Martin Luther King was slain at the dawn of Holy Week 1968

Writer reveals MLK was sent as a Messiah just when the world needed someone

(EDITOR'S NOTE — This timely essay, by Marsha Rose German, formerly of the AFRO Magazine staff, who now resides in Honolulu, Hawaii, comes at the dawn of Holy Week, 1982, and recalls that Martin Luther King died April 4, 1968, the Thursday before Palm Sunday and just a few hours before the opening of Holy Week that fateful spring. Palm Sunday in 1968 was April 7. King's funeral was Tuesday, April, 9, 1968. Easter Sunday that year was April 14.)

By Marsha Rose German

The beginning of Martin Luther King's final week on earth, like that of "Jesus Christ, came with a parade into a hostile city, Memphis.

The time was April 4, 1968, the Thursday before Palm Sunday, 1968.

Like Jesus, Martin Luther King knew death lurked in the shadows. Each knew he would not escape his enemies. But each kept his faith and refused to be shaken.

Like Christ at Gethsemane, Martin Luther King stood in the pulpit of a Memphis church the night before his assassination and spoke of God, death and brotherhood.

Dr. King's grand march began 13 years before the Montgomery bus boycott and ended on the balcony of the Memphis motel.

Many prophetic events happened along the way that history has yet to outline and define. But as the years go by, it all becomes more clear.

LORD, TAKE MY HAND

Noteworthy is the fact that Martin Luther King, standing on the balcony, happened to notice as he leaned over the rail and talked with aides and friends, that Ben French, the singer was in the crowd at street level.

Ben French was due to sing at a Claiborne Temple rally later that evening.

As he yelled his greeting up to the doomed Civil Rights leader, Dr. Martin King's request that he sing "Precious Lord, Take My Hand."

And, as the crowd united in the moment as only they sang, Dr. Martin Luther King leaned on the balcony, then and the lord stood still.

The day-to-day war-fare we see as God opened the arms of His Son, His Prophet, His Liberator, His Black Messiah and as the song says, "Lead me on to the Promised Land. Lead your child home."

HIS ROLE IN HISTORY

The great Dr. King's Letter from a Birmingham Jail written April 16, 1963, gives glimpses that he knew his role in world history would reveal him as a messenger of God.

He finished understood his role to be that of Paul and Jesus Christ.

He wrote, "Jesus Christ was an extremist for love, truth, goodness and thereby rose above his environment.

"Perhaps the South, the nation and the world are in dire need of creative extremists. Perhaps I expect too much. I suppose I should have resigned that few members of the oppressor race can understand the deep groans and passionate yearnings of the oppressed race and still fewer have the vision to see that injustice must be rooted out by strong, persistent and determined action."

HISTORY OF GOD'S MESSENGERS

But, first we go back to the Beginning, Creation, Genesis.

God created the universe and the world out of his thoughts and dreams. We might say we thought the world was finished and done. It was, but not creation.

Rivers change their course now and then, carving out new lands. Volcanos erupt and create new lands. Lakes dry up leaving valleys.

Creation continues as long as man continues to assist God in completing a perfect world.

Man was not created by God mindlessly but to serve a purpose. That purpose is to assist God in continuing the creation of a perfect world.

So God sends us help in many ways. Our very thought pattern, dreams, are messengers from God — but most of us are not tuned in.

Therefore, God sends us Messengers, Prophets, Deliverers, and Liberators.

ADAM

God gave us Adam, the first Messenger from God. For the first time, A messenger, a Prophet, who dealt with man as human with a soul, with morality, with guilt.

ABRAHAM

We then come to Abraham, the second of God's messengers, now the message to Abraham, his family and nation (who were living in a time and place where there were many gods) was that there was but One God. And Abraham believed him.

Abraham — he believed God and did as he was told, moved his family into a new civilization, a new nation and passed on the visions of God and the future.

MOSES

We read of messenger after messenger being sent from God. And as is the case today, many of them went unheard — until his "chosen people were slaves in Egypt.

God again sent a Messenger, a Prophet, a Messiah a Deliverer, Moses.

Moses believed God, held long conversations with God even learned to let God speak and write through him to his people — he gave us laws to live by, one of Commandments.

Moses turned to God and delivered his slave people out of bondage, demonstrating their Arab brothers, raising the level of creation, the universe, maintaining their dignity and creating all second class citizenships.

To this God sent a Messenger, a Prophet, a Deliverer, who listened to God who did what God wanted him to do. He created some order and gave women some status, which it must be said that the Jews and Christians had not done.

OTHER PROPHETS

This same process was carried out in Asia Minor — so God gave us KRISHNA. Repeated in Asia, God gave us BUDDAH.

By the 1800s civilization had spread to all the corners of the earth and God had sent messengers to every land and every people, but we were even more unmanageable.

God sent BAHAULLA this time in Persia. His messenger was sent all around the world.

People still didn't listen — still didn't get it.

The turn of the 20th century and we have two world wars, the Holocoust, slavery, segregation, discrimination, immoral laws and inhumanity to man is alive and well.

GHANDI

Again God sends a messenger, a prophet, a liberator, a deliverer MAHATMA GHANDI — who delivered his people from the bondage of the English — The English who invented slavery and are masters of discrimination. Ghandi who was the creator of the non - violent technique of civil disobedience.

SUN YAT SEN, in China, a messenger, a prophet, a liberator, delivered his people from bondage by believing God and doing what he was told to do

MARTIN LUTHER KING

And in the United States God gave us Martin Luther King!

What do all of these people have in common?

The ability, the gift, to hear God in their inner mind and believe God and do His will.

But prophets are seldom recognized in their own land.

You must remember that there is not just one messenger.

Thus God gave us a Black Messiah when we needed one. Martin Luther King.

Martin Luther King was third generation minister. He was deeply spiritual, a believer in God, who had the special gift that all messengers from God had, the ability to hear God in the inner mind and believe him, and do what God told him to do.

He was a man who took responsibility for transforming the world; who believed that we, make a difference in the world; who changed the context in which we hold freedom and love.

NOW IS THE TIME

Martin Luther King said, "Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevetability. It comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co - workers with God, and without this work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation.'

"We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right.

"Now is the time to make real promise of democracy and tranform our pending national elegy into a creation psalm of brotherhood."

"I am grateful to God that, through the influence of the Negro church, the way of nonviolence became an integral part of our struggle."

Martin Luther King met with great opposition from within the church, black, white, Christian and Jewish.

He was called an extremist because he dared to break immoral laws, as Jesus had done before him.

Jesus had healed the sick on Sabbath, which is against the Jewish law. That is definitely an uniust law. The Pharisees were up in arms about this branch of the law.

"I was initially disappointed at being categorized as an extremist," said Martin Luther King, "as I continued to think about the matter I gradually gained a measure of satisfaction from the label.

"Was not Jesus an extremist for love? "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

"So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be.

"Will we be extremists for hate of love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or for the extension of justice?

"In that dramatic scene on Calvary's hill, three men were erucified.

"We must never forget that all three were crucified for the same crime, the crime of extremism. Two were extremists for immorality, and thus fell below their environment.

"The other, Jesus Christ, was an extremist for love, and goodness, and thereby rose above his environment. Perhaps the South, the nation and the world are in dire need of creative extremists."

Martin Luther King said, "I have no despair about the future. I have no fear about the outcome of our struggle.

We will reach the goal of freedom, all over the nation, because the goal of America is freedom."

ABUSED, SCORNED

"Abused and scorned though we may be, our destiny is tied up with America's destiny.

Before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, we were here.

"Before the pen of Jefferson etched the mejetic words of the Declaration of Independence across the pages of history, we were here.

"For more than two centuries our forefathers labored in this country without wages; they made cotton king; they built the homes of their masters while suffering gross injustices and shameful humiliation, and yet out of a bottomless vitality they continued to thrive and develop.

"If the unexpressible cruelties of slavery could not stop us, the opposition we now face will surely fail. We will win our freedom because the sacred heritage of our nation and the eternal will of God are embodied in our echoing demands."

IN A BIRMINGHAM JAIL

As Jesus spent days in the desert praying and talking to God, getting clear what God wanted of him, even though it meant suffering and sacrifice, that is what he would do.

Martin Luther King spent a lot of time alone in a narrow jail cell, writing long letters, thinking long thoughts and praying long prayers getting very clear what God wanted from him.

Martin Luther King proceeded to walk down the path that God had laid out for him. Overturning immoral laws and injustices, raising the consciousness of the American people.

He Martin Luther King the messenger from God the prophet, the Black Messiah, delivered us from "NOBODY" to SOMEBODYNESS."

He liberated us from second class citizenship. He gave us God's message of love and proclaimed being God's creation, in being Black.

THE END

To the end of his life Martin Luther King was at peace with what he had done and been. Just as Christ had fulfilled his mission on this planet.

Martin Luther King had walked into the Valley of The Shadow of Death and said, "Maybe I've got the advantage over those people I've conquered the fear of death.

As he moved deliberately to the fateful moment when God would receive his Son, Martin Luther King, said in the prophetic way he had, "The quality not the longevity of one's life is what is important. If you are cut down in a movement that is dream to save the soul of a nation, then nothing could be more redemptive.

The night before he was crucified, in a nationally televised speach King said, "Well, I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn't matter with me now. Because I have been to the mountain top.

"I won't mind.

"Like anybody, I'd like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will."

PRECIOUS LORD TAKE MY HAND

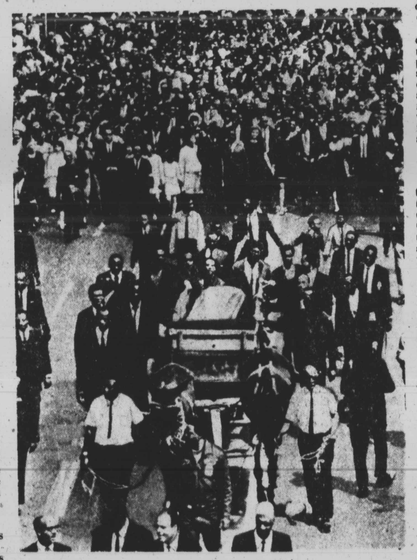
Martin Luther King took the last steps to the balcony that chilly evening in April. He leaned over the railing and talked with aides and friends.

Among the group at street level was Ben French, a singer who was to perform at a Claiborne Temple (Memphis) rally later in the evening. As they chatted, King asked French, "Sing that song 'Precious Lord' for me — sing it real pretty."

French knew the song. "Lead, lead, lead me on to the land - Oh, oh, oh take my hand, Precious Lord. - And lead your child on home."

The sound of a shot rang out and God opened his arms to His Son, His Prophet, His Liberator, His Black Messiah.

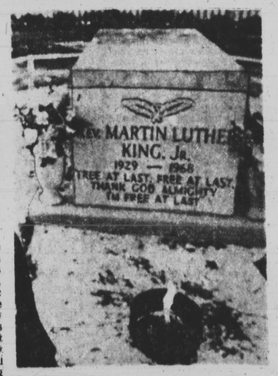
King said in his last days, "God has been profoundly real to me in recent years. I have felt an inner calm. In the midst of lonely days and dreary nights, I have heard an inner voice saying, 'Lo, I will be with you all ways."



IMMORTAL HISTORY is portrayed in this photo of the mule train carrying the body of the slain Civil Rights leader. Over 200,000 persons followed the wooden casket to represent the great and small of nearly every nation, spread on the second day of Holy Week, six days before Easter Sunday, 1968.

APRIL 4, 1968 — Precious Lord, take my hand and lead your child on home." This was the song Ben French sang at King's request just moments before the shot rang out and God opened His arms to His Son, His Prophet, His Liberator, His Black Messiah. Arrow points to the balcony at the Memphis Motel where Martin Luther King was struck by the assassin. Ben French was among the group standing at street level.

YOU ARE UNDER ARREST— This actual photo is not unlike the scene in the Bible when the Savior was taken into custody.



HIS TOMB—The grave in Atlanta, Ga. and its Eternal Flame.

Reeves announces economic development hearings...

City councilman Norman V.A. Reeves, chairman of the Baltimore City Council Task Force to study the problems of black economic development and black unemployment, announced hearings will occur within the coming month.

The task force is the result of City Council Resolution No. 801, sponsored by Reeves. It unanimously was passed Oct. 10, 1981.

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Its members include Dr. Robert Hearns, Johns Hopkins University, vice chairman; Donald Hammen, Democrat 1st district; Nathan Irby, Democrat 2nd district; Morton J. Baum, Mayor's office of Manpower Resources; Bernard Berkowitz, director of Baltimore Economic Development Corp; M.J. Brodie, Commissioner of Housing and Community Development; Dorothy Brunson, WEBB radio; and Samuel Lloyd, State of Maryland.

In announcing the hearings, Reeves said the growth of economic development in Baltimore City has been dismal.

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"Across the nation, the rate of growth for black economic development has been approximately 13 percent, while in Baltimore, it was only 1.5 percent.

"Baltimore can do better and the aim of this committee is to review the city's efforts, analyze successes and non-successes in an attempt to find ways to significantly impact on the area of black economic development within the city," Reeves said.

All interested persons, who would be interested in testifying at the hearings are asked to call Councilman Reeves at his office, 396-4818 or call Jo-Ellen Felice at 396-4804.

LIONELL E. CARTWRIGHT, a chief warrant officer in the Army in Ft. Lee, VA., recently received his 33rd degree as a mason. He formerly lived in Baltimore on Benalou St., and is the son of Mrs. Pearl P. Cartwright.

...calls for evaluation of city's civil defense system

A resolution calling for an evaluation of the city's civil defense system was approved by the City Council yesterday.

The resolution was introduced to point out the fact that the nation's present civil defense structure only gives the illusion of preparedness" and would not be adequate to Protect citizens in the event of a nuclear attack, Councilman Norman Reeves said.

Reeves introduced the bill to the council.

The councilman added he thinks citizens have been lulled into a false sense of security by a "big defense" foreign policy and that stockpiling nuclear arms only increases the chance the U.S. will be destroyed in a nuclear exchange.

"It's one thing to play chicken with two cars or two kids. It is another thing when two nations are involved," Reeves said after the council's session.

Although shelters in the city are said to be able to Provide adequate protection from the deadly radiation which follows a nuclear detonation, it is acknowledged they would not survive a direct hit.

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Furthermore, many experts say a nuclear exchange would so disrupt vital community resources, such as medical care, fire control, food distribution, housing, police Protection and other services that society would stop functioning and survivors would be threatened with starvation, exposure, pestilence and epidemic disease.

Reeves said he does not think shelters are the answer to nuclear war.

"If people see that they will begin to understand we have to do something about nuclear proliferation," he said.

16 Advance Federal advisory board members

Sixteen citizens have pledged to work to help increase savings at Advance Federal Savings and Loan Association.

They are the newest members of the association's Advisory Board.

They were welcomed at a meeting of the board held last month at Advance's new drive-in branch office in the Walbrook Plaza Shopping Center.

Dr. W. O. Bryson Jr., president, told the gathering he was happy they had expressed interest in increasing assets at Advance Federal.

He observed, "In its 25 year history, Advance Federal has granted over $38 million in mortgage loans, but we still need additional money to finance mortgages for churches, homebuyers and businesses," He urged new members to work hard so that mortgage loans can pass the $10 million mark in 1982.

Further, he outlined the new savings plans available at Advance which pay high interest. These included checking accounts, with 5 ¼ interest, and no service charge for accounts maintaing a $300 monthly balance.

"If you urge your friends, and organizations with which you do business, to transfer their checking and savings accounts to Advance Federal, we can make larger mortgage loans available to our community," he said.

Dr. Bryson also told the group of the new savings and retirement plans, All-Savers Certificates, Small Saver Certificates, with minimum deposit of $500 and the IRA (Individual Retirement Accounts), available this year for the first time.

He detailed how individuals can save to $2,000 a year in an IRA account award payment of income tax is deferred until the individual reaches retirement, between 59½ and 70½ years of age.

During the question and answer period, the new members were welcomed by veteran advisory board members who pledged their cooperation in helping them contact new savers.

The new advisory board members present were Dr. Ernest O. Brown, physician and civic worker; Lawrence A. Brunt Sr., businessman, who heads record firm and produces gospel music.

Delegate Walter A. Dean of the Baltimore city 41st district and Community College instructor Dr. Flossie Dedmond, retired Coppin State dean and community leader.

Also, James M. Griffin, president Fairmount Neighborhood Association and president of physical therapist firm.

Leon Gilmore, social security executive and president of Cumberland-Sanford Neighborhood Association. The Rev. Leonard E. Felton, minister, Union Memorial Methodist Church.

Mrs. Maggie M. Quille, civic worker and president of Druid Heights Neighborhood Association.

Dr. Edward McDaniels, dentist, civic and church worker and Anthony M. Robinson, attorney, church and civic worker.

Other new advisory board members are State Sen Clarence W Blount, the Rev. John Bryant, pastor, Bethel AME Church, Larry S. Gibson, attorney and law professor at University of Maryland.

Also, Dr. James Priest, physician and civic worker; Mrs. Vernice Reynolds, clubwoman, church and civic worker; and Mrs Sara Smalley, Social Security employee who is active in Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, serving on the organization's national finance committee.

Advance Federal Senior vice president, Joseph A. Bush, said he was was "delighted" to welcome the 16 new advisory board members.

"Our community has many citizens from all walks of life who are aware of Advance Federal's service its record of making mortgage loans and providing jobs for our people. I am confident these new members, with their record of service to the community, will be a real asset to our advisory board," he said.

Other advisory board members present to welcome the new members were: The Rev. Montague Brackett, Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Gundy, Roland Henson, Mr. and Mrs. William Russell, Mrs. Odell G. Pittman, Dr. Ralph Howard, Del. Joseph A. Chester, Samuel Phillips.

Also, Osborne A. Payne, Robert F. Brooks, Edwin G. Jones, the Rev. Marcus G. Wood, Rev. Leonard E. Hicks, S. Lee Martin, Wallace Hall, and Advance directors, Dr. Robert Phillips and Elroy O. Wilson.

(Photo by I Henry Phillips)

MAKING THE endorsement of Mrs. Elizabeth C. Gray as Seventh District Congressional Candidate official is Mrs. Elizabeth C. Gray; Mrs. Grace C. Adams, president of the Community Neighborhood Association; and the Rev. Jesse Fliggins, minister at the Victory Chapel Church of God in Christ. The official ceremony was held Saturday, March 27th.

Mrs. Gray honored at musical program

A special Saturday afternoon musical program in honor of Mrs. Elizabeth C. Gray, Seventh District Democratic Congressional candidate, was March 27, at Victory Chapel Church, 1922 Edmondson Ave.

The Rev. Jesse Fliggins is the pastor.

The program, which was arranged by Mrs. Grace C. Adams, and which featured the Victory Children's Choir, was the formal endorsement ceremony of Mrs. Gray by the Community Neighborhood Association.

The association is a 16-year-old West Baltimore civic and neighborhood improvement association, and endorsed Mrs. Gray at its monthly meeting two weeks ago.

Mrs. Adams, a former elections judge, said the program helped show the continuity of the community and allowed the audience of 50 neighborhood activists to know Mrs. Gray better and hear her views about community issues.

"Mrs. Gray believes people are the heart of the community and so do we," Mrs. Adams said.

In her remarks, Mrs. Gray thanked the Community Neighborhood Association for its endorsement and said it was an "investment in their future" because once she was elected she intended to keep in "close touch with all of you" to receive the kind of information about their needs that in turn would make her work on Capitol Hill that much more effective.

Other women present included Mrs. Philip Gibson, Mrs. Mildred Price, Mrs. Odessa Troy, Mrs. Julia Murray, Mrs. Minnie Drummond, Mrs. Bertha Other, Mrs. Bernice Mullen and Mrs. Bessie Driver.

The affair was sponsored by the members of the Saturday afternoon Prayer Group of Victory Chapel Church.

Two Guys SAYS... GOODBYE FOREVER
TO ALL STORES
NOW SAVE 40% TO 60% AND MORE on everything while it last!
MAKE THE BUYS OF A LIFETIME DURING THE LAST SALE IN TWO GUYS HISTORY!
HURRY IN! THEY WON'T LAST LONG AT THESE INCREDIBLE PRICES!
GET READY FOR EASTER!
FOR THE FAMILY:
Spring fashions for men, women & children!
BOYS: 3 PC. SUITS, BLACKS, DRESS & SPORT SHIRTS
GIRLS: DRESSES, BLOUSES, SKIRTS
MEN'S & LADIES APPAREL & SPRING OUTERWEAR
HOSIERY FOR MEN, WOMEN, BOYS AND GIRLS
FINE 14K JEWELRY WATCHES, PENDANTS, COSTUME JEWELRY
FOR THE HOME:
Dress up your home for Easter!
• TABLE CLOTHS • CURTAINS • LUGGAGE • KD & WICKER FURNITURE • TV STANDS • KITCHEN GADGETS & PLASTICS • INDOOR & OUTDOOR PAINTS • HARDWARE • CAR WAXES & POLISHES • RECORDS, & TAPES • BOOKS • STATIONERY
BATTERIES • BASEBALL GLOVES • FERTILIZER & MORE!
LISTEN FOR EXTRA SPECIAL MONEY SAVING ANNOUNCEMENTS THROUGH THE DAY!
LOOK FOR RED TAGS FOR EVEN GREATER SAVINGS!
MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF CHOICE MERCHANDISE STILL REMAINS THAT MUST BE SOLD!
• ALL SALES FINAL. FIRST COME FIRST SERVED! • DEALERS WELCOME! • MANUFACTURERS WARRANTIES VALID ON ALL ITEMS!
VISA — MASTER CHARGE & CASH ACCEPTED (SORRY...NO CHECKS).
Two Guys
GLEN BURNIE 6th Ave & Ritchie Highway
DUNDALK Merritt Blvd. & German Hill Rd.
TOWSON Goucher Blvd. & Joppe Rd.
BALTIMORE Belair Road & Clifmont Ave.
STORE HOURS: MON.-SAT. 9:30 AM - 9:30 PM Maryland Closed Sun.

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