

# The DEFENDER - February 2017

“... 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: Rise Up, Christian America

I said prior to the recent presidential election that my prayer was for Christians in America to seek the mercy of God on our nation, imploring Him to give us yet one more opportunity to repent and become the salt and light that we've been called to be. The election of Donald Trump as president seems, at least on the surface, to be a confirmation of that. Then when Mr. Trump said in his inaugural address that he was transferring power from Washington, D.C. to the American people, it further drove home the point that Christians in America have an opportunity to rise up and make a difference for Christ. This is no time to rest on our laurels and watch what the president will do. It's his job to lead the nation. It's our job to lead the nation to Christ. Now's the time for us to move into action.

People familiar with church history know that in the 4<sup>th</sup> century Constantine became emperor, and in the process issued an edict of toleration for Christianity and granting favors to the Church. The upside of that was that persecution, which had been heavy under the likes of Nero and Diocletian, quickly waned. The trade-off was that during the next 300 years the Church lost its fire and evangelistic fervor. The lessening of persecution was welcomed on the one hand but inhibited the church's growth on the other. The blood of the martyrs, being the seed of the church, went into hibernation for the next 1000 years. The point in recapping this moment in history is to remind Christians that leaders who are sympathetic to our cause aren't called to do our work for us, but rather to open the door wider for us to do what God expects of us.

There's talk of a Patriotic Spring unfolding this year in Europe. Freedom lovers in Germany, France, Austria, Italy, and the Netherlands are seeking change. They, like America, want truth instead of political correctness and cultural moral equivalency. Patriotic leaders have arisen throughout these countries, seeking the truth and a return to their Judeo-Christian standards. What a breath of fresh air that is! Christianity has long been comatose, if not officially dead, on the other side of the Atlantic for a long, long time. Has radical, Islamic terrorism and mass immigration, coupled with multicultural elitism from Europe's current leaders finally awakened a sleeping giant among truth-seeking Christians?

Will the Holy Spirit light the flames of revival one more time in Europe? Will the flames be rekindled again here in America? I believe Christians once again have a friend in the Oval Office. I believe President Trump may open doors for our cause which have been tightly closed for the past eight years. But Donald Trump is not our Savior. That title belongs only to Jesus Christ. Christian Americans have long showed their allegiance to our nation. Now is the time to be faithful to our calling and our cause and vigorously share and spread the gospel message of Jesus Christ (**Ephesians 5:16**).

*Rev. David Lewis*

# **The Temple Mount Powderkeg**

## **Part I – The War of Gog and Magog**

**By Robert Luthardt, Sr.**

Will a rebuilt third Temple by Israel on the Temple Mount (TM hereafter), that now holds the revered “Dome of the Rock” and the “AL AQSA” Mosque (the third most holy site in Islam), be the spark that ignites this cultural and political flash point and initiate the Gog prophecy “in the LATTER DAYS...” (Ez. 38:16) “when Gog shall come ... my fury shall come (vs. 19) mountains ... thrown down (vs. 20). I will call for a sword against him (vs. 21) pestilence and with blood ... I will rain upon him ... great hailstones, fire and brimstone ... (vs. 22). Thus will I magnify Myself ... in the eyes of many nations ... I AM the Lord” (vs. 23).

When and how this shall be has been debated interminably by differing but Bible-honoring and believing theologians. Will the Gog war immediately precede the Millennium? Or will it be before the start of the GREAT TRIBULATION? “There shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning ... nor ever shall be” (Matt. 24:21).

Many theologians opt for a pretribulational time for Ezekiel’s “Gog Prophecy” because of some conditions he described (Ez. 38:8-12) that point to the “LATTER DAYS” when a people gathered out of many people – back to the mountains of Israel and back to a land that while “always waste but now inhabited,” “brought back from the sword” [Foreign domination] and where the people now “dwell safely ... without walls” in relative prosperity. This sounds and looks like a description of homes and businesses in present-day Israel.

The pretribulational time frame resolves Israel’s need for burials of slain soldiers of Gog and his allies’ defeated armies (7 months) but even more so the disposal of captured, abandoned weaponry (7 years—Ez. 39:9-16). As to the objection of those being metal, it smelts quite well in blast-furnaces, and the scrap-metal industry is lucrative on a worldwide scale so this presents no difficulty. “They shall burn the weapons with fire...” (Ez. 39:10).

If the Gog war were to occur during the great tribulation (7 years total), Israel would have insufficient time to complete these requirements, and Israel would be preoccupied with survival itself (Matt. 24:16-22; Rev. 12:6) and fully consumed with defending Jerusalem and their very lives (Zech. 13:8-9; Rev. 11:2).

We may not know by an absolute certainty when the prophesied future conflicts begin, but the stage is most definitely the land of Israel and it will be “in the latter days,” “against the mountains of Israel” (Ez. 38:8). We also definitely know that God will miraculously defeat Gog with “hailstones, fire and brimstone” and “all nations will see it” (Ez. 38:8-23).

Biblical and historical scholars inform that these invaders of Israel will be an alliance of foreign nations from “the North quarters” (Ez. 38:6, 15). Some suggest that this northern menace

will be joined by Persia (Iran), Cush (Sudan), Sheba (Yemen), Dedan (Saudi Arabia), and possibly even some western nations.

Some teach that Russia will be involved, allied with certain Islamic nations that are always ready to attack Israel. This has plausibility since Russia under socialism has always been an economically dependent nation and presently certain Islamic nations are dominant economically, mostly through control of vast oil reserves. On the other side of the balance sheet, Russia has enormous stockpiles of modern weaponry and their need for those petrodollars, while a marriage, it is definitely not one made in heaven.

There are six former Soviet “republics” north of Israel that are Islamic: AZERBAIJAN, KAZAKHSTAN, UZBEKISTAN, KYRGYZSTAN, TURKMINISTAN and TAJIKISTAN. These are all avowed enemies of Israel and the west. Add to that Israel’s wealth: potable water sources, warm water seaports, Dead Sea minerals, gas and oil deposits: each make Israel a “great spoil” of war (Ez. 38:2-4, 11-12).

The launch of the Gog War and the defeat of the alliance against Israel only needs a spark that a rebuilt temple on the TM could supply. Scripture does not give an exact time frame but it is interesting that the Gog prophecies appear between two significant prophecies concerning a temple being on the TM (Ez. 37:26-28 and then chapters 40 through 48). Scripture says Gog will be defeated and God will defend Israel and His people of the EVERLASTING COVENANT (Gen. 9:16, 12:24, 17:2-8; Is. 54: 10, 17, 55:3).

Could the Gog prophecy be transitional to the period of the great tribulation? Daniel records that the Antichrist will make a false peace covenant with Israel just before the last week of the 70- week prophecy (7 years) of Daniel’s vision and prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27). If yet another war aiming at Israel’s destruction is Ezekiel’s Gog war and divine intervention saves Israel, the Islamic world may at last cease from further hostilities. Then the subsequent power shifts might set the stage for the Antichrist’s power grab (Dan. 7:23-27).

God’s destruction of Gog and his allies would so impact world thinking that the clamor would certainly be for global stability at last and an autocratic Caesar-like ruler would be welcome. A pseudo-Messiah figure indeed. The stunning victory for Israel would compel greater global recognition of Israel and engender negotiations for greater normalized economic and political relations. This could also further facilitate the rise of that autocrat that the scriptures call, “That man of sin ... the son of perdition ...” (2 Thes. 2:3). Before and during his emergence, the thrust for global government and the “New World Order” allied with the now evolving “One World Religion” will come to fruition (Rev. 17 and 18). A virtual rebirth of a modern Tower of Babel seems viable as well. The reverse side of our One Dollar Bill since 1935 has borne the inscription of the New World Order in Latin, “Novus Ordo Seclorum.”

If Gog is defeated before the “man of sin” takes power, Israel’s world status will be immense. Concessions to her could be a temple on the TM, especially if the war or an earthquake destroys the Muslim Dome of the Rock and the AL AQSA mosque. More Israelis than ever pray

for this third Temple where they believe God's presence will be (Ez. 43:1-7; Is. 2:2-4). They pray for resumption of animal sacrifices on the very site Abraham offered Isaac and the same site that God commanded King David to purchase from ARAUNAH the Jebusite (2 Samuel 24:16-24).

It should be noted that God's dealing with Israel regarding the land promised to Abraham's descendants was in perpetuity (eternally Gen. 17:7) yet was held in abeyance from the Roman destruction (70 A.D.) and only 69 of Daniel's 70-week prophecy had elapsed and one week (7 years) still is future. While God brought judgment upon Israel, He did NOT discard His Chosen Nation. He did allow them to be scattered across the globe for nearly 2,000 years, but God did NOT "cast away" His people (Rom. 11:1, 8, 23b). Still, blindness in part is happened to Israel, "until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" (vs. 25).

We know many Jews became Christians but most of Israel's rulers rejected, then abused, and with Roman help, crucified Christ as God prophesied (Is. 50:6, Matt. 26:67; Is. 53:5, Rom. 5:6, 8; Is. 53:12; Zech. 12:10) and they made Christ's followers to be as outlaws.

Since the "Day of Pentecost," God's active plan has been centered on Christ's sheep (John 10:11-16) and will be until the last are "caught up" (1 Thes. 4:13 to 5:6) in the "Rapture." Futurist theologians see this catching away happening before the great tribulation (Matt. 24:21).

Our Old and New Testaments contain yet unfulfilled portions, such as Jesus' promise to return for us (John 14:1-3) and Israel's full and final return (Jer. 23:3-8, 31:31-36; Is 44:26 to 45:6; Ez. 36:24 to 37:28; Zech. chapters 8, 12, 14). So, Israel has yet to finalize her purpose but in God's Providence she will. Meanwhile it is wrong to teach that when Israel's rulers rejected Christ, God cancelled His EVERLASTING Covenant with Abraham's descendants and replaced Israel with the Church (Rom. 11:2).

God has NOT cast away His Covenant Nation. God gave the Promised Land unconditionally to 12 tribes of Israel forever, and since 1948 it is again their homeland (Gen. 17:7-8) though they have yet to possess all of it. One day, and perhaps soon, they will. So, fulfillment of prophecy does NOT depend upon man's obedience but on the divine outworking of God's providential promises. God alone dispenses mercy upon whom and when He chooses (Rom. 9:15-19).

The modern State of Israel still has a role to play in God's prophetic plans, and many believe one day a third Temple will be on the TM as a fulfillment in the "last days;" that end time "Day of the Lord" when Daniel's prophecy begins again to "check off" on the calendar (Dan. 9).

Keep looking up.

<b><u>Chief Source:</u></b>	The Battle for the Last Days Temple
<b><u>Author:</u></b>	Randall Price
<b><u>Publisher:</u></b>	Harvest House – Eugene, Oregon

# **“The Love of God”**

**By Nancy Long**

Jeremiah 31:3b — *“Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love:  
Therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.”*

Romans 5:8 — *“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while  
we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”*

Romans 8:35, 38 & 39 — *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?  
Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine,  
or nakedness, or peril, or sword?  
For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels,  
nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,  
nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us  
from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

For the past several months, the topic of “love” has been whirling around in my mind ..... I just can’t stop thinking about it, specifically, God’s **“agape love,”** the ultimate, the highest, and most supreme love there is! People talk about this subject all the time, but what is love anyway? We use the same word to express our feelings for ice cream, cars, baseball, puppies, spouses, children ..... and too, even God! Love though, at its core, is so much more than stimulation of the senses, so much greater than a warm cozy cuddly physical sensation. Genuine love, true love ..... God’s love, is a decision, a choice, a commitment. It’s a verb, an action, a demonstration, a behavior,, or way of life. **“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”** (Rom. 5:8). There is nothing lovable, or lovely, in any of us, nothing admirable, nothing sweet, nothing good ..... absolutely nothing!! **“There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God”** (Rom. 3:10-11).

“The love of God is greater far,  
Than any tongue or pen can tell,  
It goes beyond the highest star,  
And reaches to the lowest hell;  
The guilty pair, bowed down with care,  
God gave His Son to win;  
His erring child He reconciled,  
And pardoned from his sin.

When years of time shall pass away,  
And earthly thrones and kingdoms fall,  
When men, who here refuse to pray,  
On rocks and hills and mountains call,  
God’s love so sure shall still endure,  
All measureless and strong;  
Redeeming grace to Adam’s race —  
The saints and angels sing.

Could we with ink the ocean fill, And were the skies of parchment made,  
Were ev'ry stalk on earth a quill, And ev'ry man a scribe by trade,  
To write the love of God above, Would drain the ocean dry,  
Nor could the scroll contain the whole, Tho stretched from sky to sky.

Refrain —

O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!  
It shall forevermore endure — The saints and angels' song.”

Lyrics and Music — Frederick M. Lehman (1917)

The lyrics of the beautiful hymn, written above, contain a powerful message about the awesomeness ..... the incredible depth of God's love. Who though, can accurately describe, using mere human words, or really even completely understand, the magnitude, the greatness, the immenseness ..... the unending, limitless, sacrificial love of God?!

Mr. Lehman gets credit for composing both the words, and the music, to this hymn; however, the third verse actually dates back to 11th Century Germany, and is of Jewish origin, being part of a very long Jewish poem:

***“Could we with ink the ocean fill, And were the skies of parchment made,  
Were ev'ry stalk on earth a quill, And ev'ry man a scribe by trade,  
To write the love of God above, Would drain the ocean dry,  
Nor could the scroll contain the whole, Tho stretched from sky to sky.”***

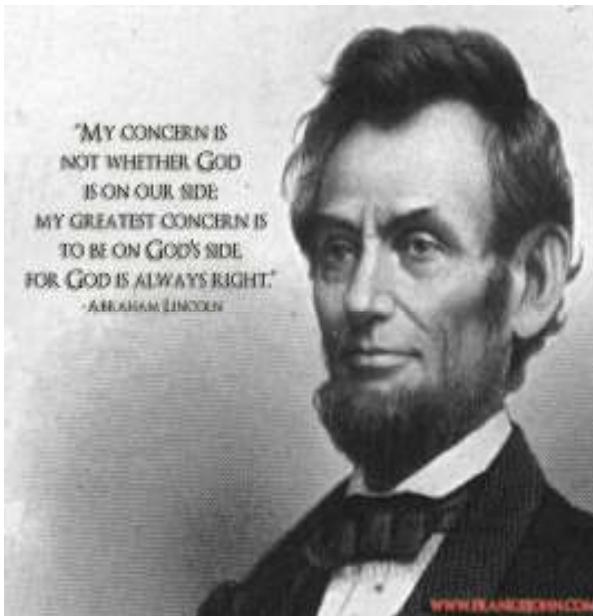
These same intense, heartfelt words also had been found scribbled on the wall of an inmate's room in a mental institution. The exactness of all this lacks some clarity, but nevertheless, God's boundless love is amazing ..... His grace is irresistible, reaching down ..... saving souls.

***“Amazing love! How can it be .....  
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me!”***

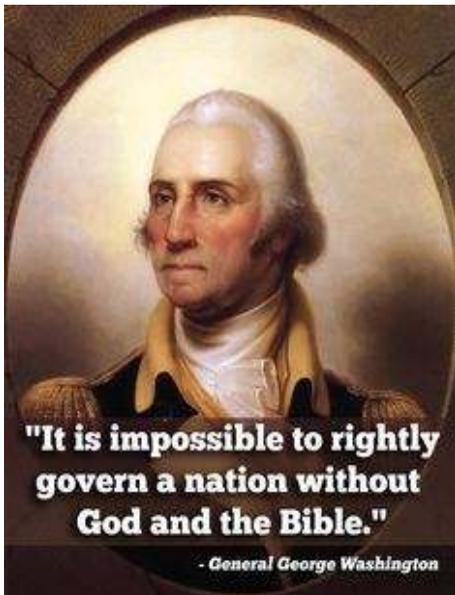
Text — John Wesley (And Can It Be?)



## Presidents with February Birthdays



February 12th

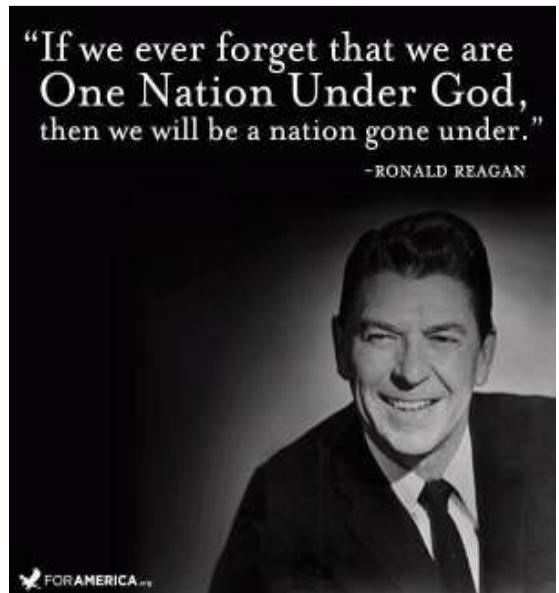


February 22nd



William Henry Harrison—February 9th

*"I deem the present occasion sufficiently important and solemn to justify me in expressing to my fellow citizens a profound reverence for the Christian religion, and a thorough conviction that sound morals, religious liberty, and a just sense of religious responsibility are essentially connected with all true and lasting happiness."*



February 6th

*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 & 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 Night Youth Group	7:00 PM