and its dominating evil influence extends into the succeeding three kingdoms and reappears in full bloom at the end of the age (Daniel 7).

Consider it's possible soon coming in the following example. In 1993, 6000 representatives of the world's faiths met in Chicago. The Dalai Lama called for “spiritual awakening.” Chuck Colson was awarded for his ecumenical endeavors. For the first time, representatives of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Catholicism, the World Council of Churches and countless others met together. Followers of Wicca (witchcraft) performed a full-moon ritual. Defying Christ's great commission, all agreed not to proselytize each other's adherents. Since that time denominations have even apologized for bringing Christ's message as when the United Church of Christ apologized for witnessing to Jews (Matthew 28:19-20).

From the outset of God's dealing with mankind, He separated the Regnum (political rule) from the sacerdotium (religious rule), the proper separation of Church and State. In pagan

lands, these were always combined under one head as sacral societies. In a sacral society every person must actively conform to the combined church and state ordained sacraments; no exceptions. Nebuchadnezzar, for instance, commanded all to bow to his image when the music played or be killed. What one believed or what their conscience held was irrelevant.

God, however, wants the hearts, minds and souls of those who trust in and believe His Word. God in His sovereignty calls elect sinners, man in his responsibility responds to the call. Sacraments serve only as acknowledgements of God's grace already present in the lives of believers.

God raised up Moses to lead politically but Aaron was called to lead in all facets of worship. God required strict adherence to all particulars and to the division instituted in worship. Violations of God's commands cost the lives of Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu. Uzziah, king of Israel, intruded into worship and was struck with leprosy, and Saul was removed from being king (Lev. 10:1-2; I Sam. 15:10-23; II Chron. 26:16-21).

God's words are not pliable for those bringing liberalizing notions. Of this Eve could testify. Cain insisted on his deviant way but God only passes over sin when he sees the blood as with Abel's sacrifice. This is the only God-given covering for sin (Gen. 2:17; 3:6, 21; 4:3-8; Ex. 12:3-13; Heb. 9:22; Rev. 1:5).

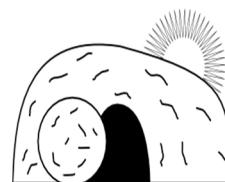
Scripture points to but one acceptable atonement for the sins of mankind, the Cross of Jesus Christ. For just this alone, there can be no basis for compromising dialogue with any other religion.

Startlingly, both Catholic and Protestant seminaries and their leaders are fellowshiping with the leaders of and adopting doctrines from Hinduism, Buddhism and New Age belief systems. At least for these free thinkers, Christ's work was not as He said, finished. Some are espousing concepts such as obtaining a "Christ consciousness" and reaching the spirit realm through eastern religions' meditative practices. The practice of yoga is now accepted. The spirits reached are not the Holy Spirit, however.

Several years back notables, including John Paul II, the Dalai Lama, Anwar el-Sadat (Muslim) and U Thant (Buddhist) formed the Temple of Understanding and a United Nations sponsored religion. Could this be a forerunner of John's prophecy in Revelation of the religious/political entity represented by the woman of scarlet and purple upon the beast? Will this lead to the time when believing in and proclaiming God's absolute truth will be anti-societal. A hate crime, maybe?

Christ's exclusive Gospel is always applicable in every situation and everywhere. Especially so as "we see that day approaching." Christ's message was, "I work the work of Him that sent Me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4). Keep looking up.

<b><u>Principal Source:</u></b>	<b>Title:</b>	"A Woman Rides the Beast"
	<b>Author:</b>	Dave Hunt
	<b>Supplier:</b>	The Berean Call/Store <a href="mailto:customerservice@thebereanall.org">customerservice@thebereanall.org</a>
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## **"He is Not Here: For He is Risen"**

**By Nancy Long**

Matt. 28:5-7 -- *"And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.*

***He is not here: for He is risen, as He said.***

***Come see the place where the Lord lay."***

Mark 16:2-6 -- *"And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: **He is risen; He is not here:** behold the place where they laid Him."*

Luke 24:6-7 -- ***"He is not here, but He is risen:*** remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered unto the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day ***rise again."***

*"Hear the bells ringing, they're singing that we can be born again!  
Hear the bells ringing, they're singing **'Christ is risen from the dead!'***

*The angel upon the tombstone said, **'He is risen** just as He said.  
Quickly now, go tell His disciples that **Jesus Christ is no longer dead!***

*Joy to the world, **He is risen, alleluia! He's risen, alleluia!**  
**He's risen, alleluia ..... alleluia!"***

(Easter Song -- Text and Music: Anne Herring)

"Easter" is a holiday celebrated every year by Christians and non-Christians alike. For some, it's a time to don new clothes, perhaps even the proverbial "Easter" bonnet, and attend their once a year, or maybe twice yearly, church service. It's a time of celebrating the "new life" of spring with baby chicks, ducks, and rabbits. Along with all this, come egg hunts, baskets full of toys, jelly beans, and marshmallow Peeps ..... also, of course, family dinners, fun, more fun, and even more fun.

Sadly, and very subtly over the years, Easter or Resurrection Sunday, as I prefer calling it, has become more secular, temporal, worldly, and extremely materialistic, and less about the original intended meaning, that being the risen Christ. Easter is about new life, but not only creation life that emerges out of the dead cold of winter into the beauty and warmth of spring.

The holiday we call Resurrection Sunday *is* about LIFE ..... new life, yes, but more than this, it's abundant life, life that's triumphant and victorious over death ..... it's a promise, from God Himself, that we can live eternally in a place called heaven one day when we leave this earth. From the moment we receive Christ as personal Savior, we are guaranteed life eternal ..... Our earthly bodies will age, fall apart, decay, and not be the same as they once were ..... but the soul within, oh my, yes ..... the soul within, is soaring, and **will not** die. Death has been conquered!! Death has been overcome, crushed ..... defeated!! Your never dying soul will be raised from its corruptible body, and will live forever, and ever, and ever ..... **endlessly** with Jesus ..... in perfect peace, joy and harmony. ***"Death is swallowed up in victory, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"*** (1 Cor. 15:54b-55).

The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is the foundation, the basis, the premise of the Christian faith. It changed everything. No other happening, or event, in all of history has made such a huge impact, or had such a powerful effect on the world in which we live, as that **"One Solitary Life"**. If Christ be not raised from the dead, then all preaching is useless, as well as our faith. All of humankind is lost and hopeless. Humanity remains in its sins, and only hell is in our future (1 Cor. 15:13-17).

Jesus Christ, did however, rise from the dead. It's part of history ..... it's true ..... the tomb *is* empty ..... Hallelujah!! Praise Him from Whom all blessings flow!! God, in His sovereignty, has had a plan from eternity past, which included Jesus Christ, His Son, leaving the glories of heaven, in order to come to this sin sick place we call earth. He was born of a virgin. He lived an unblemished, flawless, perfect life. He came, leaving His home in heaven, for one purpose, and one purpose only ..... that being to ultimately die, in order to pay, with His pure, sinless, spotless blood, the required price ..... for "sin". ***"God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"*** (Romans 5:8). ***"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life"*** (John 3:16).

Christianity is the only "religion" that espouses the truth that *"we serve a living Savior"*. We have a relationship with the only true God ..... the God who lives ..... To reiterate: **God is not dead!! He is alive!!** ***"Because I live, ye shall live also"*** (John 14:19). This is a promise ..... this is hope ..... this is assurance, on which we can rejoice!!!

What an awesome, splendid, marvelous, glorious, and mighty God we serve!! Life, no matter what He providentially brings us here on this earth, is indeed worth the living. We have the victory, both here, and throughout eternity!! Let's **shout** it from the rooftops ..... and **smile** ..... and **live** as though we believe!



## Paid in Full

As Jesus climbed up Calvary, I think He shed a tear.  
For I think He looked ahead in time, and saw me standing there.

He knew He had to suffer, to save my soul from sin.  
He knew He had to bear those stripes, my healing victory to win.

They thrust a spear into His side; He let them hang Him on that tree;  
And, as He hung there suffering, He was doing it all for me.

I think, if they had listened, they might have heard Him say:  
“Hank, your account is paid in full, I paid it all today.”



Hank Arthur, Defender

*Our mission through the broadcast of In Defense of Truth and the publication of The Defender newsletter is to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3). Our vision today is just as strong as it was back in 1963 when Dr. John Dekker began this outreach. We pray that you will continue to stand with us as we hold true to God's holy Word.*

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**WRITE TO US!**

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**Upcoming Events!**

If you are in or around the Baltimore area, we'd love to have you join us for these upcoming events!

Adult Sunday School	10:15 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 AM
Tuesday Bible Study	1:30 PM
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 PM
Good Friday Service (April 3)	7:00 PM