

The DEFENDER - June 2016

“... 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: An Answer to Prayer?

As crazy as this might sound, could it be possible that Donald Trump is an answer to prayer? The prayer which I refer to is the prayer that God would be merciful to America. That He would not only put the brakes on our nation's demise but would in fact bring revival to our churches and to our land. Christians have been praying for almost a decade now for God to forgive our national sins and stop the fundamental transformation of America.

The above paragraph may be speculation, but here's what we know. There will be a Great Tribulation coming at the end of the age (**Matthew 24:21**). Every nation which comes against God's people Israel during that time will be cut in pieces (**Zechariah 12:3**). There is no reference to the United States, past, present, or future, anywhere in God's Word. Jesus wondered if He would find any faith on the earth at the time of His return (**Luke 18:8**). We also know that it's the Lord who sets up and removes leaders (**Daniel 2:21**) and turns their hearts in whatever way He wills (**Proverbs 21:1**).

The future on earth looks bleak. The future for America doesn't seem to bode well, either. Most people are in agreement that neither Donald Trump nor Hillary Clinton are the answer to what ails our nation. Although both the former Secretary of State and billionaire businessman will likely bring us to the same end, Mrs. Clinton would probably get us there sooner. In what many view as a battle for the lesser of two evils (both candidates have a large percentage of voters who dislike them), the majority of evangelicals seem to appreciate Mr. Trump's honesty while forgiving his blunders. The concerns that many Christians have over the Donald seem to pale in comparison to Hillary.

In what is called a common psychological bond, evangelicals resonate with Trump because they both operate in a world of absolutes. In Christianity and in business there are winners and losers because there's a right way and a wrong way. Just as Donald Trump is unbending in his approach to business, born-again Christians are immovable in their insistence on the inerrancy of Scripture and the fact that there's only one way to heaven (**John 14:6**).

Donald Trump cannot make America great again. Only a national repentance from sin and return to God can do that. But what he may be able to do, through the providence of God, is slow the rate of declension in America. And that would be an answer to the prayers of many.

Rev. David Lewis

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jerusalem

Part I – From Ancient Time Forward

By Robert Luthardt, Sr.

Christians sing the hymn that has the stanza, “Turn your eyes upon Jesus...” – an aid to salvation and guidance that is a blessing in the present. For things future, one definite place to look to is the ancient city of Jerusalem.

Speaking of the world’s great metropolitan centers, usually other cities come to mind such as New York, London, Paris, Rome and Tokyo. Jerusalem is not an economic center, a fashion center, a treasure center or an overtly splendid city. Its importance is not at all secular but rather spiritual.

In the latter regard, Jerusalem is sacred to three world religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The allegiance of men to their religions does not give Jerusalem its prime importance in history, rather it is what GOD thinks and says about it in His Holy Word. God has decreed both its earthly and its eternal significance, and Jerusalem is the only city in history that holds a divine guarantee of perpetuity (eternality of existence).

In the Holy Bible there are more than 800 direct references to Jerusalem and many indirect as well. Interestingly, the Koran has NO references to Jerusalem whatsoever. God’s Word contains more than 350 prophetic references relating to Israel’s future. Biblical prophecy itself confirms that Jerusalem is and will continue to attract world attention. Jerusalem has been and will remain in the center of God’s heart and plan. Ezekiel recorded, “Thus says the Lord God, ... Jerusalem; I have set her at the CENTER of the nations (5:5) and that the people of Israel ... live at the center of the world” (38:12). Jerusalem is the center of Israel; Mt. Zion the center of Jerusalem (today the “Temple Mount”) and the Temple was and will be again the center of Mt. Zion. Whenever the Bible gives direction (North, South, etc.) it is always with Israel and Jerusalem as the demarcation point.

Scripture began to hint at a divinely favored locale when we read of the “King of Salem” (Gen. 14:18; Ps. 76:2). It was to “Mt. Moriah” where Abraham went to sacrifice Isaac—the very geographic location of present day Jerusalem (Gen. 22:2). This site was next known as Jebus (Jud. 19:10-11; 1 Chron. 11:4-5). Under King David’s leadership, the Israelites conquered the Jebusite (Jebus-ites) fortress (1 Chron. 11:5-7; 2 Sam. 5:6-9) and it became “the city of David.” Later, David built up the city and brought into it the Ark of the Covenant (2 Sam. 6:12). David thereby officially established the city of Jerusalem.

Near the end of his reign, David purchased the “threshing floor” of Araunah the Jebusite as a place for God’s altar of worship (2 Sam. 24:18-25). Later, Solomon began construction of the first temple (2 Chron. 3:1-2) in 966 B.C. on Mt. Moriah. It took seven years (1 Kings 6:37-38) and Jerusalem’s walls were extended to encompass the Temple.

After Solomon's death (931 B.C.), the people drifted from the true worship of Jehovah. God punished Israel and the Kingdom was divided and Jerusalem was relegated to be the capital of Judah alone. During the next several centuries, Jerusalem was invaded and sacked several times (1 Kings 14:25-26). Later still, King Uzziah fortified Jerusalem (2 Chron. 26:9-15) but by 597 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem, destroyed the city and Temple (2 Kings 25:8-9).

God had, through His prophets, decreed 70 years of captivity by the Babylonians after which they would be allowed to return to Israel (Dan. 9:25). The Persians who conquered Babylon ruled Jerusalem for 200 years. Ezra rebuilt the Temple in 535 B.C. (Ez. 3:8). Nehemiah next returned to rebuild the walls (444-43 B.C.). It was at this time that Daniel's 70 weeks commenced (Dan. 9:24).

From 322 B.C. to 165 B.C., Jerusalem was under Greek domination from the conquests of Alexander the Great. During the interim between Malachi and Matthew, the very evil Antiochus Epiphanes ruled Israel. He plundered the Second Temple fulfilling Daniel's prophecy of the desecration of the Temple when he sacrificed a pig on the altar (Dan. 11:21-35).

In 167 B.C., a priest named Matthias began a revolt against the Greek rule and his son, Judas the Maccabee, won victories over the enemies of God's people and nation. This deliverance is celebrated each year in the 8-day observance of Hanukkah (John 10:22). Jerusalem remained a free city for only about 100 years.

In 63 B.C., the Roman general Pompey besieged Jerusalem for 3 months, killed many and threw down the walls. In 37 B.C. the Romans installed Herod the Great as King of Judah. He ruled until 4 B.C. and it was during his rule that Jesus was born (Matt. 2:13; Luke 1:5).

The City of Jerusalem was highly significant in the life and ministry of Jesus. It was here that Jesus made His triumphal (Zech. 9:9) entry. This prophecy as well as Daniel's prophecy of "70 weeks" were fulfilled to the exact day. Under Pontius Pilate's rule, Jesus cleansed the temple (John 2:14-16) and where Satan tempted Jesus (Matt. 4:5). Over only this city Jesus wept (Luke 19:41-44) and over which He prophesied destruction (Matt. 24:4-28) and where His torture and death would occur (Matt. 16:21, 20:17-18; Luke 9:31, 13:33). From the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem, Jesus ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9, 12) and to Jerusalem He will return (Rev. 19:11-16).

Jesus prophesied Jerusalem's tragic destruction which came to pass in 70 A.D. (Luke 19:41-44) and another yet future destruction (Matt. 24:1-31; Mark 13). With numerous fulfilled prophecies already indisputably authenticated and recorded, we can know that God's remaining prophetic plan will be fulfilled.

God gave Daniel the vision and prophecy of both Jesus' death and Jerusalem's destruction (Dan. 9:26-27). The first destruction was fulfilled by Nebuchadnezzar (Head of Gold, Ch. 2). A second was by Antiochus Epiphanes, and the third was Jerusalem's utterly complete destructive fulfillment under Roman aggression.

In A.D. 66 the Jews revolted against the Romans, and the Roman general Titus came and crushed the Jews. The Jewish historian Josephus wrote in the "Wars of the Jews" (books 4-6 giving the detailed graphics of Jerusalem's destruction) that the siege, the famine and falling walls were the death dirge of Israel. Josephus recorded that Titus was so amazed at the splendid fortifications of Jerusalem that his victory must have been by divine intervention. He ordered the razing of the city and the temple reducing everything to rubble and thus Biblical prophecy was yet again fulfilled. The city of Jesus' triumphal entry was now only a memory and would remain so for 1,900 years (Luke 19:41-44).

Consider the heart-rending words of Jesus (Luke 13:34-35), "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them ... how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left ... desolate: and ... ye shall not see me until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Jerusalem now lay in ruins, her inhabitants dead or dispersed. Later the Romans rebuilt a city there in A.D. 135 and called it Aelia Capitolina. Every effort was made to eradicate all remnants of Jerusalem's ancient glory. The temple area became a Roman farm.

Now the expelled Jews were forbidden from even entering this Roman city under pain of death. By the second and third centuries A.D., Christians began to appear there and by 300 A.D., Christian pilgrimages to the "place where Jesus walked" began to be tolerated.

After Constantine, who claimed to be a Christian, became emperor, "Palestine" saw even greater influence of Christianity. The Emperor's mother Helena visited the site in A.D. 326.

History continued to record that the city of Jerusalem, already blasted by the many winds of war, will yet suffer more disturbances until the Prince of Peace returns (John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; Luke 21:27, 12:40; Rev. 16:15).

While we are watching events yet to unfold in Jerusalem, we are wise to:

Keep looking up.

<u>Main Source:</u>	Jerusalem in Bible Prophecy
<u>Authors:</u>	Thomas Ice / Timothy Demy
<u>Publisher:</u>	Harvest House Publishers Eugene, OR 97402

He Hideth My Soul

By Nancy Long

Ex. 33:20-22 -- *"And He said, Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while My glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with My hand while I pass by."*

Psalm 27:5 -- *"For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock."*

Psalm 32:7 -- *"Thou art my hiding place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble; Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance."*

Psalm 62:7 -- *"In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God."*

He Hideth My Soul

A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord, A wonderful Savior to me;
He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock,
Where rivers of pleasure I see.

A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord -- He taketh my burden away;
He holdeth me up and I shall not be moved,
He giveth me strength as my day.

With numberless blessings each moment He crowns,
And, filled with His fullness divine,
I sing in my rapture, "O glory to God, For such a Redeemer as mine!"

When clothed in His brightness transported I rise,
To meet Him in clouds of the sky,
His perfect salvation, His wonderful love,
I'll shout with the millions on high.

Chorus ---- He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock
That shadows a dry thirsty land;
He hideth my life in the depths of His love,
And covers me there with His hand,
And covers me there with His hand.

Strong and powerful, yet comforting, words in both the aforementioned Scriptures, and the beautiful old hymn, "He Hideth My Soul", written by Fanny Crosby, who was probably the most prolific hymnist in all of history. There are many Scriptural references in the more than 8000 hymns and gospel songs written by this lyricist, and this one is no exception.

A beautiful picture, don't you think? How God hides us, His children, in the cleft of an unmovable, unshakable rock, safe and secure through the storms of life. No worries, no cares, having the faith, trust, and assurance that nothing, absolutely nothing, can harm us while resting safe in the arms of Jesus.

I was blessed recently to be caring for my youngest great granddaughter, Savannah, who's just 6 months old. She fell asleep in my arms, while drinking her bottle, despite a raging storm that was brewing outside, wind blowing so hard that trees were bending down. It was quite noisy, and perhaps even a bit unnerving but Savannah had not a care in the world. Savannah was asleep. Savannah was resting in her Mom-Mom's arms.

What happens to that complete and simple trust as we grow older? We become worried and anxious, but God exhorts us to "*be careful for nothing*" (Phil. 4:6a). Don't worry about **anything**, but pray about **everything**. We humans try and plan out our own lives, seeking protection and shelter, but again God admonishes, "*The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms*" (Deut. 33:27a). We seek perfect peace. The Lord addresses this as well, "*The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*" and "*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee*" (Phil. 4:7 and Isaiah 26:3).

Isn't this exactly where God desires His children to be? Trusting, dependant upon, at ease with, and resting quietly before **Him**, who has promised to never leave or forsake His own (Heb. 13:5b).

God is sovereign and in control **He** sends the storms!! "*In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33b).

Yes, God does send the storms of life, that we might actually be able to *"count it all joy"* (James 1:2a), that we might experience His perfect peace, looking to Him more fully and completely and without question.

*"He hideth my life in the depths of His love, and covers me there with His hand
And covers me there with His hand."*



Keeping Our Eyes on the Deliverer

By Kevin Bruffey

I want the Donald, Stand for Rand, Go Rubio, I'm Ready for Hillary, or Feel the Bern. These are rallying cries we've been hearing over the past 12 months which are similar to those heard in previous election cycles. The Apostle Paul was no stranger to rallying cries either. Those he heard in Corinth were slightly different in that he heard: I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas, and I of Christ.

Well, Paul knew those who made their cry for Christ had it right. Christ brings the church together for He and He alone is our cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20). Edward Mote, in his hymn, "My Hope is Built on Nothing Less," proclaims: "On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand." The psalmist in Psalm 119:50 looks to the Lord for comfort in affliction, knowing that the Lord's promises provide life.

We are called to submit to those in authority over us as it says in Hebrews 13:17, and then in Romans 13:1 we're told to subject ourselves to the governing authorities. Since we live in a constitutional republic, we have the right to vote and influence our government in many other ways. According to our traditions, government is for the people and by the people.

While it's important to take part in the political promise, it's important to remember that Christ is always the cornerstone. Our leaders come and go, policy positions sway with the wind, and the pendulum fluctuates with the trends. 2 Timothy 2:13 speaks to Christ being the cornerstone: If we are faithless He will remain faithful, for He cannot disown Himself.

Us faithless? Surely that has something to do with the state of our culture. I'm not just blaming politicians for that, either. Isaiah 9:6-7 once again points us to Jesus who will have the government on His shoulders, one in which there will be everlasting peace and will be upheld with justice and righteousness.

In trying to influence our civil government as well as other spheres of influence we should be aware of principles Jesus taught such as compassion, equality, and fairness. If the government will ultimately be on His shoulders, we must approach civics with His sovereignty in mind knowing that He is Lord of all.

While it's important to apply godly principles in our daily walk, it's important to remember that we're never going to get it right entirely and that we indeed fall far short of God's perfect standard, Romans 3:23. This is why our main goal should be to point people to Jesus who did get it right without falling short at all - 2 Corinthians 5:21 ... He who knew no sin. For it is He who epitomizes righteousness.

Jesus, as part of the Trinity is the Alpha and the Omega. He was present during creation. Hebrews 11:3 reminds us that our faith affirms the universe's existence through God's Word. Psalm 33:6, 9 also attribute God's work in creation. Psalm 119:90 is particularly powerful as it speaks to God's unending faithfulness along with the power He demonstrates through creating and sustaining His work.

Verses that attest to God's creative and sustaining work are certainly powerful. They give us strength and add substance to our faith. A personal favorite is one in which Jesus was out to sea with his disciples in the midst of a storm. The disciples didn't think they'd survive the storm until Jesus demonstrated His omnipotence by calming the storm.

This passage reminds me of what we're going through during the election season and even during off election times. There's often fear of what will happen if certain candidates win. How will their policies affect our way of life? Will my needs still be met? Will we be kept safe?

In the Doxology we praise God from whom all blessings flow. If we truly take these verses to heart regarding God's powerful hand and faithfulness we should rest assured that we will always be cared for. Regardless of who takes office, Jesus will be there to calm the storm. It's worth noting, that history demonstrates that even when people's quality of life is compromised, the gospel still spreads. In fact, persecution has even caused the gospel to extend to areas where people had not been reached.

So, in this election while we seek the most qualified people, remember that God is the true anchor and sustainer. We should prayerfully pursue His will, for it will be carried out regardless of who wins. While our actions have consequences, God's hand produces the ultimate outcome with eternal consequences. As Romans 8:28 tells us: God works through all things for the good of those who love Him.

America

America I love you, land of my birth.
America I love you, the greatest land on earth.
I love your mountains, majesty,
and your seashores sparking white.
I love to see the sunrise chase away the dark of night.
Then, see Old Glory waving o'er the land of the free.
Yes, America, I love you, you are home to me.
Yes, America, dear America, I pledge to you my all,
And I pray that God will bless you, and never let you fall.

Hank Arthur

Daddy

Daddy —

There are little eyes watching you every night and day.
There are little ears that listen to every word you say.
There are little hands all eager to do everything you do.
There's a little boy dreaming of the day he'll be like you.

Daddy —

There are little feet that follow everywhere you go.
There's a little mind that's storing everything you know.
There's a little heart just aching to be like you some day.
There's a little boy growing up, and you're showing him the way.

Daddy —

That little boy looks up to you, don't lead him astray.
Stop, and look where you are, are you going the right way?
Don't lead him where he shouldn't go, he deserves the very best.
Lead him now to Jesus' feet, Dad, God will do the rest.

Hank Arthur

And you, fathers,
do not provoke
your children to wrath,
but bring them up
in the training
and admonition
of the Lord.

— EPHESIANS 6:4



Moments of Truth

March 29th

For as long as there have been Jewish people, there have been those committed to their destruction. Anti-Semitism is not new. From the earliest biblical times to the gas chambers of the Holocaust there has been an effort by God's enemies to destroy His chosen people.

The Muslim world is rife with anti-Semitism. Muslim religious leaders preach of the day when Israel will be destroyed. This hatred is not just in the Middle East but throughout Europe as well. Secularists oppose the Jews because they falsely believe that Zionism oppresses the Palestinians. They've incorrectly labeled Israel as the bad guy.

But the saddest form of anti-Semitism—in my opinion—comes from my own people within Christianity. There are many who believe that the Church has replaced the Jews as far as God's promises are concerned. They encourage divestiture from Israel and sanctions against them. Many are dedicated to Israel's destruction.

People may be fickle—but God's Word is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And He clearly said that He would bless those who bless Israel and curse those who don't. Who's side are you on?

June 1st

Many people today are at least interested in—if not completely worried about—the future of America. Count me in the first camp, as I don't tend to worry about anything. I believe in the sovereignty of God and fully trust in His plan for our nation and our world.

Most of the people I talk to are not comfortable with either Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton being in charge of our national security. Mr. Trump has no experience in the field, while Mrs. Clinton's experience has proven that she's in over her head.

As far as the human element is concerned, I'm inclined to like The Donald's chances of succeeding more than Hillary's—as he at least is surrounding himself with folks who have been there and done that.

But the bottom line in any discussion regarding our country's future must point to the Hand of God—which is providentially ruling the universe which He created. His plan for the world will come to fruition—the USA notwithstanding. The only question I have regarding that is how quickly it will happen. And that's where the maneuverings of our next president come into play.

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.

The Defender is available, free of charge, on audio CD.
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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
Hank Arthur, Defender

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!

Adult & Children's Sunday School	10:15 AM
Sunday Morning Worship & Children's Church	11:00 AM
Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study	1:30 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00 PM
Friday Evening Youth Group	7:00 PM
Outdoor Movie Night (June 24th)	8:00 PM