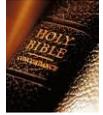


The DEFENDER—March 2022



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

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IN DEFENSE OF TRUTH radio broadcast
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FROM THE DIRECTOR’S DESK: Apocalypse Now???

Every time a major, catastrophic event happens on an international scale one of the first reactions from the huddled masses is that the Apocalypse is finally upon us. Let’s first define that word. According to Webster, Apocalypse means, primarily, the complete and final destruction of the world, as described in Revelation, and secondarily, as an event involving destruction or damage on an awesome or catastrophic scale. The Russian attack on Ukraine may not qualify as either of those descriptions, certainly not the first, but it does raise the question of where are we in the biblical end time scenario.

Many mistakenly thought the Antichrist would be revealed in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. Students of God’s prophetic Word weren’t fooled by that, as they understood that the true believing church of Jesus Christ first had to be “caught up...to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thessalonians 4:17) for that to happen. In the process of getting to that glorious moment in time, global events will continue to fall into place as the foreordained one-world political system is joined by a worldwide false religion, brought about, in part, by many within Christendom going apostate. This falling away from the truth of scripture is helping to fuel the growing ecumenical movement seen clearly in such entities as the World Council of Churches .

According to a recent survey by George Barna and the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University, the Christian church in America has officially gone apostate. Large majorities of self-identified Christians reported many beliefs that were not in harmony with biblical teaching. Three out of four claimed that people are basically good, which rejects Jesus’ words in Mark 10:18, “...there is none good but one, that is, God”. Two out of three said that “having faith” matters more than which faith you have. Another two-thirds argued that all religious faiths are of equal value. 58% believe that a person can do enough “good things” to earn their way into heaven, and 57% of those surveyed believe in karma, an obvious reference to Hindu and Buddhist doctrine. And these people think they represent Christ? His answer, of course, will be “Depart from Me, I never knew you” (Matthew 7:23).

Abraham couldn’t find 10 righteous people in Sodom and Jesus wondered if He would find any faith on earth at the time of His return (Luke 18:8). The Bible is clear that the Apocalypse will come when the people of earth turn away from the living Christ and to the false, counterfeit, deceptive Antichrist, who will rule, albeit briefly, in His stead. We’re not there yet, as the true Church has not yet been Raptured, but if American Christianity is any indication of the sign of the times, keep your lamps topped off with oil (Matthew 25) and keep looking up! Maranatha!

Rev. David Lewis

Raising God's Standard in These "Last Days" (Is. 59:19)

Part II – How Close Are We to Christ's Return?

By Robert Luthardt, Sr.

When you see the "ENEMY shall come in like a flood, the SPIRIT OF THE LORD shall lift up a standard against him" (Is. 59:19).

The prophesied "MAN OF SIN" will come with deception and in opposition to the Creator of time and eternity, The Lord Jesus Christ. This Man of Sin will blasphemously offer himself as being the promised Messiah. He, however, is under the control of the diabolically clever machinations of Lucifer's anti-God world religion: A contrived counterfeit Christianity.

Bible-educated theologians have been watching the rise of this antichrist religion since at least the mid-19th century and on into our own day here in the 21st. While the Church of God's called-out believers is Christ's heavenly bride (Ep. 1:4-14; Rev. 19:6-9) the now forming apostate church is not a bride but a "MOTHER OF HARLOTS" (Rev. 17:5) whose adherents have preached an ungodly "UNITY" to dead Christian denominations and now also to the pagan world religions to whom we used to send missionaries (see Revelation 17 and 18).

Mankind in these "latter times" (2 Tim. 4:1) has seen such distortions of God's word as the New Age errors, a socialist gospel that replaces Christ's gospel and other accelerating delusions and seductions in these "Last Days" (2 Pet. 3:3). The growth of false gospels, false prophets, occult religious practices and "lying signs and wonders" (Mark 13:22, 2 Thes. 2:9) have brought seminaries, denominations and churches to be filled with those who "Profess" to Believe BUT lack the fruit expected of those in whom the Holy Spirit resides and "IMPUTES RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Rom. 4:3-6, 23-25) and brings about the "NEW BIRTH" (John 3:7-8).

When our "GOOD SHEPHERD'S CHOSEN FLOCK" (John 10:11, 15:16) is "CAUGHT UP" from the earth into the air with the Lord (1 Thes. 4:14-18), sometimes referred to by the theological term "THE RAPTURE," those "left behind" when the Church is gone will be charged to follow the "MAN OF SIN," Satan's Antichrist.

Many conservative teachers believe we are on the cusp of the major war depicted in Ezekiel (chapters 38 and 39) after which the "war-weary" world will be consumed in peace efforts and in heightened concerns for "MOTHER EARTH." Laws will come to guarantee "Ecological Wellness" which will substitute for Christ's gospel for many. A "catching up" of the body of Christ's sheep could be world shaking by itself, but if during a massive world-war when millions go missing or during the greatest tribulation ever, many missing might be expected (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 9:15) and even ignored.

The taking home of Christ's "Bride" (Rev. 19:7-9) means the greatest opposition force to counter Satan's Antichrist will be gone. Christ's flock is the well-versed entity able to "quench the Devil's fiery darts" and even make "Satan flee" (Ep. 6:16; James 4:7).

A freer reign of terror for the enemy of the tribulation saints saved during that period would be present. Many newly called believers will die by refusing to take "the mark of the beast" (Rev. 13) or to live under a modern day "Tower of Babel" in the New World Order of a revived "ROMAN EMPIRE" (Dan. 7:19-25, 9:27).

A “pre-trib Rapture” blends well with Christ’s assurance that the “gates of hell” shall NOT prevail against “HIS CHURCH” (Matt. 16:18; 1 Pet. 2:5-10. Consider also, “greater is He that is in [US] than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:1-6).

Antichrist is allowed power “to make war with the saints” is further proof the church is already “caught up” and Christ’s return is “at the doors” (Mark 13:29) and we are in the “Last of the Last days.” Today the way is yet open to “make your calling and election sure,” so do so before the door is shut (2 Pet. 1:10; Luke 11:9-10).

After the church is with the Lord, the Holy Spirit will still be bringing the gospel to those called during the Tribulation who had not rejected Christ and who now answer the irresistible call upon their hearts; those who now love God and Jesus Christ and willing to keep the commandments (John 14:15, 23; 16:27; Ep. 6:24).

In the Tribulation choices will be difficult. A believer either takes Satan’s mark and suffers God’s wrath or refuses the mark and be hunted down by the Antichrist. Furthermore, Jesus warned that “no man knoweth the day or hour of His return” (Matt. 24:36-44) yet those who read and study God’s Word know that procession of last days events is, as with “ALL THINGS,” in the “hands of God.”

The Bible offers many clues to the general timing of the return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Those who read God’s Word know of the coming soon of one called “WICKED,” but his exact appearance is likewise known only to God (2 Thes. 2:8-9).

Our Lord first came during Daniel’s prophesied fourth kingdom (Roman) and few were aware of His arrival until after His birth (Dan. 2:30-45). It was necessary that a rebuilt Temple be standing and be under foreign rule so that hundreds of prophecies could be fulfilled, most particularly Jesus’ prophecy of the soon coming destruction of that same all-important Temple (Matt. 24:1-2). We can list only a few (Luke 2:1; Micah 5:2; Psalm 22; Is. 53; Dan. 9, etc.).

Christ’s execution was of Roman origin (crucifixion) and was necessary to fulfill a host of God’s predictive promises, and Israel’s method by stoning could not meet that need.

Christ’s return will be yet future but still in the fourth and final kingdom during the rule of Antichrist and the “TEN KINGS” (Dan. 7:23-27): “And the ten horns ... are Ten Kings which have received NO KINGDOM AS YET ...” these are still to come (Rev. 17:12-18). God will direct the hearts of these Kings “to fulfill HIS WILL” (vs. 17). Many living in this century will see the end of these Gentile Kingdoms and the end of “Jacob’s Trouble” (Jer. 30:1-11) especially their trials during the coming “Great Tribulation” (Luke 21:20-36).

So how close are we to Christ’s return? All necessary and most important signs such as Israel’s return as a nation (Ez., chapter 37) are in place waiting for the next phase of God’s plan for HIS Church and His chosen Nation, Israel.

Keep looking up (Luke 21:28).

*Daylight Savings Time Begins on Sunday, March 13th.
Don’t forget to set your clocks FORWARD on Saturday night!!*

Moment of Truth

The second psalm says that God is sitting in heaven laughing at the nations and their leaders regarding their thoughts on power. It's the laughter of a father when his 3-year old boasts that he or she can outrun him or beat him in a wrestling match. Just as a father knows the limited strength of that child, God knows the boundaries of power of the nations. And every nation is limited, but God is not. God is all-powerful. He created the world and knew about the empires of the earth long before they came into being. But pride and power cause nations and leaders to rebel against God. They rant and rave against Him but He laughs because, as Jesus told Pontius Pilate, any power they have comes from Him and He can also take it away from them.

In the big picture we don't need to fear the tyrants and evil leaders of the world because they are ultimately in God's hands, and as we read in Proverbs 21 He will turn their hearts as He turns the rivers of water.

So don't fear those who can only kill the body but fear God, who can destroy both body and soul in hell.

Moment of Truth

United we stand and divided we fall is a saying that has been popularized in music and in politics. "The Liberty Song," published in 1768, exhorted the colonists to "join hand in hand, brave Americans all. By uniting we stand, by dividing we fall." Abraham Lincoln, in a speech given in 1858, reminded his state delegation that "a house divided against itself cannot stand," which of course, is a direct reference to scripture where Jesus said "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand."

Yet the M.O. of the progressive left in America today is just that—"Divide and Conquer." The United States is split in half along political lines. The GOP prefers limited government whereas Democrats embrace its expansion. The most visible evidence of fracture of course is anything the progressives touch—a clear testament to the cancer of wokeism. It's also clear we no longer stand united in America—because we fall for anything.

How Great Thou Art

By Nancy Long

Gen. 1:1 – *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”*

1 Chron. 29:11 – *“Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all.”*

Psalms 48:1a – *“Great is our Lord, and greatly to be praised”*

Psalms 57:11 – *“Be Thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let Thy glory be above the earth.”*

Psalms 95:3-5 – *“For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In His hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills are His also. The sea is His, and He made it: and His hands formed the dry land.”*

Psalms 104:24-25 – *“O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.”*

Psalms 145:5 – *“I will speak of the glorious honour of Thy majesty, and of Thy wondrous works.”*

Isaiah 42:5 – *“Thus saith God the Lord, He that created the heavens, and stretched them out; He that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.”*

Isaiah 45:18 – *“For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else.”*

John 1:3 – *“All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.”*

How Great Thou Art

*O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy pow'r thro'out the universe displayed.*

*When thro' the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees,
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze.*

*And when I think that God, His Son not sparing,
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in,
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin.*

*When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration,
And there proclaim, my God, how great Thou art.*

Chorus -- *Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee:
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee:
How great Thou art. How great Thou art!*

Words and Music – Stuart K. Hine

This well known hymn, “*How Great Thou Art*”, originally began as a poem, penned in the summer of 1885, in Sweden, by Carl Boberg, a 26 year old preacher. The title, at its inception, was “*O Store Gud*”, translated in English to be, “*O Great God!*” As history tells us, “*Pastor Boberg, along with some of his friends had gone to a meeting some two miles from home. On the way back they were caught in a thunder storm. As the storm broke, the lightening flashed, the thunder rolled, and the winds swept across the fields; and then, as quickly as it came, it was all over. The sun again came out, and with it appeared a rainbow. Then, as the rainbow disappeared and the sun began to sink low in the west in the thrill of the evening, from a distance could be heard the song of the thrush, and the church tower sounding the tolling of the bell, memorializing a funeral that had been held that afternoon. The very atmosphere, the beauty of the surroundings, and the sound of the bell – all combined to draw from the heart and mind of the young preacher a poem, the subject of which, after many translations in many lands, and after many years would become known as ‘**How Great Thou Art**’.*”

Over the decades, the original poem has been translated into the languages of several different countries, each, I’m sure, adding its own particular flavor. From Sweden it traveled to Germany, and a few years later a pastor in Russia, Ivan Prokhanoff, adapted it to Russian. However, it was Stuart K. Hine, a British missionary to Ukraine who felt free to add two new verses to this poem/song. According to one source, the story of the third verse goes like this: “*It was typical of the Hines to inquire as to the existence of any Christians in the villages they visited. In one case, they found out that the only Christians that their host knew about, were a man named Dmitri and his wife, Lyudmila. Dmitri’s wife knew how to read because a Russian soldier had left a Bible behind several years earlier, and she started slowly learning by reading that Bible. When the Hines arrived in the village and approached Dmitri’s house, they heard a strange and wonderful sound: Dmitri’s wife was reading from the gospel of John about the crucifixion of Christ to a houseful of guests, and those visitors were in the very act of repenting. In Ukraine, this act of repenting is done very much out loud. So the Hines heard people calling out to God, saying how unbelievable it was that Christ would die for their own sins, and praising Him for His love and mercy. They just couldn’t barge in and disrupt this obvious work of the Holy Spirit, so they stayed outside and listened. Stuart wrote down the phrases he heard the Repenters use, and (even though it was all in Russian), it became the third verse that we know today: ‘*And when I think that God, His Son not sparing, Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in.*’”*

And the story behind the forth verse, occurring seventeen years later: After World War II, while working in a camp among Russian refugees, Stuart Hine found only two people professing

themselves to being Christians one of whom spoke these words: *“One man to whom they were ministering told them an amazing story: he had been separated from his wife at the very end of the war, and had not seen her since. At the time they were separated, his wife was a Christian, but he was not, but he had since been converted. His deep desire was to find his wife, so they could at last share their faith together. But he told the Hines that he did not think he would ever see his wife on earth again. Instead he was longing for the day when they would meet in heaven, and could share in the Life Eternal there.”* These words again inspired Hine, and they became the basis for his fourth and final verse to **‘How Great Thou Art!’**

So many different and diverse stories from around the world all expressing God’s greatness!! This hymn is not only beautiful, but enlightening and encouraging as well, helping those who sing it, to shift thoughts of self to thoughts of our Sovereign God from **our** inadequacies to **His** all sufficient grace, and the beauty of His perfectness from any pain or storm this world might bring, to hope in our home in heaven forever, and ever, and ever!!! Set your hearts and minds on these truths, my Defender friends, and rest in **His** perfect peace (Isaiah 26:3).

This same God who spoke the worlds into existence this same God who knitted us together in our mother’ wombs this same God who sent His Son to the earth, as a baby, to live a perfect life, and to ultimately die on a cruel cross, shedding His precious, sinless, cleansing blood, to save all those who believe. This same God rose again, conquering death now we can be assured and comforted that this same God has promised to come again one day. *“Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord”* (1 Thess. 4:17).

Quotes taken from:

(<https://livinghymns.net/2020/00/04/>)



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