

# The DEFENDER - December 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: Thankful For a Savior

Every December Christians every where start to feel the anxiety mount as the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the month draws near. It's time to deck the halls, roast some chestnuts, go caroling, watch Linus read from Luke 2, and wish all of our fellow shoppers a Merry Christmas. We get so excited to celebrate the birth of Jesus you wonder why we don't do it **every** day of the year. It is certainly an event worth celebrating every day. Jesus is our Savior. He embodies and offers that which every person on earth is seeking—eternal bliss in heaven above. But so many will never find what we as Christians have because they're looking for it in all the wrong places.

The Jews come the closest because they worship the same God—the Father of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They, along with many other Old Testament patriarchs, spent 4000 years looking for and waiting on the Messiah. But then when He arrived, we're told that “His own received Him not” **John 1:11**.

The Buddhists are not even concerned about being saved from this world, as it's their contention that we continue to return to it through reincarnation. Their goal is to reach a state of Nirvana, where the mind transcends all suffering and attains peace. Not sure how they deal with the issues of sin or Hell, but the fact remains that the day will come when all will have to bow the knee and confess with the tongue that Jesus Christ is Lord **Philippians 2:10-11**.

The Hindus also believe in reincarnation, but they believe that karma (rather than Jesus) determines one's destiny both in this life and the next. They also believe that the soul is on a cosmic purification journey. Once attained, it crosses the threshold into their version of heaven.

We've heard about the Muslim's way of salvation, and that also is not worth following. In fact, converts to Islam usually come by way of the sword, and not by free will. They believe that on the day of Resurrection Allah will wake them from their deaths and reward them with heaven for the good that they have done.

And then we have the atheists. They don't think they need a Savior because they don't think that they've done anything wrong. They also don't believe in an afterlife. Their motto is essentially eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you may die.

Other than Christianity, every major religion relies on good works to save them. Even the Jews, short of accepting Christ, try to keep the Mosaic Law. I'm thankful that I'm saved by grace through faith, not by my good works **Ephesians 2:8-9**. If that was the case, I'd be in the same predicament as all the others. Merry Christmas, everyone!

*Rev. David Lewis*

## The End of the World—Part V Before and After Israel's Invasion

By Robert Luthardt, Sr.

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood ... the Lord shall lift up a standard against him” (Is. 59:19b).

Scriptures outline that when Gog (Russia?) advances against Israel, Israel will be in a slumberous state regarding her fragile national security. Some surmise from these scriptures that this may ensue when some of Israel's enemies are neutralized militarily. However, She will remain in peril until the Lord returns (Ez. 39:1-4, 38:13-16; Rev. 19:11-21).

As Ezekiel prophesied, “I am against thee Gog ... of Meshach and Tubal: And I will ... put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring ... all thine army ... Persia [now Iran], Ethiopia and Libya ... (Ez. 38:3-5). Note the absence of Israel's former enemies, Egypt and Jordan, and a present enemy, Syria. What keeps Syria out of the fray?

Ezekiel prophesied further of Gog, “Thou shalt ... come like a storm ... thus saith the Lord God ... thou shalt think an evil thought ... I will go up to the land of “UNWALLED VILLAGES” (vs. 9-11). The phrase unwalled villages has been interpreted as being disarmed or weak militarily—when national security is imprudently taken for granted.

This enemy north of Jerusalem (Russia?) will for some yet unknown reason think that world opinion is so pervasive against Israel that no one will effectively oppose Gog's treachery. Today's current events already reveal an unrestrained Kremlin-sponsored force that has illegally occupied the Ukraine and with brute brigandage plundered the Crimea. All the “democratic” nations do is send strong words and condemnations and bone-chilling chastisements. We can all just imagine how this causes the KGB Colonel Putin and Kremlin leadership to desire to repent in sackcloth and ashes.

This current blatant impotence of the West meshes well with Ezekiel 38, verse 13, where nations in the future will observe Gog (Russia?) invading the mountains of Israel and will retaliate with all the deadly force of an embarrassing question, “Art thou come to take a spoil? ... A prey? To carry away silver and gold ... a great spoil?” These withering blasts of fiery indignation may so wound those aggressors that it causes them to retreat with tails between their legs and heads hanging—or maybe not.

No, it will be God Himself who miraculously destroys all but a “sixth part” of Gog's mighty military machine with earth-shakings and hailstones, “fire and brimstone,” strewing the north of Jerusalem with death and devastation (Ez. 38:18-19, 22; 39:2-4). Throughout the world this destruction evokes a universal recognition that God has rescued Israel and a spiritual awakening follows. This revival will be akin to the repentance seen in Nineveh that was short lived (Jonah 4:11, Nahum 3:7).

Many in that day will make professions of faith but the vast majority will follow the “woman who rides the beast” (Rev. 17; Like 18:8) and be seduced into the One-World New Age Amalgam of Christ-opposing religions and Apostate Christianity (2 Thes. 2:3-8). This composite evil is shown in a woman arrayed in purple and scarlet, decked with gold and jewels, holding a cup of “abominations;” but is a CITY of history (Rev. 17:4-6, 18).

Ezekiel recorded that Gog, of the land of Magog, will GOD BRING FORTH in the “LATTER YEARS,” into the “land brought back ... out of many people” (Ez. 38:8-12), a people, “that dwell safely ... without walls.” One thing we can definitely know since 1948, the year of Israel’s reestablishment as a self-governing nation “born in a day” (Is. 66:8), Israel has not been able to “dwell safely.” There have been repetitive attacks, battles and wars until today, and Israel’s enemies are the same who intend to set the whole world aflame. No nation, including Israel, will see peace until all evil is eradicated by God when Christ returns.

What will cause Israel to “dwell without walls” having neither “bars nor gates” (Ez. 38:11)? Even a cursory reflection shows many middle-Eastern nations armed to the teeth and expressly espousing murderous and even suicidal intent to use their weaponry. Some may attack each other and destroy their respective militaries. There is intense hatred between some. Saudi Arabia has attacked ISIS in Yemen and is an avowed enemy of Iran. Just a few decades ago, Iran and Iraq warred for eight years with WMD’s. Today, Turkey is eyeing Syria with a jaundiced eye. The middle-East is a powder keg and sparks are flashing and flying. If Israel is drawn into any of these conflicts, we should not be surprised if she finally ends up occupying much of their “promised land” (Deut. 6:10; Gen. 15:6-7, 18, 17:8, 50:24). No one but God can be certain of future events. Only the passing of time and God’s providential outworkings will fill in the blanks of future history. God’s prophetic pronouncements through His chosen prophets will never fail and Gog will be destroyed on Israel’s mountains (Ez. 38:18-23, 39:1-13).

Our God is Lord of all history and has promised to establish AND protect Israel but His watch care is also over His adopted children (Ep. 1:4-11). When God once again demonstrably intervenes in human history with signs and wonders (most especially during Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week), and at the end of the “great tribulation” (Dan. 9:24-27, 12:1-4; Matt. 24:21), and in the full and final fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21) when the Holy Spirit moves mightily bringing many to faith. Scriptures plainly state that God’s foreordained, predestinated, called, justified and glorified adopted children (Rom. 8:28-29; Ep. 1:4-14) are NOT appointed to the wrath to come (John 3:36; 1 Thes. 1:10, 5:9; Rev. 3:10) and will be rescued (raptured) before the “great tribulation” (2 Thes. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 14:51-54). The revival after Gog’s destruction was prefigured at Pentecost (Acts 2:16-18). In the future “LAST DAYS,” God will pour out His Spirit with visions and dreams and in wonders in “heaven above ... earth beneath ... the sun turned into darkness ... the moon into blood, BEFORE that ... day of the Lord come” (Acts 2:19-21). The pouring out on Pentecost was an “early rain” pointing to the events coming at the end of the age.

When God destroys Gog all glory goes to Him alone. The stunned world will now acknowledge the super-naturalness of the decimation of Israel’s enemies from the north upon the mountains of Israel and will participate in the coming “latter rain” (Joel 2:18-21, 23-25, 28-32; Acts 2:1-6, 16-21; James 5:7-8). The full efficacy of Joel’s prophecy recast and repeated by Peter, will one day come to pass—perhaps soon.

A very definite and significant warning is in order for Christ's church and a rescued Israel which is that the destruction of Gog and his allies and the following awakening is NOT yet the coming Kingdom that is promised and for which the Lord taught us to pray (Mark 6:9-10). At this time in history, the great tribulation (Matt. 24:21-29; Mark 13:14-29) and other unfolding events are yet future.

Prophetical scriptures declare that once God destroys Israel's enemies, Israel will be burying the dead for seven months and recycling the destroyed implements of war for seven years (Ez. 39:1-4). Even while these devastations bring much shock and sorrow, these are not yet the coming days of Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27)—that coming time of trouble such as never was ... (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21). Immediately preceding and during these days grave danger arises from false prophets and false Christs (Matt. 24:22-25; Mark 13:22) as our Lord Himself had warned the church. So also did Peter (2 Pt. 2:1-3, 3:3-5) and John (1 John 4:1-3) and Jude (vs. 4) and Paul (2 Thes. 2:3-12; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Cor. 11:3-4, 13-15).

Scripture provides the contrasts for discerning between the two major periods of warfare (Gog's destruction and the final war of Armageddon—Rev. 16:13-16) when God yet again asserts Himself into world affairs and human history at the "end of the world" (age), and this will be consummated by Christ's physical return to earth (Acts 1:11; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 19:11-21), and events will be circumscribed by prophetic signs and wonders with warnings that time is running out, especially for God's enemies (Rev. 12:12). While no one knows the day or the hour of Christ's return (Matt. 24:32-37; Rev. 3:3) we are called to "watch" (Mark 13:35-37) for His coming will be sudden-unannounced (Rev. 16:15a).

The return of Christ is every believers "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13), so we properly turn away from scoffers or those who teach that Christ's return is none of your business. Indeed, true believers have an invitation to the "marriage of the lamb" (Joel 2:15-16; Matt. 25:10-13; Rev. 19:7-9).

Then we will finally know the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ep. 3:8-12) which "passeth knowledge" (vs. 18-19) for, "As it is written, eye hath not seen, not ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9).

Keep looking up.

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# Mary, Did You Really Know?

By Nancy Long

**Luke 1:26-38** -- *"And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary, And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women... And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How can this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be called impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to Thy Word. And the angel departed from her."*

## Mary, Did You Know?

Words -- Mark Lowry ..... Music -- Buddy Greene

"Mary, did you know that your baby boy will one day walk on water?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy will save our sons and daughters?  
Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?  
This child that you've delivered will soon deliver you.

Mary, did you know that your baby boy will give sight to a blind man?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy will calm the storm with his hand?  
Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?  
And when you kiss your little baby, You've kissed the face of God.

Mary, did you know?  
The blind will see ..... The deaf will hear ..... The dead will live again  
The lame will leap ..... The dumb will speak ..... The praises of the Lamb  
Oh, Mary, did you know?

Mary, did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy will one day rule the nations?  
Did you know that your baby boy is heaven's perfect Lamb?  
This sleeping child you're holding is the Great I Am!"

Centuries ago, a young virgin named Mary, found favor with God. This particular young woman, humble, godly, and of Jewish upbringing, most probably between the ages of 12 and 16, was visited by the angel Gabriel, and given this message, *"Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS."* Mary was betrothed to Joseph. Marriage agreements had already been made. What were Mary's thoughts? Was she shocked? Confused? Perplexed and disconcerted? Mary was a simple girl ..... not wealthy or influential. Was Mary, in her humanity, ready to hear this news? Was she, in fact, able to comprehend what it actually meant ..... all that it really entailed? Did she understand ..... or did she just willingly accept and submit to God's eternal plan?

Scripture tells us nothing of these supposed questions ..... none of the mental activity or reflections Mary may have had are disclosed in God's Word. All we do know though, and all we need to know is what's truly important, that being that this young woman, Mary, was yielding and submissive ..... willing to do, and to be, whatever God asked.

Mary had no guarantees, no confirmations, no promises, that anyone ..... her parents, the townspeople, even Joseph, would believe or accept her story. Mary was going to have a baby, yes, miraculously conceived, yes ..... and this baby was to be no ordinary baby ..... but this baby would be the promised Messiah, the Son of God!

What a miracle this was!! Indeed, this was a supernatural occurrence, a marvel, a wonder!! God used a plain and modest pregnant virgin, to bring His Son into the world, and instead of letting possible fear take over ..... Mary praised God, *"And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior"* (Luke 1:46-47).

God has a plan for your life, and for mine. My prayer is that we respond, as Mary of old, *"May it be according to Thy Word!!!"*



## No Greater Love, by Linda Tyson

He came to earth in humility,  
Born of a woman and in poverty.  
He was despised and rejected,  
But His people He protected.

He was mocked and He was scorned,  
And His body for me was torn.  
My Hell had He endured,  
To make my salvation sure.

Forsaken from His Father above,  
He laid down His life for the sheep He loved.  
Crucify, crucify was the sinners cry!  
Forgive them Father was His reply.

Breathing His last, His work was completed.  
Satan and death were now defeated.  
Oh precious God, how can it be,  
That Jesus can love a sinner like me?

Oh the love of Christ cannot be bound!  
His love and mercy at the cross are found.  
No greater love will I ever see,  
Than when Jesus gave His life for me!



PUT  
JESUS  
CHRIST  
BACK INTO  
\*CHRISTMAS\*  
NO JESUS CHRIST  
NO \*\*\*\* CHRISTMAS  
KNOW JESUS CHRIST  
KNOW \*\*\* CHRISTMAS  
JESUS \* IS \* THE REASON  
FOR THE SEASON  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY  
LORD  
JESUS  
CHRIST



### **The Christmas Gift, by Hank Arthur**

Mary and Joseph came into town, looking for a room, anywhere.  
Joseph was begging, "a baby's being born," but most people didn't even care.  
Then someone said, "there's a stable out back, you might find an empty manger."  
Later that night on Bethlehem's plain, they missed the entrance of a tiny stranger.

Up in the hills around the town, shepherds were tending their sheep.  
They saw angels singing and shouting news that was, by far, too good to keep.

"Christ is born, the Son of God, He's laid in a manger low.  
Hallelujah, Praise the Lord, leave your sheep, and go."

In Jerusalem, three men were asking about a governor's birth.  
They seemed to feel that this man would impact all the earth.  
From Jerusalem, and from the hills, and from the skies above,  
They came to see the Christmas Gift God sent to earth, with love.

The hills are empty, the wise men are gone, the manger has rotted away.  
But that first Christmas, and God's perfect gift, are still alive today.  
For God so loved this old world, that He sent His only Son,  
Knowing that He would hang, bleed, and die before it all was done.

Jesus finished what He came to do, and is now with His Father above,  
Waiting to come back for those who believe, and take them home with love.  
God gave His Son, the Christmas Gift, a ransom for you and me.  
Accept His Gift, believe in Christ, and He will set you free.

# **Liberty**

**By Kevin Bruffey**

The term “liberty” has been used in many different contexts over the years and still today leaves observers to ponder its true intent. In our freedom-loving land, many people recognize the term’s origin in the Declaration of Independence in which Thomas Jefferson proclaims that we have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Many people, though, don’t recognize in order for liberty to exist there must be limits on it. The signers of the Declaration understood this, for 52 out of the 55 were members of churches. As church members, they were brought up understanding true biblical doctrine, including that which concerned liberty. When observing the Westminster Confession of Faith’s teaching, readers will note that Jesus Christ purchased our liberty. Three of those aspects include freedom from guilt resulting from sin, the condemning wrath of God, and the curse of the moral law.

To appreciate this notion that Christ purchased our liberty, man’s total depravity must be recognized. Total depravity originated when Adam and Eve took the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil which God forbid them to do. As a result, all mankind was born with an instinct to rebel against God, which made them His enemy. God did not want them to take from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil because he knew that upon doing so, man would seek to be judge of good and evil rather than submitting to His rule. Over the years, man’s judgment on the subject has led to war, disregard for life, breakdown in relationships, property misuse, and overall disregard to the Heavenly Father.

The sins that man has committed over time which stem from our sinful nature or total depravity put us on the road to Hell. Hell is the right reward for our sin. So, then what do we need? We need redemption which only God can provide through His saving grace. Since God has a commitment to His covenant people, He provides a means of redemption which is received through faith. Abraham believed God when God told him his descendants would be like the stars in the sky and he was declared righteous.

To understand the liberty granted through Christ, it is important to know that God instructed His people to perform animal sacrifices as a means of atonement for their sins. These sacrifices were performed throughout the year multiple times a day by a priest who interceded on behalf of the people. These were, of course, very bloody sacrifices done to show the detestability of sin and also to foreshadow Christ’s death on the cross.

Christ’s atoning death on the cross freed His people from the sacrificial system and all the ceremonial regulations that went with it. Instead of having a mortal priest who repeatedly made sacrifices on behalf of God’s people, we have a high priest in Jesus who served Himself as a one-time offering whose death covered His people’s sins entirely. In fact, scriptures tell us in 1 Timothy 2:5 that there is one God and one intermediary between God and man and that is Christ Jesus.

As mentioned, Christ liberated His people from guilt. As our high priest, he presents us to the Heavenly Father while warding off Satan's condemning accusations. Since He died on the cross for our sins, providing our faith is in Him, we are no longer on the road to Hell. We are seen as righteous in God's eyes. The scriptures tell us there is, therefore, no condemnation in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1), which means that while a redeemed person will still sin he will not face eternal punishment for it. Knowing this, a redeemed person recognizing their new birth sees that if God is not punishing them then why should they punish themselves?

In respect to the notion that Christ liberated His people from the curse of moral law, one must once again recognize the effects of total depravity. Due to total depravity, a person can never measure up to the standards of moral law. The law serves as a wake-up call to remind us that we are nothing without Christ. Righteousness, which gives us right standing before God, only comes through Christ which we receive through faith. Christ is such a wonderful and loving savior that He was willing to die so we could have His righteousness and no longer live under a curse.

Liberty of conscience is left to matters that the scriptures are not clear on. Choosing to be a vegetarian is a good example. While people do this for health and ethical reasons, those who do not are not in sin.

Another aspect of liberty that must be addressed is our freedom from man's law. As mentioned, man has an instinct to be judged which leads to standards that are contrary to God's. In Jesus' time, he dealt with the Pharisees who were the keepers of the law. They misused their authority in that they added several hundred laws to God's original laws. The Pharisees went so far as to rebuke Jesus for plucking grain on the Sabbath.

In respect to the civil realm, many leaders here and abroad rule in such a way that they have put themselves on the throne while disregarding God's authority. They have passed laws which do not coincide with God's laws and are, therefore, unlawful. When this happens, tyranny prevails.

In the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson enumerates the offenses the King had been committing. By breaking from the rule of Britain, the founders acknowledged that our liberty is a Godsend and that a free people should be governed as such and therefore should not be under the King's tyranny.





### **Jesus Was Born to Die, by Lawrence Hill**

This is a TRUE story, from the Bible it came.  
How a Savior came from GLORY, and Jesus is His name.

He was born in a manger, there was no room in the inn.  
For the SAVIOR of the WORLD, WHAT A WAY TO BEGIN.

They nailed Him to a cross, put a crown of thorns on His head,  
Tried to give Him vinegar to drink, let Him hang until He was dead.

He could have called ten thousand angels, but He knew He was born to die,  
To save ALL who would believe, that is the reason why.

He said, "*Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.*"  
He came into the world to save sinners, He died for me and for you.

He thought God had forsaken Him, but God turned His back on sin.  
Jesus paid the price for the world, to unite sinners with God again.

When He said, "*It is finished,*" His life's work on earth was through.  
A soldier pierced His side, the blood of Jesus can save me and you.

When He died, the sun darkened, and the thunder did roar,  
To let the people know He was God's Son for sure.

He was buried in a borrowed tomb, nothing in this world did He own.  
He just came to save sinners, He would have died for you alone.

When He ascended back to Heaven, to prepare a place for me,  
An angel proclaimed, "He's coming again." We'll be together for all eternity.

*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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**DEFENDER CONTRIBUTORS**

Rev. David R. Lewis, MDiv., Director, IDOT  
Robert Luthardt, Sr., Elder, CHBPC  
Nancy Long, Member, CHBPC  
Kevin Bruffey, Deacon, CHBPC  
Linda Tyson, Member, CHBPC  
Hank Arthur, Defender  
Lawrence Hill, Defender (in Heaven)

**WRITE TO US!**

Rev. David Lewis &  
In Defense of Truth  
2927 Cub Hill Road  
Baltimore, Maryland 21234

**Upcoming Events!**

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

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Tuesday Bible Study	1:30 PM
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 PM
Christmas Eve Service	7:00 PM